**WATER AND ENERGY FOR FOOD: A GRAND CHALLENGE
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**OPEN CALL FOR INNOVATION (O-CFI)
Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region**

**Primary Point of Contact:
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Date Issued: July 20, 2023

Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI)
Subject: Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) for Water and Energy for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development Competition

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the European Union (EU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Netherlands, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) invite eligible organizations to respond to the Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) **Water and Energy for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development (WE4F) Call for Innovations.**

This Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) is designed to address barriers to enable the production of more food with efficient and sustainable usage of water and energy along the value chain from farming to end-users and to impact food security, gender, and poverty reduction in an environmentally sustainable way. The O-CFI describes the purpose of the program and the types of activities that it will fund; indicates the process for preparing and submitting Expression of Interest (EOI)s and proposals; and outlines criteria for their evaluation.

Individual awards are expected to range between 25,000 US Dollars and 250,000 US Dollars depending on the type of funding requested with the awardee expected to bring in a minimum 1-1 matching amount themselves. The period of performance for individual awards is up to two years; the actual period of performance for each award will be determined at the time of award. The WE4F Middle East and North Africa Regional Innovation Hub (MENA RIH) will make every attempt to distribute funding to awardees as quickly as possible, but awardees should expect to begin activities immediately after the award is signed, even if funding is delayed by one to two months. The time to disburse funds will be agreed upon with awardees based on their budgets. Awards made through this Call for Innovations may be in the form of grants or other instruments as appropriate, depending on the nature of the submitting organization and at the discretion of the WE4F MENA RIH (and its partners).

The O-CFI solicitation document can be downloaded from www.we4f.org/apply-mena. The EOI is submitted via: https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050. The MENA RIH accepts applications on a rolling basis starting April 3, 2023. MENA Hub reviews of submitted applications are planned to take place every quarter, subject to the availability of funds. Applicants may submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) via the following link: https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050.

Applicants should retain a copy of their proposals and accompanying uploaded documents for their records.**QUESTIONS:** Prospective applicants who have questions concerning the contents of this Call for Innovations shall submit them in writing via email to we4f@berytech.org.

Issuance of this Call for Innovations does not constitute an award commitment on the part of WE4F, or any of its Funding Partners, to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission

of proposals. Further, the WE4F MENA RIH reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Farhat
WE4F MENA RIH Manager
we4f@berytech.org

Executive Summary

This document provides details about the application process of the Water, Energy for Food Challenge Fund MENA RIH: Regional Call for Innovations.

What is the WE4F MENA Regional Innovation Hub (RIH)? Water & Energy for Food (WE4F): A Grand Challenge for Development is a joint international initiative of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the European Union (EU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Netherlands, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is subject to many challenges including water scarcity, environmental degradation, unemployment, conflicts, and increased migration. Tackling issues in the water-energy-food nexus is imperative to achieve political and social stability, gender equality and inclusion, food security, and sustainable development.

Although the MENA region's water-energy-food challenges are severe, they present an opportunity for local organizations to find solutions for the most pressing water and energy issues in food production and agriculture.

The MENA RIH supports organizations that work in the MENA Region (Appendix I) and lead to the production of more food while using less water and/or energy, to impact food security, gender equity, and poverty reduction in an environmentally sustainable way. Together with investors and partners, the MENA RIH works to scale mid to later-stage enterprises that have an environmental and social impact in the water-energy-food nexus.

Why join WE4F? Are you a MENA-based organization with a proven solution tackling water and/or energy issues in urban or rural food production? The MENA RIH for WE4F is designed to support organizations in the region in growing their business by tackling the most common internal and external challenges. By tackling matters related to business growth, technical aspects, environmental and social impact, and access to finance together with MENA RIH experts, organizations such as yours will receive tailored and intense support to help you rapidly grow through:
- developing your strategic growth plan
- redesigning your business model for growth and impact
- overcoming your cashflow problems
- strengthening your financial management foundations
- optimizing your production processes and organizational structure
- receiving more than 20 other growth support services such as export readiness, technical, as well as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) aspects.

The MENA RIH will also help you in
- building your network across the MENA region
- becoming investment ready to access needed debt and/or equity funding
- developing partnerships with financial institutions for end-user finance
- raising the right type of capital needed through the best mix of debt and equity

- receiving cash grants of up to 200,000 USD (reimbursement basis) for outstanding Organizations, which will be conditional on investments raised by the Organizations and milestones met – this will be tied to the level of impact, performance, and readiness).

Our Support Team: The support is delivered by leading MENA-based organizations who have collectively helped over 300 firms raise over 250 million USD in the previous five years and achieve more than USD 400 million in yearly revenues in 2019.

Application Process:
The below illustrates the key phases of the O-CFI program. The number of Innovators selected to benefit from the O-CFI and the grant amount is contingent upon the availability of funds. The MENA RIH accepts applications on a rolling basis starting April 3, 2023. MENA Hub reviews of submitted applications are planned to take place every quarter, subject to the availability of funds. Applicants may submit the Expression of Interest (EOI).

How the program works:

Phase 1 - Explore Interests and Submit Expression of Interest (EOI): WE4F launched a Rolling Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) to explore the interest of SMEs in the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus. Applicants respond to the O-CFI by submitting their Expression of Interest (EOI) via English
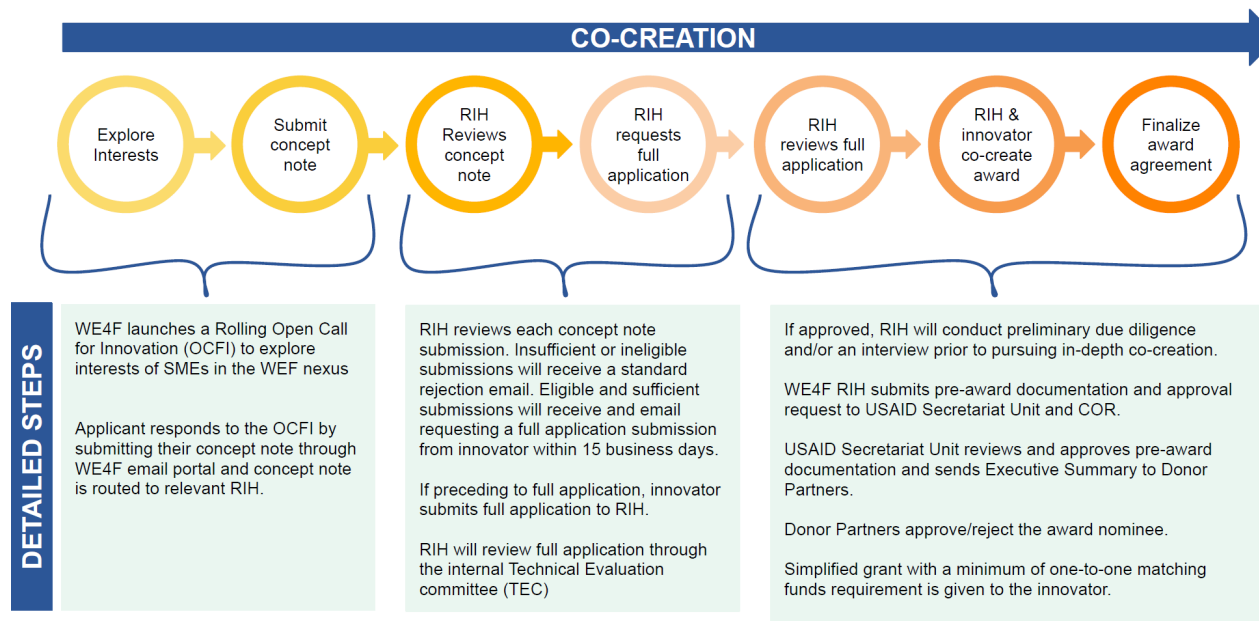https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050

Phase 2 – RIH Reviews Expression of Interest (EOI) and requests Full Application: RIH reviews each Expression of Interest (EOI) submission. Insufficient or ineligible submissions will receive a standard rejection email. Eligible and sufficient submissions will receive an email requesting a full application submission from the innovator within 15 business days. If preceding to full application, the innovator submits the full application to RIH. RIH will review the full application through the internal Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC). **The Full Application Form will be shared with the applicants upon their selection in Phase 1.**

Phase 3 – RIH reviews the Full Application, RIH & Innovator co-create the award, and Parties finalize the award agreement: If approved, RIH will conduct preliminary due diligence and/or an interview before pursuing in-depth co-creation. WE4F RIH submits pre-award documentation and approval
request to USAID Secretariat Unit and COR. USAID Secretariat Unit reviews and approves pre-award documentation and sends Executive Summary to Donor Partners. Donor Partners approve/reject the award nominee. A simplified grant with a minimum of one-to-one matching funds requirement is given to the innovator.

Phase 4 - Scale-up: This step ensures you receive the support needed to implement your growth plan and transform your organization into a rapidly and sustainably growing one. It includes the following activities: Technical Assistance (TA) and Investment Readiness and Brokerage (IR) in the form of tailored consultancy projects, one-to-one support, and workshops (including Bootcamps or Annual Convenings to meet other innovators and key stakeholders), enabling environment and ESG support as well as networking opportunities and access to potential buyers,

suppliers, financing entities and partners in agri-food value chains in MENA and internationally. Such services will be provided on a best effort basis over the Grant Agreement period and following contingent on performance.

HOW DO YOU GET A PARTNERSHIP THROUGH WE4F'S OPEN CALL FOR INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS (O-CFI)?

CO-CREATION

Explore Interests → Submit concept note → RIH Reviews concept note → RIH requests full application → RIH reviews full application → RIH & innovator co-create award → Finalize award agreement

DETAILED STEPS

WE4F launches a Rolling Open Call for Innovation (OCFI) to explore interests of SMEs in the WEF nexus

Applicant responds to the OCFI by submitting their concept note through WE4F email portal and concept note is routed to relevant RIH.

RIH reviews each concept note submission. Insufficient or ineligible submissions will receive a standard rejection email. Eligible and sufficient submissions will receive and email requesting a full application submission from innovator within 15 business days.

If preceding to full application, innovator submits full application to RIH.

RIH will review full application through the internal Technical Evaluation committee (TEC)

If approved, RIH will conduct preliminary due diligence and/or an interview prior to pursuing in-depth co-creation.

WE4F RIH submits pre-award documentation and approval request to USAID Secretariat Unit and COR.

USAID Secretariat Unit reviews and approves pre-award documentation and sends Executive Summary to Donor Partners.

Donor Partners approve/reject the award nominee.

Simplified grant with a minimum of one-to-one matching funds requirement is given to the innovator.

Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADS	Automated Directives System
AIDAR	Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulations
AO	Agreement Officer
AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
APS	Annual Program Statement
BAA	Broad Agency Announcement
CCR	Central Contractor Registration
CFP	Call for Proposal
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
CO	Contracting Officer
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
EST	Eastern Standard Time
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FSN	Foreign Service National
GCD	Grand Challenge for Development
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IFB	Invitation for Bids
IR	Intermediate Result
LOC	Letter of Credit
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MB	Megabyte
M/OAA	USAID Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PAEGC	Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development
PCA	Partner Contracted Audit
PD	Program Description
PDF	Portable Document Format
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RRAB	Regional Advisory Body
RIH	MENA Regional Innovation Hub in Middle East and North Africa
R&D	Research and Development
RF	Results Framework
RFA	Request for Application
RFQ	Request for Quotes
SF	Standard Form
WE4F	Water Energy for Food: A Grand Challenge for Development
SWFF	Security Water for Food: A Grand Challenge for
USAID	Development
	U.S. Agency for International Development

Commonly Used Terms and Definitions

Within the context of this Call for Innovations, potential Applicants should be aware that these definitions apply to the following commonly used terms:

Accelerate to a sustainable scale	The process of advancing an innovative SME and its product(s) from a small number of recurring clients to a large one targeting thousands of recurring clients. Across a country or across other countries in the MENA.
Apparently Successful Applicant(s)	The Applicant(s) for the WE4F MENA RIH funding recommended an award after technical evaluation but has not yet been awarded a grant or other type of award. Apparently, successful applicant status confers no right and constitutes no commitment to an award, which still must be obligated by WE4F.
Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)	ESG means using Environmental, Social, and Governance factors to evaluate the level of overall sustainability of companies, especially criteria related to gender integration, water management, natural resource management, climate resilience, and poverty reduction/BoP impact.
Award	A form of implementing mechanism through which the WE4F MENA RIH transfers funds to an implementing partner, generally selected through a competitive process resulting in a grant or other agreement (Source: ADS).
The base of the pyramid (BoP)	The base of the pyramid refers to the largest segment of consumers, which is also the poorest on a global scale. BoP consumers are typically improvised or economically marginalized groups. They could be smallholder farmers or poor food consumers and could include individuals below the poverty line.
Business Model	The manner by which an enterprise creates delivers, and captures value profitably.
Customers	These are individuals or organizations directly purchasing your product or service. Your customers are either farmers/food consumers (when you operate as B2B) or businesses selling products to farmers/food consumers (when you operate as B2C).
End-Users	End-users are those who are clearly and unequivocally benefiting from your Innovation, i.e., individuals whose income increases, have access to more affordable products/services, or save on expenses because of your Innovation to the extent which your organization can determine and document. This is given the fact they can be uniquely determined. If you are eligible to apply to WE4F, your customers are either farmers/food consumers or businesses selling products to farmers/food consumers. Family members of farmers who benefit from your product or service can also be counted as end-users, particularly in the case of small-scale farmers. Workers in farms or food processing establishments benefitting from your Innovation can be also considered as end-users.

Sustainable Scale	A technology and associated business model which is financially, socially, environmentally sustainable to unlock growth in new and larger markets.
Food Security	When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life.
Food Value Chain	The full range of participants and activities that produce and move agricultural goods from a farmer's field to the end consumer. Activities within the food value chain include input production or supply (i.e. seed, fertilizer, feed, etc.), irrigation, production (i.e. planting crops, raising livestock), storage, transport, processing (i.e. sorting, drying, grinding, packaging), wholesaling, marketing, retailing, and waste management, it also includes financial and none financial services as well as process optimization
Innovation	The development and application of unconventional, new (and/or modification of existing) technologies, tools, products, services, or processes.
Intervention	Awardees' planned activities intended to increase the amount of water available for the food value chain, or produce more food using less water, consume less energy, use renewable energy and production optimization tools to produce more food or reduce the waste of food, or an intervention that covers both energy and water intervention and other solutions that could improve access to financing to integrate and scale such tools in developing countries.
Market Driven	Market-driven means investment, production, and distribution are determined by supply and demand and reflected in freely set prices.
Matching Funds	Funds invested by your organization toward the Water-Energy-Food Innovation you are applying with supplement the grant. This could be monetary (excluding funds from WE4F Founders/donors) or in-kind contributions (e.g., land, equipment, warehouses, salaries of your staff allocated to the proposed WE4F Innovation). In-kind contributions could be given a monetary value in the budget. To help ensure the sustainability of your Innovation, Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) awardees are required to have at least one-to-one (1-1) matching funds (cash/cash equivalent) to satisfy the matching requirements. Matching (whether in-kind or cash/cash equivalent) is based on funding provided by WE4F, not the total project budget. For example, applicants who request 100,000 US Dollars (initially) for an Innovation would need to provide a minimum of 100,000 US Dollars of in-kind contributions *or* matching funds, making the total project budget 200,000 US Dollars. The funds must pay for activities that further the growth, development, or commercialization of the organization's technology (e.g., manufacturing, distribution, marketing).

Online Application Platform	The online application platform defines the website that all Applicants will use to submit an application to the Water and Energy for Food solicitation. (http://we4f.org/apply-mena)
Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI)	A general announcement of a WE4F research interest, including criteria for selecting proposals and soliciting the participation of all offerors capable of satisfying the WE4F's needs. As opposed to the regular Calls for Innovation, OCIs accept applicants on a rolling basis and have at least 1-1 Matching Fund requirement.
Peer or Scientific Review	Peer review is a process of evaluation involving qualified individuals from the relevant field.
Scaling	Expanding, adapting, and sustaining successful technology or process solutions at the product level or above, in different places and over time, to reach a greater number of people in a financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable manner.
Target Area of Operation	The target area of operation defines the primary geographic location and/or market for project implementation and impact.
Water-energy-food nexus	In short, referred to as the "Nexus." The term refers to the interlinkages between water, energy, and food and reflects that, typically, a change in one impacts the other.

SECTION I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
1 Introduction and Background

Water, energy, and food are essential for human well-being, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. Global projections indicate that the demand for freshwater, energy, and food will increase significantly over the next decades under the pressure of population growth and mobility, economic development, international trade, urbanization, diversifying diets, cultural and technological changes, and climate change.[1]

Agriculture accounts for 70% of total global freshwater withdrawals, making it the largest user of water. Water is used for agricultural production, forestry, and fishery, along the entire agri-food supply chain, and it is used to produce or transport energy in different forms. At the same time, the food production and supply chain consumes about 30 percent of the total energy consumed globally. However, the agricultural sector faces challenges in accessing renewable energy in low-income countries as significant barriers – that hinder the integration of renewable energy technology in agricultural development – exist. Likewise, renewable energy enterprises seeking to serve these farmers face several barriers, such as limited access to debt, a remote client base, or a lack of demand due to missing awareness. These issues create an unproductive cycle in which suppliers and buyers are not connected, and farmers and agribusinesses are unable to leverage more cost-effective renewable energy technologies. Further, drivers linked to agriculture account for 70 percent of the projected loss of terrestrial biodiversity.

The above-described situation is expected to be exacerbated in the near future as 60% more food will need to be produced to feed the world population in 2050. Global energy consumption is projected to grow by up to 50% by 2035. Total global water withdrawals for irrigation are projected to increase by 10% by 2050. As demand grows, there is increasing competition for resources between water, energy, agriculture, fisheries, livestock, forestry, mining, transport, and other sectors with unpredictable impacts on the livelihoods of smallholders, women, and youth working in the agricultural sector and the environment as a whole.

Furthermore, these trends will also influence development in general. A largely unproductive agricultural sector with low prospects to increase living standards will increase unemployment rates and the number of working poor – particularly among the youth in these regions. Thus, the creation of jobs, or improvement of those that exist, both within the agricultural sector and also jobs related to non-agricultural activities, can make a crucial contribution towards poverty reduction, food security, and sustainable rural and urban development. Targeting women in the agricultural sector both as producers and consumers in this regard are of particular importance since they constitute nearly half of the agricultural workforce and up to 70% in many parts of the world. If women had the same access to resources as their male counterparts, they could increase yields by 20% to 30% and, in the process, feed up to 150 million more people.

1.A Addressing Global Trends and Challenges

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1.B Learning from the Past

To address the above-described trends and challenges, even "traditional" development cooperation must generate new modalities and solutions. As a result, two global Grand Challenge programs were launched in 2012: Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development (PAEGC) and Securing Water for Food (SWFF). These were both managed by USAID and supported by the Swedish government through Sida, the German government through GIZ, the Dutch government and the South African government, Duke Energy Cooperation, and the Overseas Private Investment Cooperation (OPIC). They focused on science and technology Innovations aiming to improve energy and water efficiency in the agricultural sector in an environmentally sustainable way while at the same time enhancing food production and increasing employment and income opportunities for women and men living in poverty (see chapter 2.2.4).

Key Lessons Learned

Based upon these rich experiences from the past, BMZ, MFA-NL, Sida, and USAID have identified the following key lessons learned, which have been taken up in the design of WE4F (see chapter 3 and following).

● Milestone-based funding, paired with acceleration support services, delivers greater program and individual, organizational impact than financial means for development alone.
● Sequenced and incremental acceleration support where the organizations experience meaningful short-term results can build momentum for success and help organizations meet milestones at an accelerated pace.
● Practical and actionable gender recommendations can facilitate gender-inclusive programming that lays the foundation for strategies that promote the participation of more women.
● Environmental reviews and mitigation strategies can ensure that Innovations are implemented sustainably and do not negatively affect natural resources, biodiversity, or the climate.
● Local context matters. Successful scaling-up requires all the following: having a long-established local presence, understanding the local enabling environment, and receiving technical assistance that includes the understanding of the local context.
● Key challenges to reaching a sustainable scale and ensuring longer-term systemic change and sustainable impact are to connect organizations to private and other capital and to promote an enabling environment for private sector entrepreneurship and innovation in the countries and regions of implementation.
● The organization's success requires multi-stakeholder collaboration, as well as the flexibility to pivot and recalibrate based on lessons learned from measurement and monitoring data.
● To sustainably scale, every Organization must be able to define their customer segments and relationships and validate their assumptions on the value they deliver to their customers, their distribution channels, their cost structure, and revenue streams.
● Cost sharing basis (gradual) investment model, particularly in combination with the food production model, is very cost-effective in securing value for money and sustainability.

1.C WE4F Program Rationale and Objectives

WE4F hopes to expand the scale of Innovations that impact the sectors food and water, food and energy, or all three sectors of the nexus (food, water, energy) to increase the sustainability of agricultural food value chains, improving energy and water efficiency as well as to improve climate resilient agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity in developing countries and emerging markets, with a particular focus on the poor and women.

To achieve this goal, the effort must include partners from the private sector, NGOs, other research institutions, and other donors who share the common goal of increasing food production through sustainable water and energy usage. A key consideration of this effort is to ensure that feedback loops are created that integrate local conditions and new knowledge into both national and international policy and decision-making, as well as to integrate capacity development, knowledge management, and financial and non-financial instruments in a smart way to create an enabling environment in the partner countries.

We are looking for Organizations that can use WE4F funding as a catalyst to (for example) buy down the risk of entering new markets; attract partners who can help bring innovation to a sustainable scale; expand to wide-scale adoption of an Innovation; and attract private capital. If you have a product or business model that you would pitch to an investor, we want you to apply to WE4F. If you have a great idea for a development project, WE4F is probably not the right vehicle for you.

In 2022, the Middle East and North Africa Regional Innovation Hub (MENA RIH) onboarded an additional 21 innovators, of which 38% are women-led or women-owned. This brings the total number of supported innovators to 38, of which 24 are active. Based on the 2022 results, 42% of innovators are expected to meet all their targets and intended impacts, which is ahead of WE4F estimates. In addition, MENA RIH innovators:

- Impacted more than 139,000 end-users, helping them grow nearly 3.1 million tons of food while saving over 598 million kWh of energy.
- Mobilized over $20.2 million in investment, which is more than 2.6x the MENA Life of Program (LOP) Target.
- Helped more than 49,000 end-users increase their income from agricultural activities.
- Provided solutions to address environmental sustainability – 42% of innovators focus on biodiversity.
- Provided solutions that adapt and mitigate climate change

The Open Call for Innovations' solicitation document can be downloaded from www.we4f.org/apply-mena

1.D Target Groups of the WE4F Grand Challenge

WE4F works with entrepreneurship and Innovation through the following actors:

o For-profits and non-profits organizations, as well as organizations in academia with a for-profit arm that, are working with scalable sustainable Innovations at the nexus of water-energy-food. These organizations can apply through the Calls for Innovation.

o Actors that are identified by the regional Innovation hub fit the criteria of WE4F and are crucial for the scaling of impacts.

o   Organizations with large potential for sustainable scaling that have previously received support and proved successful in the introduction phase from either Securing Water for Food or Powering Agriculture Grand Challenges (for a detailed description of the selection criteria, see Terms of Reference of the regional Innovation hubs).

Organizations who have applied to and **have or have not been** accepted to WE4F's first and second Regional Call for Innovations Through our support for Innovations, WE4F expects to target poor men and women, smallholder farmers, and others working in all parts of agriculture value chain.

2   Goal and Focus Areas

WE4F aims to:
● Increase food production along the value chain through a more sustainable and efficient usage of water and/or energy
● Increase income for the base of the pyramid (BoP) women and men in both rural and urban areas working in farming and/or consuming food products.
● Sustainably scale the Organizations' solutions to meet the challenges in the WE4F nexus.
● Promote climate and environmental resilience and biodiversity through the sustainable, holistic management of natural resources and ecosystems.

2.A   Thematic areas in which innovation is needed

The WE4F Founding Partners have identified priority thematic areas in which innovation is urgently needed, as mentioned below. Innovations supported by *Water and Energy for Food* COULD INCLUDE BUT ARE **NOT** LIMITED TO, the themes mentioned below.
o   THEME 1: Innovations in food production to reduce water usage
o   THEME 2: Efficient use of water resources for food production
o   THEME 3: Sustainable use of energy and water on the farm
o   THEME 4: Energy innovations for food processing & logistics
o   THEME 5: Food production with efficient energy use
o   THEME 6: Leveraging food/agriculture waste for energy

2.B   Cross-cutting Critical Barriers

While a broad range of complex factors contributes to water scarcity and energy access in the food value chain, *Water and Energy for Food* look to overcome the barriers that inhibit the creation, dissemination, and adoption of science and technology innovations in the focus areas listed above. These COULD INCLUDE, BUT ARE **NOT** LIMITED TO:
1. The lack of cost-appropriate technologies for use in low-resource settings;
2. Insufficient user-centered design in technology development;
3. Poorly developed supply chains;
4. Lack of distribution networks;
5. High up-front investment costs;
6. Lack of confidence that developing and emerging countries have the market mechanisms necessary for growth;
7. Limited knowledge about local and global policy and regulatory environment that inhibits scaling of innovation;
8. Absence of proper financing tools to adopt innovations;

9. Limited access to information that would enable entrepreneurs to make informed investment, management, and marketing decisions;
10. Insufficient information and training to farmers and other end users regarding how to use available technologies/innovations;
11. Cultural norms/beliefs, access to/and control over assets, and patterns of power and decision-making that could prevent equal participation between men and women;
12. Institutional and organizational barriers faced by Organizations as well as their customers/end-users;
13. Insufficient planning for unintended environmental and social consequences;
14. Limited End-User (and/or farmers') access to finance the integration of such solutions.

Applicants will be expected to describe which barriers their Innovation will address in their application.

3 Characteristics of Supported Organizations

The O-CFI targets supporting organizations with the following characteristics:

For this call, applicants should adhere to meet the following requirements:

a) **Have a well-defined financial model and revenue traction.** Per the lessons learned from legacy grand challenge programs, WE4F is focused on mid to late-stage enterprises/innovations which showcase a commercially proven revenue model and are on the cusp of unlocking exponential growth in terms of scale and scope.

b) **Address the water-energy-food nexus challenges.** The Innovation must address at least two dimensions of the water-energy-food nexus, with food always being one of the two.

c) **Understand and incorporate the local enabling environment for technology and business innovations.** Applicants must be able to articulate the social, environmental, institutional, legal, and regulatory challenges for sustainably scaling their Innovation and describe how they will overcome those barriers and also embed their Innovation to have the intended impact. Applicants must also provide market research that describes local market conditions.

d) **Promote user-centered design, not technology, for the sake of technology.** Thousands of water, agriculture, and energy technologies exist but are not available or utilized. In many cases, this is due to a lack of understanding of the needs of Customers and/or end users in developing or emerging countries. *Water and Energy for Food* will emphasize the importance of the End-User in its criteria, milestones, and subsequent innovation reviews.

e) **Build sustainability into the fabric of the program.** All Innovations must be sustainable. This means that all Innovations must not only have the financial means to remain viable after WE4F funding has ended but also be able to successfully integrate into the existing social and institutional ecosystem in the countries of implementation and provide an environmental benefit. Preference would be given to organizations that showcase net positive environmental benefits, especially related to climate resilience, natural resource management, and biodiversity conservation.

f) **Innovations supported by this program must demonstrate direct or strong indirect benefits for the poor.** Water and Energy for Food is a program that is focused on alleviating relative poverty through both economic growth and environmental sustainability. Through their project implementation, all WE4F Innovations need to provide either direct benefits to those that are earning less than half their country's median income through the provision of resources in the form of goods or services that directly benefit them or should provide economic growth for instance through the creation of jobs and/or labor and/or through strengthening poor people's opportunities and choice, power and voice, and human security and as such can have positive indirect benefits on those earning less than half of their country's median income.

g) **Show how their Innovation benefits women.** Women and men use access, and control water, energy, land, and ecosystem resources in different ways. When these differences are properly understood, targeted actions may be developed to decrease the pitfalls and enhance the potential of the Innovations. By including a gender perspective in business strategies and plans, the potential of an Innovation to sustainably scale increases. Addressing gender issues may improve the efficiency in the implementation of the

business plan, as well as it may improve the social and environmental benefits, or outcomes, from the use of our water, energy, land, and ecosystem resources. Successful Innovations can break boundaries and catalyze transformative changes in people's lives. Investing in women is not only a moral and institutional imperative; it is also a profitable thing to do. Thus, WE4F is giving preference to women-focused Innovations that highlight the roles, skills, and capacities of women. Therefore, Innovations should contribute (directly or indirectly) to more equal gender relations, e.g., by addressing the practical needs of women (e.g., positive impact on the workload of women) or strategic needs of women (e.g., increasing their access and control over production means).

h) **Have a local presence and develop market-driven[1] partnerships.** WE4F Innovations must be validated and disseminated through market-based models. All applicants must be registered and authorized by the national government in the countries of operation in MENA or have at least one local partner that is registered to work in MENA. We also encourage applicants to develop market-driven partnerships that can help bring the Innovation to scale. If working with a local partner, the local organization should have a tangible stake in the Innovation and its development rather than, for example, a local merchandiser who stocks the product. Demonstrating a pre-existing relationship and strong partnership between the applicant (if not based in MENA) and the local organization is desirable.

i) **Have strong financial systems and financial growth models/sustainability plans and the ability to adapt these in different scenarios.** WE4F MENA RIH and its partners are better resourced and prepared to assist organizations that already have sound financial plans. As a result, all applicants will be required to submit financial documentation as well as a description of the organization's long-term financial sustainability plan to support the Innovation.

j) **Have a basic understanding of ESG issues and showcase a strong commitment towards ESG integration into the business model**. WE4F is a program that is focused on promoting the integration of ESG issues into the Organization's business model and day-to-day operations as it presents a compelling business as well as development case for the Organization. Through project implementation, the Organization must meet the minimum set of ESG-related criteria required to enter the program, especially related to gender integration, sustainable natural resource management (including sustainable water management), environmental sustainability (including climate resilience and biodiversity), and poverty reduction. Apart from meeting the minimum prerequisites, the Organization must showcase commitment to further integrate ESG issues into their business and operational model. As a result, all applicants will be required to submit information and any such documentation that supports their application concerning ESG integration. Please see Appendix IV for the full WE4F ESG guidelines.

k) **Have a gender-balanced team that can scale up Innovation in a sustainable manner**. This can be reflected in the leadership team (upper management, founders, or key team players) experience in the nexus or relevant sectors. The leadership team should also have complementary skill sets and demonstrate the capacity to sustainably enable the firm/company to grow. WE4F will give preference to women-owned/women-led organizations and MENA-based entrepreneurs.

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[1] The use of the term "market-driven" is not meant to exclude Innovations from not-for-profit organizations; it simply means that Innovations must be demand- and market-driven.

4 What Will Not Be Funded

WE4F aims to source emerging, cutting-edge business and technology innovations at the water/energy/food nexus. The focus of the challenge is to support game-changing innovations with a focus on wide-scale adoption to impact hundreds of thousands to millions of smallholder farmers and other customers. WE4F will not provide funding for traditional development programs and is not looking to evaluate proposals that present conventional approaches. WE4F will not fund proposals that do not present a viable business model with sufficient backup documentation for the financial model. Currently, the Founding Partners view the following activities as low priority and unlikely to receive program funding:

a) Innovations that fail to clearly demonstrate how they can eventually ensure sustainable benefits in line with the development purpose of WE4F (e.g., enhanced value of the agricultural chain, promotion of food security, sustainable management of natural (including water) resources and ecosystems, increased broad-based economic growth in developing or emerging countries, and a focus on impacting women and the poor).

b) Innovations that fail to clearly demonstrate their positive impact on the poor and women.

c) Innovations that fail to demonstrate their positive impact on the environment (including natural resource management, water resource management, climate resilience, and biodiversity).

d) Innovations focused on research and development for a product without a clearly defined market or potential for commercialization or growth to a minimum of hundreds of thousands of Customers/End-Users within a five-year timeframe. Innovations without potential or intent for commercialization do not fit within the scope of this challenge.

e) Technologies that have not reached a minimum customer base of 5,000 End-Users for a product/solution that costs less than $100. If the business model is B2B, then the combined End-Users of all direct Customers should be more than 5,000.

f) Technologies that have not reached a minimum Customer base of 1,000 End-Users for a product/solution that costs more than $100. If the business model is B2B, then the combined End-Users of all direct Customers should be more than 1,000.

g) Innovations that do not have operations in at least one of the countries mentioned in Appendix-1.

h) Innovations focused on sustainable water supply and energy access without an explicit benefit to the food sector. This agriculture link must have been demonstrated through the organization's existing customer base.

i) Innovations focused on agricultural products and services without a significant and sustainable water or energy component.

j) Organizations use or promote the usage of pesticides either directly or indirectly in their operations.

k) Products/solutions that require any sort of construction or land development/leveling activities.

l) Large dam projects for water capture and storage.

m) Solar/renewable energy mini/micro/Pico grid projects that lack an explicit and inherent benefit to the food value chain.

n) Wastewater treatment projects that lack an explicit and inherent benefit to the food value chain

o) Large pipeline infrastructure projects.

p) One-off water/energy technology installations or pilot projects to support proven technologies for proven applications.
q) Established and large companies whose technologies are already used throughout the eligible countries.
r) Organizations promoting the use of fossil fuels.

5 WE4F Program Administration - How Do You Get a Partnership through WE4F's Open Call for Innovation Partnerships (O-CFI)?

5.A Innovation Selection Process

The below illustrates the key phases of the O-CFI program. The number of Innovators selected to benefit from the O-CFI and the grant amount is contingent upon the availability of funds. The MENA RIH accepts applications on a rolling basis starting April 3, 2023. MENA Hub reviews of submitted applications are planned to take place every quarter, subject to the availability of funds. Applicants may submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) via the Online Application Platform. https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050

Phase 1 - Explore Interests and Submit Expression of Interest (EOI): WE4F launched a Rolling Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) to explore the interest of SMEs in the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus. Applicants respond to the O-CFI by submitting their Expression of Interest (EOI) via https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050
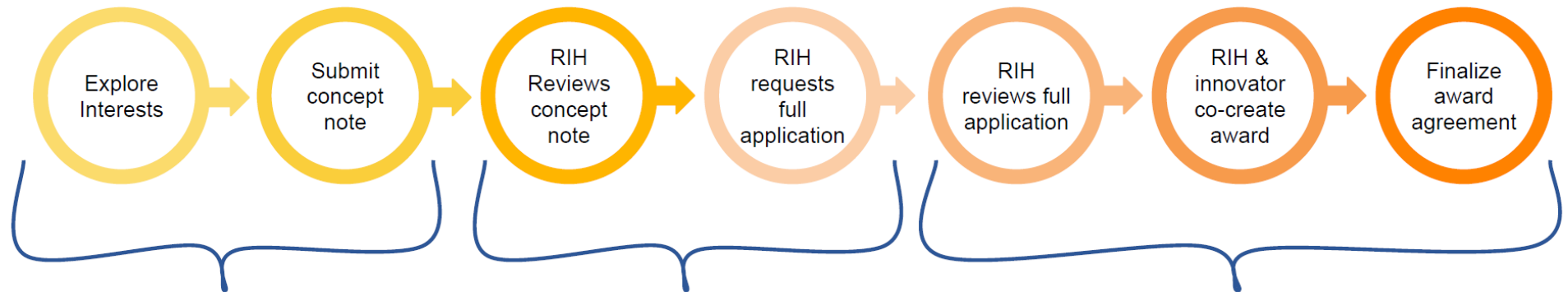
Phase 2 – RIH Reviews Expression of Interest (EOI) and requests Full Application: RIH reviews each Expression of Interest (EOI) submission. Insufficient or ineligible submissions will receive a standard rejection email. Eligible and sufficient submissions will receive an email requesting a full application submission from the innovator within 15 business days. If preceding to full application, the innovator submits the full application to RIH. RIH will review the full application through the internal Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC). **The Full Application Form will be shared with the applicants upon their selection in Phase 1.**

Phase 3 – RIH reviews the full application, RIH & Innovator co-create the award, and Parties finalize the award agreement: If approved, RIH will conduct preliminary due diligence and/or an interview prior to pursuing in-depth co-creation. WE4F RIH submits pre-award documentation and approval request to USAID Secretariat Unit and COR. USAID Secretariat Unit reviews and approves pre-award documentation and sends Executive Summary to Donor Partners. Donor Partners approve/reject the award nominee. A simplified grant with a minimum of one-to-one matching funds requirement is given to the innovator.

Phase 4 - Scale-up: This step ensures you receive the support needed to implement your growth plan and transform your organization into a rapidly and sustainably growing one. It includes the following activities: Technical Assistance (TA) and Investment Readiness and Brokerage (IR) in the form of tailored consultancy projects, one-to-one support, and workshops (including Bootcamps or Annual Convenings to meet other innovators and key stakeholders), enabling environment and ESG support as well as networking opportunities and access to potential buyers, suppliers, financing entities and partners in agri-food value chains in MENA and internationally. Such services will be provided on a best-effort basis over the Grant Agreement period and following contingent on performance.

HOW DO YOU GET A PARTNERSHIP THROUGH WE4F'S OPEN CALL FOR INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS (O-CFI)?

CO-CREATION

Explore Interests → Submit concept note → RIH Reviews concept note → RIH requests full application → RIH reviews full application → RIH & innovator co-create award → Finalize award agreement

DETAILED STEPS

WE4F launches a Rolling Open Call for Innovation (OCFI) to explore interests of SMEs in the WEF nexus

Applicant responds to the OCFI by submitting their concept note through WE4F email portal and concept note is routed to relevant RIH.

RIH reviews each concept note submission. Insufficient or ineligible submissions will receive a standard rejection email. Eligible and sufficient submissions will receive and email requesting a full application submission from innovator within 15 business days.

If preceding to full application, innovator submits full application to RIH.

RIH will review full application through the internal Technical Evaluation committee (TEC)

If approved, RIH will conduct preliminary due diligence and/or an interview prior to pursuing in-depth co-creation.

WE4F RIH submits pre-award documentation and approval request to USAID Secretariat Unit and COR.

USAID Secretariat Unit reviews and approves pre-award documentation and sends Executive Summary to Donor Partners.

Donor Partners approve/reject the award nominee.

Simplified grant with a minimum of one-to-one matching funds requirement is given to the innovator.

5.B Organization Funding
Tranche Funding
Winners of this Call for innovation can receive grants between USD $25,000 and $300,000. Water and Energy for Food cash grant awardees will be eligible for up to three tranches of funding under one award. Initial funding will depend, in part, on the stage of Innovation as shown below.

WE4F Organizations, together with WE4F, will establish mutually agreed upon technical, financial, and sustainability/ESG benchmarks and milestones to assess progress in scaling up innovations and addressing the purpose of the program.

To receive further tranches of funding, the RAB and the WE4F MENA RIH will review technical, financial, and sustainability/ESG benchmarks and assess market conditions to ensure that the Innovation is still viable and has the potential to achieve wide-scale adoption. This will be a transparent process. In some cases, this market assessment may require an adjustment of benchmark targets.

Organizations that have been awarded the cash grant and who achieve mutually agreed-upon technical, financial, and sustainability/ESG benchmarks will be eligible to receive future tranches of funding. All funding is subject to the availability of funds. The WE4F MENA RIH will make every attempt to distribute the first tranche to awardees as quickly as possible, but awardees should expect to begin activities immediately after the award is signed. Release of funds will be tied up on agreeing on milestones to be tied to the release of funds. Funding should be released within 1-2 months latest after the milestone is achieved.

Financial benchmarks (milestones) will include the ability to secure matching funds and/or specific market/demand metrics. A few illustrative examples are noted below:
   a) Total matching funds from the public or private sector
   b) Expected total product/solution sales
   c) Dollar amount leveraged through WE4F global and regional partnerships

Technical benchmarks may include specific technical metrics, such as the quantifiable benefit of the Innovation (e.g., increased efficiency, reduced cost), distribution, and adoption, and a few illustrative examples are noted below:
   a) The total volume of water consumption reduction in the food value chain as a result of WE4F Innovation
   b) Mass of food produced and/or processed as a result of WE4F Innovation
   c) Amount of energy saved in the food value chain as a result of the use of WE4F Innovation
   d) The amount of greenhouse gases emissions reduced
   e) Number and nature of partnerships (including THE WE4F MENA RIH missions) leveraged to improve the availability, distribution, and utilization of the innovation.
   f) Agreed-upon internal changes in business model and/or operations are achieved.
   g) New geographical areas served by Innovation, sectors, and Customer segments
   h) End-user finance leveraged

In addition, the program is also monitoring sustainability/ESG benchmarks which may include metrics that showcase progress on the level of ESG integration in the Organization's business, such as income increase for poor and extremely poor farmers, contribution to environmental sustainability (including climate resilience, biodiversity, water management, and other natural resource management practices) progress on gender mainstreaming throughout business model:

a) Number of smallholder farmers and other end-users that experience an increase in income
b) Number of smallholder farmers and other end-users using energy or water-efficient WE4F Innovations in their activity
c) New jobs were created for both men and women.
d) Efforts to build climate resilience as part of the organization's scaling-up efforts

All awardees who receive a cash grant (funds) are required to have matching funds (cash/cash equivalent) to satisfy the "Matching Fund" requirements. Matching Funds are Funds invested by your organization toward the Water-Energy-Food Innovation you are applying with that supplement the grant. This could be monetary (excluding funds from WE4F Founders/donors) or in-kind contributions (e.g., land, equipment, warehouses, salaries of your staff allocated to the proposed WE4F Innovation). In-kind contributions could be given a monetary value in the budget. To help ensure the sustainability of your Innovation, Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) awardees are required to have at least one-to-one (1-1) matching funds (cash/cash equivalent) to satisfy the matching requirements. Matching (whether in-kind or cash/cash equivalent) is based on funding provided by WE4F, not the total project budget. For example, applicants who request 100,000 US Dollars (initially) for an Innovation would need to provide a minimum of 100,000 US Dollars of in-kind contributions *or* matching funds, making the total project budget 200,000 US Dollars. The funds must pay for activities that further the growth, development, or commercialization of the organization's technology (e.g., manufacturing, distribution, marketing).

The release of funds will be highly milestone based. The value of cash grants (funds) to be received by each organization, the amount of matching funds required, its time of deployment as well as the time of release of funds will be agreed upon with the organizations and will match the organization's needs, capabilities, and status. This will ensure the best scenario is tailored for each organization, reflecting their needs and market conditions while the principles of transparency, milestone-based, and matching are adhered to.

5.C Acceleration Support

WE4F, through its MENA Regional Innovation Hub, operated by a consortium led by Berytech and having as partners cewas, Chemonics Egypt and IWMI, provides commercial, acceleration, and enabling environment support to game-changing organizations who work at the nexus of water, energy, and agriculture. This hybrid incubator-accelerator helps organizations improve their market-driven business development, commercial growth, and scaling in a developing country context and with social and environmental impact purposes.

The WE4F MENA RIH consults and works with each WE4F organization to identify their specific barriers to embedding their Innovation in the local social and institutional context, hitting targets, and scaling their technologies, and then connects them to high-impact service providers that bring the capabilities global presence, and specific country knowledge to help them overcome those barriers. The RIH works with partners along the food value chain to test and market

innovations and to provide needs-based and tailored services to help the organizations address the world's most pressing development challenges.

The level of acceleration support to awardees will depend on the needs and stage of the awardee. This support may include advisory services, technical, business, and sustainability/ESG services, and partnership facilitation. Supply-side interventions may include: improving innovation, capacity building of the management team, redesigning product/solutions, improving distribution models, gender advisory services according to identified needs, gaining operational efficiency, and facilitating access to capital to finance the growth strategy. Demand-side interventions may include improving market linkages, assisting with securing contracts, building partnerships, enabling penetration of new markets, supporting in attracting a growing customer base, including BOP customers, and navigating through the policy and regulatory environment, including environmental compliance. Internal capacity-building interventions may include human resources, including gender balance advisory, legal advisory, etc.

Awardees will work with the MENA RIH to create a transformational work plan that identifies relevant and specific services from the Acceleration Support program. These services should directly complement the organization's ability to reach technical and financial milestones. The regional Country Coordinators are WE4F MENA RIH staff members with a background in market-driven sustainable development.

While all acceleration support will be needs-based and tailored to the organization, we anticipate that the third party(ies) will offer four broad sub-programs, described below. Services under each of the sub-programs will, ideally, be provided by existing and proven accelerators, incubators, industry experts, and recognized business development service providers. If there are specific services that an organization requires that are outside of these sub-programs, we will do our utmost to provide these services within the limitation of funds.

The four sub-programs are envisioned to include:
- *Biz-Tech Development Services:* The Regional Country Coordinators may provide access to prequalified firms and consultants who can provide the services identified in the organizations' transformational work plan. These services may include access to technology and engineering, pricing, human resource management, marketing, IT, legal, procurement, supply chain, manufacturing, and distribution experts and business model innovation advisory services.
- *Investment Facilitation:* This will include:
  1) Investment-preparedness workshops. The Investment Facilitation unit of the WE4F MENA RIH may help prepare organizations to successfully attract external capital. Organizations may receive tailored transaction advisory services and participate in investment workshops with successful entrepreneurs, investors, other capital providers, and lawyers to help them analyze their growth strategy and determine capital requirements. In addition, the workshops will help organizations develop their pitches and prepare for questions from potential investors.
  2) Investors' circles. The Investment Facilitator may help bring together investors and select organizations for structured pitch presentations. Grant, debt, and equity capital providers will be invited, depending on the needs of the organizations. Additionally,

s/he may invite relevant corporations to catalyze product development, licensing agreements, mergers, acquisitions, etc., as appropriate.
3) Deal brokering. The Investment Facilitator may integrate feedback from the investors' circles and/or individual investor meetings into the acceleration work plan and support the organizations to address identified challenges and prepare for future rounds of investment pitches. The Investment Facilitator may also track potential interest from the investors and support the organizations to respond and follow up during the due diligence and negotiation process.

● *Enabling environment support:* The WE4F MENA RIH staff may facilitate market linkages and help build meaningful partnerships with local government, think tanks and trade associations to scale the organization's business. Where relevant, the WE4F MENA RIH may help awardees secure contracts, penetrate multiple markets, and build and serve a growing customer base. Services will include:
1) Sales and market expansion: The Regional Country Coordinators may provide access to advisors and build capacity around sales and new market expansion.
2) Partnership development: The WE4F MENA RIH's Enabling Environment Specialist may work with awardees, members of the RAB, and prequalified firms and consultants to support the creation of partnerships with manufacturers, distributors, and other B2B partners, donors, civil society organizations, local governments, trade associations, etc. to facilitate uptake of the Innovation and thereby growth of the business. The Enabling Environment Specialist of the WE4F MENA RIH may work with organizations to help them navigate through the policy and regulatory barriers in their regions of operation.
3) International marketing. The WE4F MENA RIH may facilitate winning organizations' participation at international conferences (e.g., trade shows, technology fairs).

● *ESG integration:* This will include:
1) BoP impact and poverty mainstreaming: The BoP Impact Specialist/Sustainable Development Advisor may work with the organization to advise on ways to integrate poor and extremely poor farmers to benefit from their Innovation. He/she will also work with the Investment Facilitator on making end-user financing accessible to the low-income customers/users of the Innovation.
2) Gender integration: The WE4F MENA RIH's Gender Advisor will create a gender action plan for the organization during the acceleration work planning stage and may consistently advise on ways to integrate women throughout their business model as customers/users/partners/employees/mentors, and so on.
3) Environmental sustainability: The Environmental Specialist may advise organizations on avoiding negative contributions to the environment and suggesting measures/ways in which the organization can create a positive impact on the environment. The Environmental specialist may help the organization to navigate the local/regional/global environmental policies and regulatory aspects.

6 Technical and Financial Benchmarks
Benchmarks will be jointly determined and agreed on by the awardee and the MENA RIH Manager and RIH team at the time of award. The RAB will be consulted during this process.

The number of benchmarks will be limited and manageable; we do not intend for *Water and Energy for Food* to be an overly burdensome program for awardees. We will have semi-annual reviews and only track benchmarks that best demonstrate the potential and growth of an Innovation and its intended impact in bringing water and energy efficiency for food production in developing countries context. Financial benchmarks will include the ability to secure matching funds and specific market/demand metrics. Technical benchmarks may include specific technical metrics, such as the quantifiable benefit of the Innovation (e.g., increased efficiency, reduced cost) and adoption. Sustainability/ESG benchmarks may also include the progress in the integration of ESG principles in the organization's business model (e.g., increased participation of women at various levels, access to finance for poor and extremely poor, and biodiversity conservation). During the semi-annual reviews, market conditions and other factors that pose both opportunities and challenges for the Innovation and organization will also be assessed.

We hope that all organizations can achieve all technical, financial, and sustainability/ESG milestones. However, some Innovations may fail, even if benchmarks are adjusted. Therefore, if at any annual review, an Innovation is no longer meeting agreed-upon technical, financial, and sustainability/ESG benchmarks, *Water and Energy for Food* will not continue to fund it. Note that these latter organizations may remain alumni of the WE4F program and, as such, will be included in the semi-annual networking events at their own expense and can still be highlighted in WE4F communications. In addition, the program will reach out to alumni for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

7 Eligibility Requirements
See Section III

8 Evaluation Criteria
See Section V. – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

[END OF SECTION I]

SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATION

As of the date of this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) based on the Appropriations Act, the WE4F MENA RIH is prohibited from directly financing any assistance or reparations for the governments of Cuba, North Korea, Iran, and Syria.

1   Award and Administration Information

a. **Award**: Although there are multiple international governments and private sector partners contributing financial and technical resources to *Water and Energy for Food*, all awards made through this competition will be made and administered by the WE4F MENA RIH. The WE4F MENA RIH may (i) reject any or all proposals, (ii) accept more than one proposal, and (iii) waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received. Awards made through this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) may be in the form of grants or other awards- depending on the nature of the submitting organization and the proposal.

b. **WE4F MENA RIH Management of Activities:** The WE4F MENA RIH Manager shall serve as the primary agreement contact between the WE4F MENA RIH and the recipient of the Award.

c. **Award Administration:** Award administration will be determined at the time of award based on the mechanism chosen by the WE4F MENA RIH.

2   Funding Information

Funds may be provided in increments subject to the availability of funds, successful implementation, and continued relevance to the WE4F MENA RIH. The WE4F MENA RIH's obligation to make awards is contingent upon the availability of sufficient appropriated and partner funds from which payment can be made, and the receipt of proposals that the WE4F MENA RIH determines are acceptable for Award under this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI).

3   Period of Performance

The period of performance for new awards for proposals submitted in response to this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) is up to two years from the date of award.

4   Award Budgets

Subject to the availability of funds, the individual award(s) of a cash grant will range from USD $25,000 to $200,000. Each awardee with receive 1-3 instances of technical assistance and other types of non-financial support, such as access to markets and investors.

[END SECTION II]

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to participate in the call for *Water and Energy for Food*:

1. **Type** – WE4F is open to legally incorporated/registered for-profit and not-for-profit organizations or academic institutions which are responsible for generating revenue and maintaining a self-sustaining operational budget (i.e., covering costs). In addition, these organizations should **be able to demonstrate a revenue track record selling the water-energy-food nexus-relevant product or service.** WE4F is focused on financially viable businesses or organizations that can showcase a proven and sustainable revenue model.

2. **Size** – *Water and Energy for Food* is open to all relevant organizations/companies, regardless of size. We encourage applications from small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

3. **Location** – See Appendix 1 for geographic restrictions.

4. **Language**- Application responses must be written in English, French, or Arabic.

5. **Matching funds or cost-sharing –** All Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) awardees are required to have at least one-to-one matching funds (cash/cash equivalent) to satisfy the matching requirements. Matching (whether in-kind or cash/cash equivalent) is based on funding provided by WE4F, not the total project budget. For example, applicants who request 100,000 US Dollars (initially) for innovation would need to provide a minimum of 100,000 US Dollars of in-kind contributions *or* matching funds, making the total project budget 200,000 US Dollars. The funds must pay for activities that further the growth, development, or commercialization of the organization's technology (e.g., manufacturing, distribution, marketing).

6. **Local presence** – All applicants must use the funds to implement the innovation in a developing or emerging country (see Appendix I). In addition, applicants must either already have a presence in MENA or must have a local partner active and operational since at least January 2022 (supporting documentation required).

7. **Impact –** Innovations must have a direct linkage between water/energy and the food value chain. Applicants must demonstrate that they are not causing any negative harm to the environment, like increased water usage or biodiversity loss. In addition, innovations must directly or indirectly benefit the poor (income, products, opportunities). In addition, applications must contribute to gender equality and strive for a positive impact on the environment while avoiding negative environmental effects and local market distortions.

8. **Data collection –** Applicants must have in place proven data collection tools and/or processes that capture the number of end-users, contact details, addresses, income category per quintile, and gender, amongst others. If the applicant's main clients are points of sales, distributors, i.e., work on a B2B basis, their direct clients' end-users will still need to be reported as per the aforementioned criterion.

Applicants from nearly any category of organization or institution are welcome to respond to this solicitation. Specific categories of organizations and institutions that are welcome to respond include but are not limited to, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations and regional organizations. *Water and Energy for Food* welcomes and encourages high-quality applications, especially from women-owned/women-led enterprises and entrepreneurs from developing countries. **Note: Government entities and individuals are not eligible to apply for funding.**
[END OF SECTION III]

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This is the second regional Call for Innovations for the MENA region under Water and Energy for Food. Issuance of this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government or any of the Partners, nor does it commit any of the Partners to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

1 Points of Contact

Nicolas Farhat, WE4F MENA RIH Manager
Berytech
we4f@berytech.org

2 Eligible Country List

See Appendix 1 – Eligible Countries of Implementation for the most recent eligible country list.

3 Timetable

See section 5. C. Acceleration Support

4 Content and Form of Proposal Submission

There will be two stages of proposal submission: Expression of Interest (EOI) and Full Application. Applicants whose proposals are ranked among the top applicants during the Expression of Interest (EOI) Stage will be required to submit supplemental documents and answers in a Full Application as outlined in Appendix 2 – Full Application Criteria (Stage 2 – Proposal Stage).

1. **Stage One: Initial Proposal Package – Expression of Interest (EOI)**

All Applicants must submit the following responses/documents by the closing date of this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) using the online platform. A complete Expression of Interest (EOI) application consists of the following sections:
   A) **Basic Applicant Information**
   B) **Answers to Expression of Interest (EOI) questions on the Online Platform**

Please note that the responses of *Water and Energy for Food* funding recipients may be used for public communication after the Awards are made. WE4F reserves the right to make minor edits to the responses to enhance their readability for public communication.

2. Stage Two: Full Application Submissions
Following submission of the Expression of Interest (EOI), <u>a select </u>number of applicants, the Semi-Finalists, will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. The Full Proposal is meant to provide evaluators with in-depth information about the Innovation. The questions are listed in Appendix 1-Full Application Criteria (Stage 2 – Proposal Stage). In some cases, the WE4F MENA RIH may request applicants to elaborate on technical proposal submissions.

At this stage, applicants will also be required to submit a detailed budget. The budget portion of the proposals will be reviewed for cost realism and cost-effectiveness. Please see Appendix 3- Budget Information Requirements for details regarding what this budget document must include.

5 Online Application Platform

Proposal Submissions must be inserted into the Online Platform, which can be accessed via https://form.jotform.com/230804341945050. Complete instructions regarding how to submit proposals are provided on the website, including a FAQ document. Questions can also be submitted via email to we4f@berytech.org).

Please note: Proposals submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be accepted.

If the Applicant experiences any difficulty with submitting a proposal through the online application platform or encounters any other difficulties in the process, the Applicant should send an e-mail to we4f@berytech.org. All proposals received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in this Call for Innovations. Applicants must ensure that their applications are received by the WE4F MENA RIH in their entirety. No additions or modifications to the applications will be accepted after the submission deadline stated in this Call for Innovations. The WE4F MENA RIH bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions.

6 Questions and Answers

Questions concerning the contents of this Open Call for Innovations (O-CFI) shall be submitted in writing to we4f@berytech.org in order to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation (if necessary). Verbal explanations or instructions given before the issuance of an Award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this Call for Innovations will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this Call for Innovations if that information is necessary for submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant. For more information via WE4F's informational webinars and for other relevant resources, please visit we4f.org.

7 Non-Disclosure

Proprietary Information—Applicants that include data/information that they do not want to be disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the USG (including other parties directly affiliated with the Innovation Selection Process for Water and Energy for Food) except for this solicitation's evaluation purpose, should indicate so through the Online Application Platform, and mark as instructed the box that references the following text:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside WE4F (including other parties directly affiliated with the Innovation Selection Process for Water and Energy for Food) and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part– for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, WE4F shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the

data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the WE4F's right to use the information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction." The data that may be subject to this restriction should include in the "sheets" or other documentation uploaded with the following legend:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

Applicants should retain for their records a copy of all information and documentation that they input/upload to the Online Application Platform. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that files are complete and transmitted by the deadline. The applicant bears full responsibility for data errors or omissions.

8   Branding & Marking Requirements

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "WE4F Identity," which comprises the WE4F logo, BMZ, EU, MFA-NL, Sida, Norad, and USAID logos.

b. The request for a Marking Plan by the WE4F MENA RIH from the applicant confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no WE4F MENA RIH commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the WE4F will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking WE4F programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to revision and negotiation with the WE4F and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant or other award agreement.

e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the WE4F and WE4F Founding Partner Identities as part of the award, including:

(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by WE4F, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;

(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, websites/internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by WE4F;

(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by WE4F, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief

programs; and

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the WE4F Identity and the Applicant's identity.

(v) Events financed by WE4F, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences, and other public activities. If the WE4F Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to acknowledge WE4F otherwise.

(2) A table of the program deliverables with the following details:

(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the WE4F Identity;

(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;

(iii) When in the performance period, the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;

(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the WE4F Identity, and

(v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from WE4F marking requirements and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if WE4F marking requirements would:

(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the WE4F MENA RIH Strategic Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.

(ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each deliverable must be seen as credible.

(iii) Undercut host-country government "ownership" of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as a host-country government item or product.

(iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or

commodity would impair its functionality.

    (v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost-beneficial or practical.

    (vi) Offend local cultural or social norms or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

    (vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The WE4F will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness in the award criteria and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance Appendix 1 e plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

[END SECTION IV]

SECTION V. – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION
1 Expression of Interest (EOI) Stage

We are inviting all eligible applicants to submit an EOI, which includes responses to the questions below. In addition to responding to the following questions, applicants will be required to provide background information in the online platform and demonstrate that they meet the minimum eligibility criteria described in 1. C EOI Eligibility Criteria.

General Information
Name of the organization(s). Click or tap here to enter text.

Title of the WE4F-specific Innovation (if applicable)
Click or tap here to enter text.

Your Organization's website or any social media pages.
Click or tap here to enter text.

Type of Organization: Choose an item. **-** Click or tap here to enter text.
- o For-profit; If for-profit, please indicate the type of company (e.g., Joint stock / LLC / Other – Please indicate)
- o Non-profit; If non-profit, please indicate any for-profit arms or for-profit partners
- o Other – Please indicate

If you're not a registered entity, please pause your application for future rounds. Thank you for considering us.

The primary point of contact information
- o Full name   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Position title   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Phone number   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Fax number (if applicable)   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o E-mail address   Click or tap here to enter text.

Secondary point of contact information
- o Full name   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Position title   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Phone number   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o Fax number (if applicable)   Click or tap here to enter text.
- o E-mail address   Click or tap here to enter text.

Incorporation and Operations
- o Are you applying as a standalone Organization or in a consortium?
  ☐Standalone Organization   ☐Consortium
- o If you are applying as a consortium, please list the name of the lead organization as well as the name of the other Organizations (co-applicants).
- o For Your Organization (Lead Applicant):
  - i. Name   Click or tap here to enter text.
  - ii. Year of incorporation   Click or tap here to enter text.
  - iii. Year of start of operations   s

      iv. Country (ies) of legal incorporation   Click or tap here to enter text.
      v. Country (ies) of operations in MENA   Click or tap here to enter text.

o For the consortium partner (s)/co-applicants:
      i. Name   Click or tap here to enter text.
      ii. Year of incorporation   Click or tap here to enter text.
      iii. Year of start of operations   s
      iv. Country (ies) of legal incorporation   Click or tap here to enter text.
      v. Country (ies) of operations in MENA   Click or tap here to enter text.

o If you are not established in any of the MENA countries in Appendix I – do you have a local partner?

☐Yes   ☐No

If you're not establish in MENA and do not have a partner who is, please pause your application for future rounds.

o If yes, how many years has your partnership been operational? (Numeric input only)
Click or tap here to enter text. year(s)

Share of women in founding and/or management team (%) (Numeric input only)
Click or tap here to enter text. **%**

Share of ownership by women (%) (Numeric input only)
Click or tap here to enter text. **%**

Share of female employees (part-time and full-time) (%) (Numeric input only)
Click or tap here to enter text. **%**

Are you willing to collaborate with WE4F in documenting and providing key impact metrics?
☐Yes   ☐No   ☐Maybe

Through providing grants, Technical Assistance, and partnership opportunities to fast-growing Water/Energy-Food Nexus Organizations ("innovators") as well as supporting the enabling environment in which such innovators operate, WE4F aims to enable 100s of thousands of end-users in agriculture and food production value chains in the targeted countries in MENA to adopt affordable water and/or energy saving solutions to enhance their resource efficiency, agriculture, and food production productivity as well as their climate resilience. Therefore, the selection of the organizations for the Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) program, and the extent they could continue to benefit from the program, is contingent upon the provision of key information and data to be provided by the innovators to measure the impact of their solutions on end-users. Such information includes, and is not limited to, the numbers and gender breakdown of the Innovation's end-users, the changes in income levels, and the water and/or energy savings as a result of using the Innovation. Examples of documentation include locations and contact information of end-users (e.g., from CRM systems), income ranges, savings in energy or water consumption, and food produced or processes (e.g., information from data loggers, inputs backed by sales data,

publications, and/or primary research, etc.). WE4F will also provide a wealth of resources, best practices, training, tools, and one-to-one support to the innovators to prepare the information required and has successfully supported 30+ innovators in MENA in upgrading their ability to document and report on key financial and impact matrices.

Eligibility Questions:

The following questions apply to the Lead Applicant organization.

1. **Nexus focus area:** Choose an item.
2. **Please describe your traction since the start of your operations**
   o Do you provide your Innovation directly to Customers (B2C) and/or through a distributor/retailer (B2B)? or both?
   Choose an item.

   o How many paid Customers in the agriculture or food sector have you acquired since the start of your operations to date? Customers are individuals or organizations directly purchasing your product or service. Your customers are either farmers/food consumers (when you operate as B2B) or businesses selling products to farmers/food consumers (when you operate as B2C).
   Choose an item.

   o How many end-users in the agriculture or food sector have you acquired since the start of your operations to date? End-users are those who are clearly and unequivocally benefiting from your Innovation, i.e., individuals whose income increases, have access to more affordable products/services, or save on expenses because of your Innovation to the extent which your organization can determine and document. This is given the fact they can be uniquely determined. If you are eligible to apply to WE4F, your customers are either farmers/food consumers or businesses selling products to farmers/food consumers. Family members of farmers who benefit from your product or service can also be counted as end-users, particularly in the case of small-scale farmers. Workers in farms or food processing establishments benefitting from your Innovation can also be considered end-users.
   Choose an item.

   o Estimate share of female end-users
   Choose an item.

3. **The WE4F grant does not fund construction activities. Does your Innovation/solution require any construction/land development activity (ies) at any stage of operations <u>to be financed by the grant</u>?**
   ☐Yes   ☐No

4. **Does your Innovation/solution/business model use, intend to use, or encourage/drive usage of any type of pesticides/herbicides either directly or indirectly?**

☐Yes   ☐No

5. Grant Request and Matching Funds

Individual Open Call for Innovation (O-CFI) awards are expected to be up to 200,000 USD depending on the type of funding requested. The period of performance for individual awards is up to one year;

the actual period of performance for each award will be determined at the time of award. O-CFI-awarded innovators must match the grant amount by 100%. For example, if the innovator's budget to scale its Water- and/or Energy-Food nexus solution is 200,000 USD, and the grant ask from the WE4F program is 100,000 USD, the innovator must contribute with 100,000 USD in cash or in-kind. O-CFI grants are disbursed on a reimbursement basis (i.e., the grantee is to submit a monthly invoice for the Allowable Costs as defined by the Grant Agreement as well as the needed back-up documentation and proof of matching spending).

If your response to Q3 or Q4 is "Yes", please pause your application. Thank you for considering us.

If you do not plan to provide Matching Funds (cash or in-kind). please pause your application for future rounds.

a. How much investment/financing (in US Dollars) will you need if you were to scale your Innovation to tens or hundreds of thousands of end-users by 2024? How do you plan to use the investment needed for growth? (please give examples).

Click or tap here to enter text.

b. What are your expected sources of funds and/or in-kind contributions to meet this target with WE4F support (please estimate a monetary value in US Dollars)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. Describe the Innovation you are applying to WE4F with (energy and/or water-saving product/service/solution targeted to agriculture and food value chains in the targeted MENA Countries). Please elaborate on your target customers and end-users, as well as your business model. In addition, you may attach your Organizational Profile. ***(maximum 250 words)***

> Click or tap here to enter text.

2. How much growth in your customer base (in agriculture and food value chains) do you anticipate from 2023 to 2025? (in %) and what key strategic initiatives do you plan to deploy to achieve such growth? ***(maximum 250 words)***

> Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Are there any arrangements that you have undertaken or are planning to undertake to ensure that your Innovation(s) is/are accessible and/or affordable to vulnerable groups and the poor? ***(maximum 250 words)***
   o Such arrangements could include product/solution customization, special pricing/financing schemes, tailored communication channels, etc.

> Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Are there any arrangements that you have undertaken, or are planning to, to ensure that your Innovation(s) is/are accessible and/or affordable to women? ***(maximum 250 words)***
   o Such arrangements could include product/solution customization, special pricing/financing schemes, tailored communication channels, etc.

> Click or tap here to enter text.

5. Describe the existing or potential positive and negative environmental impacts (especially related to natural resource/water management, climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity) that could be generated by your Innovation. Please describe your key mitigation measures for the negative impacts. Please note that despite the core product/service being environmentally friendly, collateral/unintended negative environmental impacts can occur during its life cycle and needs to be mitigated. *(maximum 250 words)*

   o Positive impact, e.g., Are there positive effects on biodiversity as a result of your solution's water management, does the innovation support diversification as opposed to monocultures? Does your innovation reduce dependence on fossil fuels; does your innovation prevent loss of crops due to flood or drought or salinity; does your innovation protect the natural habitat (lakes, forests, soil), etc?

The negative impact, e.g., from procurement to production to distribution to end of life), especially related to natural resource management, including water and biodiversity, and how you intend to (or already) mitigate any current and future negative risks. Illustrative examples: our mobile solar pumping solution could result in excessive, unmonitored use of water. Mitigate: install digital water meters and monitor water use in real-time.

> Click or tap here to enter text.

2 Full Proposal Stage

Following submission of the Expression of Interest (EOI), a **_select_** number of applicants will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. The Full Proposal is meant to provide evaluators with in-depth information about the Innovation. Some or all questions asked at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage may be repeated in the Full Proposal stage. The Applicant must also answer additional questions in the Full Proposal stage (see Appendix 2 – Full Application Criteria (Stage 2 – Proposal Stage)), and the Full Proposal will be reviewed by Business, Gender, Environmental, and Sustainable Development Specialists on the RAB. Applicants will also be asked to provide a budget spreadsheet and budget narrative, and past performance references. The WE4F MENA RIH reserves the right to reject any files or materials that are infected or harmful to our system. In addition, if potential applicants submit material that is not requested, such material will not be reviewed or scored. Full applications will be based upon specific questions tailored to each theme and each Organization in which discussions will be held. Questions will be divided into three categories: 1) Innovation Viability, 2) Application and Sustainability/ESG in Developing or Emerging Country(ies), and 3) Business/Financial Viability. See Appendix 2 for illustrative questions. The WE4F MENA RIH may choose to award upon the basis of initial applications without holding discussions with applicants, although the RIH reserves the right to hold discussions at the sole discretion of the RIH. Applicants are therefore advised that each initial application should contain the Applicant's best effort at a holistic and sound application.

3 Video Teleconference Interview Assessment Stage

Semi-finalists will be invited to participate in an interview with the WE4F MENA RIH and members of the RAB. The interview will take place via videoconference and will serve as a presentation session to at least two members of the RAB. No more than six people can represent a company/organization. The interview will include a presentation session and questions to the applicant and is expected to take one hour. The presentation should include an overview of the most salient aspects of the Innovation from the company/organization, will give applicants an opportunity to address weaknesses identified by reviewers, and will be followed by a Q&A session that will enable the judges to validate responses to Innovation/technical viability, application and sustainability/ESG in developing and emerging countries, and business/financial viability questions and assess the capacity of the management team. In addition, all semi-finalist applications will be reviewed to ensure they meet the ESG requirements of the WE4F program.

4 Physical Visit to Organization Business Location

In certain cases and based on the recommendation of the first screening phase, site visits might be conducted to the organization's production facility or business location to observe operations. This visit will aim to clarify and understand the missing aspects of the application. The organization will be provided with reasonable time to prepare for the site visit and must give the RIH team access to the site as well as facilitate the visit.

[END SECTION V]

SECTION VI. – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Awards made through this Call for Innovations may be in the form of grants, and other award agreements, depending on the nature of the submitting organization and proposal. The WE4F MENA RIH will determine the appropriate Award instrument for the selections resulting from this solicitation. Prior to Award execution, the WE4F MENA RIH may solicit additional information necessary to execute the Award.

1 Intellectual Property

WE4F's goal is to facilitate the research and development that will lead to innovative and potentially commercially viable solutions. Understanding the sensitive nature of submitters' information, the WE4F MENA RIH will work with organizations to protect intellectual property.

Intellectual property provisions applicable to contract awards are subject to the provisions of the WE4F MENA RIH FAR Supplement (AIDAR) (available at http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/aidar.pdf). When the awardee is a college, university, nonprofit organization, or small business firm, FAR clause 52.227-11 and FAR clause 52.227-14 shall apply. When the awardee is a large business firm, FAR clause 52.227-14 will apply. The WE4F MENA RIH may include FAR Clause 52.227-16. Additional Date Requirements in the resulting contract if appropriate. The WE4F MENA RIH will utilize the following regulations for intellectual property (IP) issues arising from:

1) Patent development, including USAID-funded research, technology development, and technology transfer for commercialization or other distribution;
2) The creation and funding of copyrighted material and marks; and,
3) The handling of information that is trade secrets.

17 U.S.C. 101, 105
17 U.S.C. 301 - 305
22 CFR Part 226
35 U.S.C. 100-212
37 CFR Part 401, "Rights to Inventions Made by Nonprofit and Small Business Firms under Government Grants, Contracts, and Corporate Agreements" (implementing the Bayh-Dole Act)
AIDAR Subchapter E – Part 727

a) **Title and Rights in Property**

During negotiations, Applicants should identify where title to all property types acquired for *Water and Energy for Food* activities is critical to their commercialization efforts. The WE4F MENA RIH will determine whether title to the property will remain with the Applicants for a specified period to be negotiated prior to award.

2 Reporting Requirements

Specific reporting requirements will be stipulated at the time of Award negotiation. Applicants should anticipate the following deliverables to demonstrate the project's progress and success:

a) A detailed monitoring and evaluation plan, with expected timelines for completion
b) Semi-Annual progress report detailing the technical and programmatic achievements

c) A clear proof-of-principle demonstration is described in the original proposal and documented as part of the final report, including detailed documentation of the technical work accomplished and success and lessons learned from the project.
d) Dissemination of knowledge through publications in peer-reviewed literature, patent applications, etc.

In addition, awardees will likely be responsible for the following activities and documentation during the life of the program:

a) Conducting an ongoing assessment of progress and a final evaluation and submitting periodic reports according to the requirements outlined in the Award;
b) Briefing *Water and Energy for Food* Partners on project progress and outcomes;
c) Cooperating with *Water and Energy for Food* Partners to facilitate rigorous program evaluations;
d) Maintaining communication with key *Water and Energy for Food* staff;
e) Attending up to 2 WE4F-related activities/events per year, and
f) Bi-monthly to monthly meetings with the assigned country coordinators to report on progress with the agreed-upon action plans.

[END SECTION VI]

Section VII. Appendices
Appendix 1 – Eligible Countries of Implementation

Algeria	Iraq	Morocco	Tunisia
Egypt	Lebanon	West Bank/Gaza	Sudan
Jordan			Yemen

Appendix 2 – Full Application Criteria (Stage 2 – Proposal Stage)

Following submission of the Expression of Interest (EOI), a ***select*** number of applicants will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. The Full Proposal is meant to provide evaluators with in-depth information about the Innovation. Some questions asked at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage are repeated in the Full Proposal stage, which Applicants are asked to answer in the Full Proposal stage and provide extra information beyond the Expression of Interest (EOI) answers if needed. Applicants can copy from their Expression of Interest (EOI) application if needed. The applicant must also answer additional questions in the Full Proposal stage. Applicants will also be asked to provide a budget.

Questions are divided into three categories: 1) Innovation Viability, 2) Application and Sustainability/ESG in Developing or Emerging Country/(ies), and 3) Business/Financial Viability. Below, we list likely questions; there may also be different and/or additional questions asked of applicants.

Business/Financial Viability – 35% of Full Application Score

1. Describe your current business model and the key aspects which you plan to alter/add/expand within the next three years, including Customer segments, distribution channels, key activities, partners, value proposition, etc. Please complete and upload the attached template (Business **Model Canvas) and any other document you might have, such as a business expansion plan (5%). Business Model Canvas Template:** ENG O-CFI Q 1a Business Model Canvas Full Proposal.docx

2. Describe the competitive landscape. Who are the companies/organizations that you see as competition? What is your competitive advantage? (Your competitive edge/Innovation could be in the product/service/technology and/or the business model, and competition could come from those selling similar products/services or offering alternatives and substitutes to your customers/End-Users.) (2%)

3. Do you possess any intellectual property? If yes, are you free of any legal proceedings with respect to intellectual property? (Not scored)

4. How much are your customers currently willing to pay for your product? How do they pay (i.e., will they pay the full cost upfront, or will they pay in installments)? Is there any difference between the cost that Customers are currently willing to pay and the price that

you are charging? How have you overcome the gap between the two in the past, and what is your plan for doing so in the next 1-2 years? (2.5%)

5. What are the qualifications and years of experience of your key operational executives and board members in terms of technical, operations, and business expertise (focus on the following: track record, expertise, and networks)? How many expatriates are part of your core management team? If any, how many years of experience do they each have in the MENA region? Please provide resumes of the key senior management team or other backup documentation. Please demonstrate how such individuals can help scale your Innovation. (3.5%)

6. Describe your financial model.
   a. What is the average selling price of your product/service and the unit cost? In the case of innovative products, how much does it cost to produce, store, and/or sell one unit of this Innovation? For innovative service, what must be spent to offer this specific service, including the number of times the service is offered, the salaries of those employed to deliver the service, and any materials used to deliver the service? Provide backup documentation (2.5%) **OR fill in the spreadsheet:** ENG O-CFI Q6a Bus-Fin Viability Full Proposal.xlsx
   b. What were the annual revenue and operating profit figures for your company in 2020, 2021, and 2022? Additionally, what is the projected income revenue and operating profit for the year 2023? Provide an income statement that, at a minimum, includes revenue, COGS, Gross Margin, Selling General & Administrative Expenses, Operating Earnings, and net income. Provide backup documentation in the form of audited financial statements (full form including income statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement, and notes or any other official financial document). (2.5%)
   c. What are your main sources of capital, including your own investment in the organization? Have you secured external private funding in the past? If yes, what kind of funding was it (Equity/Debt/Both), and who did you raise these funds from? Do you have an idea of your company's valuation? If you have already completed equity investment rounds in the past, what was the resulting valuation (post-money), and when was this (month and year)? If you have not completed equity rounds, have you attempted to calculate your own valuation? Do you have existing relationships with equity investors, including venture capital investors? With banks? (2%) **Please explain, provide backup documentation, AND fill in the spreadsheet template attached:** O-CFI Q6c Bus-Fin Viability Full Proposal ENG.xlsx

7. What are the other source(s) and amount(s) of matching funds you or the existing shareholders are planning to make available or inject? (Additional evaluation points will be awarded for applicants who provide higher matching funds than the minimum described in 6. B: Organization Funding (2%)

8. How are you planning to use the funds to be granted and injected/raised?

a. Provide us with a budget up to the grant amount you are requesting, split over 24 months. (The grant amount, if provided, will be based on milestones and disbursed through several tranches over 12 months). **Please refer to Appendix 3 and fill in the spreadsheet template attached:** ENG - Q8a Budget Template OCFI.xlsx **(5%)**

b. Provide us with a detailed breakdown of the capital funds usage you are seeking to inject and/or raise. **Fill in the spreadsheet template attached:** ENG-Bus-Fin Viability Full Proposal templates Q8b.xlsx (5%)

9. Describe the financial sustainability of the organization:
   a. How long can your organization sustain in your countries of operations without any future grants/funding/investment? (1%)
   b. What are the risk mitigation measures thought of by your organization in case of any future financial distress? (1%)
   c. What is your exit strategy should you not meet the milestones and thus be suspended from the program? (1%)

Innovation Viability – 35% of Full Application Score

1. Describe your Innovation (product/service/solution). What is transformative or game-changing about it? What differentiates you from your competitors or alternative/substitutes offered to your Customers/End-Users? If your Innovation is a technology, provide technical specifications on how your Innovation works; if a business model, what is innovative about it? Please provide a greater level of detail as compared to your response in the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage - you may build on your previous answers, and feel free to provide any additional document to support your response. (5%)

2. Describe your experience or track record to date in piloting and validating your Innovation as well as any changes you may have underdone to increase adoption by vulnerable groups, women, and the poor. You may provide backup documentation (previous projects, pictures of your solutions, etc.) in one .pdf of no more than three pages. (5%)

3. Who are your existing and targeted Customers? Please be sure to include information about the average farm size, average income, average business size of your Customers, and the general locations/geographies in which your project will be implemented. Please complete the following template: ENG- O-CFI Q3 Innovation Viability.xlsx (2.5%)

4. What are the challenges (technological, legal, logistical, financial, etc.) faced by your Customers/End-Users related to water-energy/food nexus? How are these barriers preventing Customers/End-Users from accessing water-energy/food? How does your Innovation overcome such barriers? (2.5%)

5. Water and Energy for Food aims to achieve certain social, economic, and environmental goals and uses both standard and custom indicators to track Awardee progress. Please provide numerical targets for some of the Water and Energy for Food standard and custom indicators **(e.g., liters of water saved, tons of food produced, kWh of energy saved, number of End-Users), as well as other select technical and financial**

indicators. Please describe what activities you will undertake to meet your targets for Water and Energy for Food standard indicators in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3, as well as the activities that will support you in achieving your targets. (15%). Please provide tentative numerical targets for each of the Water and Energy for Food KPIs. Please then describe the activities you will undertake to meet those targets. Applicants are not responsible for illustrative indicators at this time but, upon award, will select a subset of these to track. Please describe the challenges that you foresee that might hinder you from meeting the targets for the standard indicators described above. Please complete the template attached: ENG-O-CFI Q5 Innovation Viability.xlsx

WE4F KPI targets	Units	Target During Period [2023 – 2025]	Activities Planned to Achieve Targets
The total mass of food produced as a result of your innovation	# of tons		
The total mass of food processed as a result of your innovation (if applicable to your innovation)	# of tons		
The total amount of energy saved in the food value chain as a result of your innovation (if applicable to your innovation)	# of kWh		
Total volume of water consumption reduction in the food value chain as a result of your innovation (if applicable to your innovation)	Volume of Liters		
Number of smallholder farmers and other end-users reached	Number	Please mention % female	
Number of smallholder farmers and other end-users that experience an	Number	Please mention % female	

increase in income as a result of your innovation (Please note: This figure must be lower than the Total number of smallholder farmers reached)			
Number of jobs created in the value chain	Number	Please mention % female	

6. Where do you see the biggest risks and gaps to sustainably scaling your Innovation/organization? And how do you plan to mitigate risks and address gaps? (5%)

7. How could the WE4F program support you in scaling your Innovation/organization? (Not scored).

Application and Sustainability/ESG in Developing or Emerging Country(ies) – 30% of Full Application Score

1. What non-financial resources (e.g., suppliers of additive technology, materials/components, equipment, etc.) are necessary to bring the Innovation to scale, and how do you plan to sustainably secure them? (2%)

2. Describe your partnership strategy with stakeholders and communities, which can ensure the sustainable scale of your business. Provide letters or other forms of commitment (e.g., contracts, letters of support, memoranda of understanding between collaborating entities) supporting your partnership strategy. Provide backup documentation in the form of 1 .pdf document of no more than three pages if you are able to do so.
   a. Do you have existing local and global partners? If so, who are they? (2%)
   b. In the future, what other potential partnerships would be beneficial to bring your Innovation to scale (e.g., with local companies, international corporations, local governments, investors, consumer groups, cooperatives, companies, and public sector agencies), and what stage are you at in identifying and/or working with these partners? (2%)

3. Provide detail about the legal, regulatory, and policy challenges in the country(ies) in which you propose to work, or are working, including specific laws and policies that will either foster or inhibit the scale-up of the technology (example: trade barriers). (2.5%)

4. How does your Innovation directly or indirectly benefit or impact women (for example, does this Innovation engage women as employees, suppliers, distributors, and consumers)?

a. Is your Innovation directly / indirectly used by / benefits women? If yes, in which manner (e.g., income generation for their households, saving significant amounts of time daily or weekly by no longer having to perform certain tasks manually or walk long distances to collect or deliver resources, etc.)? Does your Innovation change dynamics positively in households and communities towards gender inclusion and women empowerment? Provide details on benefits for women from your Innovation and how it positively impacts their well-being and/or economic status. Please support your response with data if possible. (2%)
b. Are there any expected gaps in the levels of participation between men and women (including age, ethnicity, disability, location, etc.)? Please describe how cultural norms/beliefs, access to / control over assets, and patterns of power and decision-making could be causing these gaps and how your Innovation will shrink those gaps. (1%)
c. Describe how you ensure or will ensure women benefit from your Innovation as a customer /supplier/worker/employee. What actions will you take or have taken, whether in operations, sales, access to finance, etc., that could support increased benefits for women? Have you adapted your marketing, sales, financing, or hiring strategies during COVID-19 to include women or reduce gender barriers? (2%)
d. Have you ever directly marketed to women based upon an understanding of their role in the agricultural value chain specifically or included their insights in product design or designed financial solutions targeted at them? Please describe this effort and the results or outcome, if any. Additionally, who are the partners you have worked with to market/sell, train, hire, or provide financing for women, if relevant? (2%)
e. Have you worked with men and women in your communities to improve gender dynamics and create better opportunities for women? What steps have you implemented and/or what commitments have you made to improve the recruitment, retention, and growth of women in your management teams? What kind of conducive policies do you have in place/are in the process of introducing to ensure this? (1%)

5. How does your Innovation directly or indirectly benefit or impact vulnerable groups and BoP?
    a. What % of your organization's current customers/End-Users are considered as BoP (smallholder farmers or poor food consumer, for instance, and could include individuals below the poverty line – please see definition on page 9) and/or are an economically vulnerable group? How have you or do you plan to ensure that this percentage increases, particularly in light of COVID-19? For example, how have you adapted or planned to adapt your pricing, end-user financing offering, marketing, or sales activities to ensure barriers preventing such Customers /end users from accessing your Innovation are removed? (You may build on your calculations for Q3) (2%)
    b. What specific barriers limit BoP Customers and End-Users (if different) from benefiting from your Innovation (pricing, limited finance, limited access to data), and how have you overcome or plan to overcome such barriers in the future? (2%)

      c. How do BoP customers and/or End-Users benefit from your Innovation (e.g., higher yields result in greater sales volumes of crops, better quality outputs result in higher prices, time saved permits more economically productive activity in a day or week, job creation, financial and physical security, control over their produce sales, fair remuneration, etc.)? Please provide numbers or percentages, if possible, reflecting savings or increase in income or profits for BoP. (2%)

6. What are the social, economic, and environmental challenges your Innovation faces that may prevent its scale-up, and how do you propose to overcome those challenges (for example: attracting key talent, End-User financing, etc.)? (2%)

7. How may your Innovation have a negative impact on the environment in your target markets and geographies? What measure(s) do you have planned or have taken to mitigate such impact? And how do you monitor your environmental compliance? Please attach any environmental certifications or Environmental Impact Assessment Studies you might have conducted, **if relevant, and respond to this questionnaire:**ESG Full Proposal Environmental Questionnaire Q7 ENG.docx. Please note that despite your core product/service being environmentally friendly, there could be collateral/unintended negative impacts on the environment caused by your Innovation (for example, in procurement, its production, operations, distribution, and end-of-life). (2%)

8. Describe any climate risks your Innovation might have and how you plan to address them. How does your innovation contribute to climate resilience and adaptation? For example - how does your innovation contribute to building climate resilience for farmers or other food producers to better manage effects arising from climate change such as sea-level rise, flood, drought, changing of weather patterns, etc? Climate risks could result from climate-triggered challenges which your organization, customers/End-Users, and/or suppliers can face. These risks could include drought, floods, extreme temperature conditions (heatwaves, rising temperatures, etc.) – for more details, please visit the following website: https://www.climatelinks.org/resources/climate-risk-screening-and-management (2%)

9. How does your innovation impact (positively and negatively) the biodiversity of the surrounding area of your operation, if any? Special care should be taken to avoid drying out of local wetlands and streams caused by irrigation of agricultural land. For negative impacts, please share your mitigation measures. [Definition: Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi. It also includes all organisms, species, and populations; the genetic variation among these; and their complex assemblages of communities and ecosystems (1.5%). For more details on how to strike a balance between the need for irrigation for agriculture, you can visit the following website: https://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/wwd2014_e.pdf.

Non-weighted Evaluation Factors for Finalist Applications:
While no weight is assigned to the below factors, they are important and material to the award decision.

(a) Past Performance

Past performance information for three (3) past performance references which describe any contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements which the applicant organization, as well as any consortia or joint venture partners and any subcontractors or sub-awardees that will perform a substantive role in the applicant's program, has implemented involving similar or related programs over the past three years will be required.

Please include the following information: name and address of the organization for which the work was performed; name and current telephone number and email address of responsible representative from the organization for which the work was performed; contract/grant name and number (if any), the period of contract/grant performance, annual amount received for each of the last three years and beginning and end dates; a brief description of the project/assistance activity and key project accomplishments/results achieved to date.

It is recommended that the applicant alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide past performance information when requested.

(b) Cost
In the later stages of review, costs included in the proposed grant use will be reviewed to ensure they are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
Cost-effectiveness will be considered in relation to any proposed cost-share.

If requested, budget proposals will also be subject to cost realism analysis. The cost realism analysis will verify the applicant's understanding of the requirements, assess the degree to which the cost application reflects the approaches in the technical application, and assess the degree to which the costs included in the application accurately represent the programmatic requirements set forth in the application.

(c) Pre-Award Survey
All Award nominees (those applicants that have made it past the Finalist stage) that do not have a prior grant with the WE4F MENA RIH will be required to perform a Pre-Award Survey prior to receiving any WE4F funding. The WE4F MENA RIH or its designee will administer the Pre-Award Survey. This tool helps determine whether the organization's financial management and internal control systems are adequate to manage, control, account for, and report the uses of the WE4F MENA RIH funds. It provides WE4F with the information needed to evaluate the ability of an organization to adequately fulfill the terms of an award.

The Pre-award Survey will assess the following criteria:
i. Organization legal structure
ii. Financial management and internal controls
iii. Procurement systems
iv. Human resources systems
v. Programs performance management (project management capacity)
vi. Organization sustainability

An organization that has been audited within one year of the time of the award may submit that audit in lieu of the Pre-Award Survey if it covers all of the criteria listed above, but WE4F will

ultimately determine if the audit meets the requirements of the Pre-Award Survey. The WE4F MENA RIH (or its designee) recognizes that newer organizations may have some difficulty providing all documents and will work with award nominees to create the systems listed in the criteria if they do not exist. If an award nominee is unwilling or unable to modify their practices to meet the criteria requirements, the WE4F MENA RIH will not make an award.

Appendix 3- Budget Information Requirements

This section may be subject to change and refers to information and details to be shared in the full proposal stage.

1) **Grant Use Budget Spreadsheet**
   The budget should represent a detailed summary budget. A template for the budget will be provided on the online platform. Applicants will need to complete the template and submit it to the application platform. The basic definitions for the detailed cost elements are provided below. Grant payments will be made based on the submission of documented expenditures in line with the approved budget and USAID regulations.

2) **Budget Narrative**
   The budget narrative should provide information on the basis for estimating each line item, including reference to sources used in substantiating the cost estimate (e.g., organization's policy, payroll document, vendor quotes, etc.).

   i) **Direct Labor**: Direct salaries, wages, and annual increases for all personnel proposed under the application must be in accordance with the applicant's established personnel policies. To be considered adequate, the policies must be in writing, applicable to all employees of the organization, subject to review and approval at a high enough organizational level to assure its uniform enforcement and result in costs that are reasonable and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles. The narrative should include a level of effort analysis specifying personnel, rate of compensation, and amount of time proposed. Anticipated salary increases during the period of the agreement should be included.

   ii) **Fringe Benefits**: If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate that has been approved by a USG agency, such rate should be used, and evidence of its approval should be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

   iii) **Travel and Transportation**: The application should indicate the number of trips, domestic, regional, and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin and destination for proposed trips, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. Per diem should be based on the applicant's normal travel policies.

   iv) **Allowances:** Allowances must be broken down by specific type and by person and must be in accordance with the Applicant's established policies.

   v) **Supplies and Equipment:** Differentiate between expendable supplies and nonexpendable equipment (NOTE: Equipment is defined as tangible nonexpendable personal property including exempt property charged directly to the Award having a

useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of 5,000 US Dollars or more per unit unless the applicant's established policy establishes nonexpendable equipment anticipated to be required to implement the program, specifying quantities and unit cost). The recipient will not purchase any goods or services, except as authorized pursuant to 22 CFR 228 or ADS 310 "Source and Nationality Requirements" or any applicable waivers, and the recipient will not purchase any single item that has a useful life of over one year and a cost of 5,000 US Dollars or more. BERYTECH may modify the Simplified Grant Format as long as the agreement includes the applicable Standard Provision for related costs in the small grant award and if the support of international travel or the purchase of equipment is necessary for the performance of the grant.

vi) **Sub-awards (contracts/grants) (if any):** Applicants who intend to utilize sub-awardees should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the applicant. Sub-award cost applications should follow the same cost format as submitted by the applicant.

vii) **Other Direct Costs:** This could include any miscellaneous costs such as office rent and utilities, communications, transportation, supplies, public outreach, sub-awards, audits, report preparation costs, passports, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than the Applicant's normal coverage), etc. The narrative, or supporting schedule, should provide a complete breakdown and support for each item of other direct costs.

3) **Cost Sharing**

The Berytech encourages simplified grant recipients to provide as much cost matching as they reasonably can. The company will consider waiving cost-sharing when necessary to support WE4F MENA RIH objectives that may not otherwise be met. However, WE4F will primarily use Fixed Amount Awards for innovation grants. Note cost sharing is not allowed for Fixed Amount Awards.

Grant cost-sharing must adhere to applicable USAID guidance, such as ADS 303.3.10, Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directive (AAPD) 02-10, and any other Applicable Standard Provision. It is USAID's policy not to apply its source, origin, and nationality requirements or the "restricted goods" provision established in the Standard Provision entitled "USAID Eligibility Rules for Goods and Services" on cost-sharing amounts. In accordance with Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 200.207, program income may be used to finance the required non-U.S. government cost-share portion of the grant award.

Cost-sharing or matching refers to that portion of project or program costs not borne by WE4F MENA RIH. All contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, are acceptable as part of the recipient's cost-sharing or matching when they meet the criteria established in the standard provision governing recipient contributions.

For instance, the cost share may be in the form of funds from other (non-US Government) donors; it may be the labor of the grant recipient employees or volunteers, or it may be the use of a recipient's meeting room to hold a workshop for the grant activity.

Backup documentation is used to verify the source and value of the cost-share contributions. The types of backup documentation required vary according to the type of cost share. Examples of backup documentation include:

- Donation letter from a donor for cash or in-kind contributions and copy of bank statement (for cash contributions only);
- Timesheets;
- Rate calculations;
- Valuation of donated goods and use of space; and
- Independent appraisals (for donated equipment, building, or land).

Cost share can come from a variety of sources, as described below. Berytech encourages grant recipients to explore different cost-share possibilities within their organization as well as pursue other potential donors that could contribute to project costs. Berytech staff will be available to work with recipients to help identify possible sources of cost share. It is critical that all forms of cost share are documented throughout the duration of the grant.

Allowable and Unallowable Cost-Share

All costs, whether reimbursable or contributions to cost share, must have the following three characteristics:

1. Costs must be reasonable, meaning they are generally recognized as ordinary and necessary and would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of normal business.
2. Costs must be allocable, meaning they are incurred specifically for the grant activity.
3. Costs must be allowable, meaning that they must conform to any limitations in WE4F MENA RIH's award from USAID.

Contributions, whether cash or in-kind, are acceptable as part of cost share if they meet ALL of the following criteria:
1. Cost-share contributions must be verifiable from the recipient's records.
2. Cost-share contributions must not be included as contributions for any other U.S. Government-assisted program.
3. Cost-share contributions must be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient accomplishment of grant activity objectives.
4. Cost-share contributions must be types of charges that would be allowable under the applicable Federal cost principles.
5. Cost-share contributions may not be paid by the U.S. Government or any other WE4F donor under another grant or cooperative agreement.
6. Cost-share contributions must be provided for in the approved budget when required by USAID.
7. Cost-share contributions must conform to other provisions of USAID guidance.

4)   **Audit**

The grant must be included in any audit required by 2 CFR 200 or ADS 591.3.2. The grant requires the recipient to allow USAID access to its records for up to three years after the end date of the grant, and the recipient will refund USAID for any funds it receives for any costs that did not meet the terms and conditions of the grant.

Appendix 4 – Guiding Principles for Environmental, Social, and Governance Adherence in WE4F

One of the major foci of WE4F is to support the integration and uptake of activities that enhance the social, environmental, and governance structures in the countries of operations. Under the broader definition of ESG, WE4F specifically focuses on tackling gender mainstreaming, environmental sustainability, and poverty reduction-related issues and supports all related stakeholders in overcoming barriers related to these themes. The guiding principles mentioned below are based on the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI). However, these principles have been evolved and customized to align with WE4F's vision and goals as follows:

- Principle 1: We will be an active issue managers and incorporate ESG issues into the decision-making process, operating structure, and standard practices.
- Principle 2: We will seek appropriate disclosure on ESG issues by the organizations in which we invest.
- Principle 3: We will promote acceptance and implementation of the Principles related to ESG within the WEF nexus and larger international development ecosystem.
- Principle 4: We will work together with all stakeholders to enhance our organization's effectiveness in integrating the principles related to ESG into their business and operational model.
- Principle 5: We will report programmatic activities and progress towards integrating the ESG principles.
- Principle 6: We recognize that the level of ESG integration within organizations might be at a beginner/intermediate/advanced level; hence, we will work with a "no one size fits all" approach. However, organizations must meet a minimum set of requirements related to gender mainstreaming, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability to be eligible for support.

Classification of WE4F Organizations

All WE4F organizations will be classified into one of the three levels based on their current level of ESG integration into their business and operational model. The three levels are defined below:

Beginner: A WE4F organization will be termed as a beginner if they meet the minimum set of ESG-related criteria required to enter the program, especially criteria related to gender integration, sustainable natural resource management, including sustainable water resource management, biodiversity, climate resilience, and poverty reduction. Apart from meeting the minimum prerequisites, the organization must showcase commitment to further integrate ESG issues into their business and operational model. The program will support them in increasing awareness of key ESG issues to help them move from beginner level to intermediate/advanced level of ESG integration.

Intermediate: A WE4F organization will be termed as intermediate if they **not only** meet the minimum set of ESG-related criteria required to enter the program **but also** showcase tangible progress on ESG issues in terms of implementation and results. They might not meet all the stated criteria and goals of WE4F, and hence there could still be scope for

improvement. The program will support them to improve and aim to reach an advanced level of ESG integration.

Advanced: A WE4F organization will be termed as "advanced" if they meet **all** the stated ESG-related objectives and goals set by WE4F and not just the minimum set of criteria required to enter the program. The program will help them to scale their impact on ESG issues.

Appendix 5 - WE4F Innovation Types

Though there is expected to be a wide of technologies or Innovations supported under WE4F, all Innovation data will be reported to the WE4F secretariat and in the WE4F M&E platform according to the definitions outlined in this document. Any instances of an Innovation that does not match one of the following definitions and is not digital or financial must be reported as "Other." RIH-Ievel documents related to Innovations should adopt the terminology and definitions in this document.

Energy- Farm input: This includes Innovations that are used as energy-efficient inputs or pre-harvest treatments or improve the energy efficiency of existing agricultural inputs.

Energy- Farm production: This includes Innovations focused on increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy in agricultural production and/or harvesting processes. This may include labor-saving technology or the replacement of human or animal labor with machines, existing machines with more energy-efficient machines, or the improvement of existing machines.

Energy- Agricultural processing: This includes Innovations that use renewable energy or aim to improve the energy efficiency of value-added food processing, including the transformation of raw agricultural goods to foodstuffs or the changing of foodstuffs to other more valuable forms.

Energy- Energy production and infrastructure in agriculture: This includes Innovations that improve the energy efficiency of existing energy production methods, energy distribution infrastructure, or energy storage methods which are being used to support agricultural processes.

Energy- Aggregation and storage in agriculture: This includes Innovations used post-harvest in food aggregation, packaging, and storage which use renewable energy or aim to improve the energy efficiency of these agricultural processes.

Energy- Agricultural goods transport: This includes Innovations that improve the energy efficiency of the transport of agricultural goods using renewable energy or using other energy-efficient solutions.

Water- Irrigation: This includes Innovations that are new water-efficient methods or improve the water efficiency of existing processes used to divert water from its source and distribute or redirect water resources for the purpose of agricultural production.

Water- Capture/storage in Agriculture: This includes Innovations that aim to improve water efficiency in agriculture by collecting and storing water, including rainfall, for agricultural purposes.

Water- Reuse in Agriculture: This includes Innovations that treat wastewater or support the reuse of water resources to improve the water efficiency of agricultural processes.

Water- Quality/salinity in agriculture: This may include technologies that use brackish or saline water to improve the water efficiency of agricultural processes or which treat poor quality or saline water to increase freshwater resources for agricultural use.

Digital solutions: This includes Innovations that are digital and improve the water and/or energy efficiency of agricultural processes but cannot be defined by one single other Innovation type listed. Any digital Innovation which does match only one definition for an existing Innovation type should be categorized under that Innovation type.

Financial solutions: This includes Innovations that improve the financial access or financial resources of actors within the food value chain, including food producers, food processors, and direct end-users of agricultural goods.

Other: This includes Innovations that are not digital, improve agricultural processes' water and/or energy efficiency, and cannot be defined as any other Innovation type.

[END]