

Innovation Fund

Application Form for

UNICEF Country Offices -

follow-on funding

This application form is for UNICEF Country Office led projects that have received an investment from the UNICEF Innovation Fund and are seeking to continue the same initiative with a second tranche of funding.

If you are applying for funding for a new initiative, please apply at:

<https://unicefinnovationfund.org/#/submit>

The eligibility requirements for the UNICEF Innovation Fund are:

- Country Office is developing and piloting a new open-source solution
- The solution has completed initial prototyping and small-scale piloting with promising results. It lacks sufficient evidence or resources to scale further
- You have matching co-funding to support the project
- CO senior management supports the application and project itself
- You are able to spend the investment within 12 months

The application will be assessed based on the Innovation Fund Criteria:

- Alignment with UNICEF's Innovation Principles and UNICEF's global priorities for children.
- Size of the market opportunity and relevance across geographic locations.
- Suitability of the team to implement the project.
- Feasibility and problem-solution fit.
- Creation of open source, public goods in frontier technology spaces.
- Results able to be measured and monitored in real time.

Once the application is complete, second tranche funding applications will be assessed by the Innovation Fund Board (Chris Fabian, Erica Kochi and Tanya Accone) for a final decision.

Email address

Please link here the initiative profile on Invent: <https://invent.unicef.org/en/-/>

Tip: to avoid duplicating efforts, you can fill out the Invent profile out once the draft proposal has been finalized. The Invent entry is required to submit a final proposal to the Venture Fund Board.

OVERVIEW

Project name * **Piloting blockchain based digital relief distribution platform for cash transfers in Nepal**

Country * **Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**

Application submitted by * **Usha Mishra, Deputy Representative a.i.**

Who has final accountability of the project? * **Usha Mishra, Deputy Representative a.i.**
Chief, Social Policy, Evidence and Evaluation, Nepal Country Office will have final accountability of the project

ACHIEVEMENTS

Please update us on the activities completed and your key achievements during the last 12 months? Please refer to specific numbers, data, results where possible. You can copy this from

All preparedness activities, technical support, Data collection and validations completed, and first cash camp was started on 10 January 2023. Altogether about 60 per cent of total work has been completed. In terms of cash transfers, as of 26 January, 20 per cent of targeted beneficiaries have received cash.. Altogether 13 cash camp have been planned (one in each ward and one for the remaining if any and out that four ward level cash camp have been completed till date. Similarly bank transfer has planned to start from 26 January and the municipality has planned to disbursed cash to the beneficiaries of four wards in first go. All wards will be benefitting from the pilot. Rahat team send SMS and IVR message to the eligible beneficiaries and QR cards. About eight per cent of beneficiaries were absent in the cash camp and follow up is being done to find out the reason and deliver cash by using alternative modality.

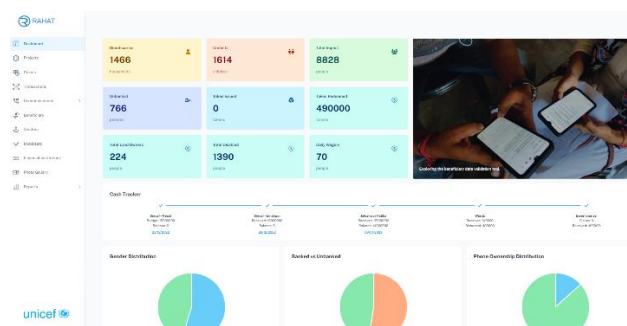
The cash distribution was well managed by the municipality and went very smooth and distribution took around 2 and half hour including all the verification, voucher redeeming in the

mobile app, record keeping and cash handover to the beneficiaries. The local government officials are excited to see real-time data and movements of cash.

Building on your achievements, what do you still need to learn, develop or test to have enough evidence to sustain the solution / scale further with other resources?

The project has already achieved some milestones and learnings associated with preparedness activities, targeting but, the project has yet to finalize cash delivery, complete robust end user monitoring and the evaluation. Identifying and targeting and validating beneficiaries in a bit complex and we need to improve and expediate the process. Additional challenges we faced is due to unavoidable situation such as parliament election and also festival holiday season.

What has the real-time data you've been collecting showed you to date? What were some key insights/results that you gathered? How do you aim to use these insights in the next phase of the initiative?



SCALE + SUSTAINABILITY

Based on your experience so far, how has your initial business model worked? What steps do you aim to take to ensure the solution is sustained after the initial phase? *

For example, describe how scaling will be financed, or how will external partners monetize the solution? What type of partnerships will be needed to sustain further development? 1000 characters max.

The project is moving as planned with some adjustments and improvements. It was expected to have some variations on the number of beneficiaries. However, the number seems a bit more than expected. Originally it was estimated to reach to 1,500 families from one of the floods prone Palikas (that is Jaleswor) of Madhesh Pradesh and these HHs have also been social-economically impacted by the adverse affected of the Covid-19 pandemic. We believe supporting these households through Rahat project would to some degree help them to mitigate their hardship.

However, while validating the 2 years old data the number of eligible HHs increased to about 1,900. The main reason for increase of HHs could be the impact of COVID-19 that pushed many families into jobless and daily wage earner category and another reason is newly borne children since last 2 years who were not in the previous data collected and used for estimation.

If this solution works well and can prove a significant efficiency gain in terms of time and resources, there is high potential that it could be scaled up. If it is scaled up, this may potentially affect millions who are supported through UN or any other agencies supporting cash response.

What is your plan for resource mobilization during the next 12 months and beyond? How will you be diversifying funding / leveraging different sources of funding to ensure sustainability after the Innovation Fund investment?

The project lessons learned, and evaluation findings will be widely disseminated at all levels of government and other stakeholders and launch evidence-based advocacy to use the blockchain modality, highlighting the importance of real-time information, transparency, and other achievements. It is expected that the technical know-how will be transferred, and the local government can apply the modality using their own or other resources next time in case of disaster or in other crisis. It could be too early to confirm whether the government will be continuing to use the system in future. We need to work to develop business model and also showcasing/ learning sharing events at provincial and Federal government level for buy in by the government and scale up.

Scaling: How will you disseminate and share the solution across UNICEF (other COs, ROs, programmes, etc.) and other relevant partners?

The modality is not limited to multi- purpose cash transfer. Other sections/sectors can use the same modality for sectoral cash transfer. For example, cash for nutrition or education.

MILESTONES + RESOURCES

What will you do? List your main objectives & milestones for the follow-on investment period: *

The pilot is planned for the duration of 9 months from September 2022 to May 2023. Data collection and validation is the crucial part which will take significant time. Because of election planned in November 2022 there will be interruption in data validation during a month in November. Actual cash delivery is planned to be started in the last week of December and to be completed by mid-January 2023. The post distribution monitoring will start in January immediately after the distribution is completed. Evaluation of the program will take some time. The evaluation starts from mid-February and will be completed by mid-April 2023. The final report of the evaluation is expected to be ready by the end of April 2023. The following timeline and milestone are proposed. In addition to **the** work already completed following works are ongoing and need additional time period.

- a. F) Lead M&E efforts; manage external M&E partner- *Mid January 2023*
- b. G) Finalization of PDM instruments *2nd week of January 2023*
- c. H) Finalization of Evaluation ToR- *3rd week of January 2023*
- d. I) Call for proposal Evaluation *4th week of January 2023*
- e. J) Recruitment of Evaluation Firm: *Mid- February 2023*
- f. K) Evaluation started: *March 1st week 2023*
- g. L) Evaluation Completed: *End of April 2023*
- h. M) Final Report submission: *mid- January 2023*
- i. Project closure: *end of June 2023*

Who are the key partners for implementation of the project, and what are their roles? *

1000 characters max.

This solution will be implemented in collaboration with local government. (Jaleswor Municipality). Municipality will be engaged in data verification approving the final list of beneficiaries enter the system and do actual distribution of cash using the new solution. Rahat team will be working closely with the local government to establish the entire eco-system of the digital Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) management system and orient/train them. The following are the key stakeholders engaged in different capacities in implementing the project.

UNICEF: OOI

UNICEF- Nepal Country Office and Field Office Janakpur

Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration

Local consultant hired for 3 months for this project (Janakpur)

M&E third party

Technology enabler - Rahat

Local partner - Jaleswor Palika (12 ward offices)

Palika Bank - Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited

Mobilizers to be hired: 8 to 12 (managed by Rahat team)

What is the estimated budget (in US \$) for the entire second phase (including the Innovation Fund investment and co-funding from the CO) *

USD 205,085 (USD 145,460 from Innovation Fund and USD: 58,250 from NCO- co-founding)

How much financing (in US \$) are you requesting from the Innovation Fund (required to be spent within 12 months)? *

USD 30,800 (about USD 77. per HHs to 400 households)

What are your major (3-5) budget lines for spending? *E.g., 30% software development, 10% user testing, 40% roll-out costs, 20% M&E *

Cash to be delivered to beneficiaries : USD 30,800 (about USD 77. per HHs to 400 households)

Co contribution: USD: 59,625

Admin support to the municipality: USD 3,000

Monitoring: 6,000
RCCE: 5,000
Evaluation: USD 30,000
Staff contribution: 15,625

Is matched/paired funding (co-funding) available from the UNICEF Country / Regional Office or some other source? *

- Yes
- No

Please specify the amount of co-funding available (in US \$). *

USD 59,625

Besides money, what are you hoping to get out from the Fund for the second phase? Select all that apply. *

RR- non grant and COVID ACT/GAVE grant (related to COVID RCCE)

1. Access to clusters of problem-solvers in other COs and startups developing similar solutions
2. Technical assistance from the Innovation Fund technical team for the development of my solution
3. Support in open-source licensing or real-time data
4. Access to mentoring from cutting-edge technology experts outside UNICEF
5. Visibility to innovative work led by the CO to attract new donors and partners
6. Other: Support from the Venture Fund's Evidence of Impact Mentor for the M&E