

Call for Proposals

COVID-19 and Women in Asia Learning from changemakers and practitioners

1. Background

The COVID-19 crisis has been disrupting many lives and is impacting the social, economic, and political conditions for the coming decade. Women across Asia have been facing diverse challenges ranging from increased loads of unpaid care work as well as increased risks of economic vulnerability and physical violence. Against this background, women – especially from the Global South – often are portrayed as victims of the crisis.

While it is true that women have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, in many cases it was also women who have led the crisis responses: For example, [Basira Popul](#) along with colleagues were distributing bars of soap and giving hygiene lessons to curb the spread of the virus when COVID-19 hit Afghanistan. [Dr. Najmah Usman](#) from Indonesia brought together mothers, teachers, community leaders and colleagues for informal community meetings to counter misinformation and provided information in local languages to make sure health protocols are understood and followed. In Nepal, [Women for Human Rights](#) opened a women-run and women-only quarantine centre, provided sanitary kits, and supported female migrants who were unable to return home with shelter.

These are only a few examples of women and their organizations leading the immediate responses during the ongoing pandemic. Their efforts range from providing masks and sanitizers to running community kitchens, fighting misinformation, supporting stranded people, creating awareness of health protocols, providing monetary assistance to those in need and other measures. Besides the immediate response, there are also many organizations that are contributing to crisis recovery. They are not only leading in identifying impacts on women but also advocate for gender-sensitive responses and recovery initiatives.

Against this background, the [Gender Justice Hub Asia](#) of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is inviting proposals of (teams of) experts and researchers to conduct a study on counter responses led by feminists and women's organizations during the pandemic, identify innovative and inspiring approaches in COVID-19 responses and extract learnings for policy makers and international organizations for future crisis responses.

The study should set out to explore how women in Asia are acting as agents of change in context of the pandemic and how they have been able to respond and support the communities they are working with. The geographic focus in the region should be with countries with FES offices/projects.

2. Purpose of the study

The study should bring together efforts and initiatives of women-led organizations in response and recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study should focus on the responses led by grass-root non-governmental organizations and domestic civil society (not international organizations). It should analyse and showcase selected responses in more depth, but also explore patterns of

women's organizations responses. In doing so, the researchers should take into consideration what these activists and organisations were able to achieve, how they got there and what has been the impact of their work. The study should also extract learnings from women's leadership experience and formulate recommendations for gender-sensitive responses and recovery.

The study will be a part of the series titled [COVID-19 crisis and women in Asia](#).

Components and length of the paper

The study should have an analytical approach to counter-responses and formulate practical recommendations. The overall length of the paper should be of **maximum 30 pages** (one page comprising approx. 3,000 characters incl. spaces). It should be accompanied by an **executive summary** (one page or less). The manuscript has to follow the FES style guide in regard to citation and formatting style, which will be provided later. Structure-wise it might include:

- A. Introduction
 - a. General overview of the topic, background on counter-responses to the pandemic in Asian countries
 - b. Description of the methodology of the study and its subsequent structure
- B. Successful and innovative approaches of women organization in response to the pandemic
 - a. Leadership (How did they lead the response? What was the driving force?)
 - b. Approaches and Innovations (What were the approaches they undertook? How was it different? What were the resources they required and how did they manage them? Did they receive any external support? What led to their success? Were there some innovative practices?)
 - c. Beneficiaries and Impacts (Who were their beneficiaries? How impactful have the responses been for the receiving communities? What has been the long-term impacts? Were they able to reduce structural inequalities in any ways?)
- C. Outlook
 - a. Insights and Learning (What learnings can be derived from their experience of working on the grounds?)
 - b. What are potential insights for support organisations from the responses? What are the needs of feminist and women's organisations regarding external support?
- D. Conclusion and policy recommendation

The paper should be addressed to a non-academic audience and serve the purpose of providing information and shaping the debate. The main target group of the study are decision-makers and opinion-makers, policymakers, and other professional circles.

3. Timeline and remuneration

- Tender and contract will be finalised **by 20th October**
- Basic outline of the research and detailed methodology to be submitted **by 30th October**
- Submission of first draft of the paper to be handed for review by **15th November**
- Submission of second draft of the paper to be submitted by **30th November**.
- Finalization of the study by **15th December**

For the project, an honorarium will be paid in two instalments:

1st instalment (40 %) upon submission of the first draft of the paper
2nd instalment (60 %) upon finalization of the study

Any expenses associated with the fulfilment of this assignment shall be borne by the contractor. If additional expenses arise in context of the organization of workshops, these might be covered by FES separately, but are subject to coordination with project team.

Required Skills and Expertise

- Proven competency in the application of feminist and gender perspectives, including a minimum of three years of working in related fields or comparative experience
- Demonstrated experience in research and writing
- At least a master's degree in gender studies, development studies or related fields of social sciences
- Fluent written and verbal communication skills in English
- Prior experience of working with an international organization is a plus
- Ability to work independently, remotely, under pressure and tight deadlines

We are committed to social justice and aspire to increase diversity among individuals, consultants, and service suppliers we are working with. Therefore, we encourage applications from people regardless of gender, religion, ethnic or caste background.

4. Application Procedure

Interested individual(s) are required to submit:

- Written **outline of the research approach and concept**, including detailed methodology, focus areas (incl. geographical focus/countries covered) and timeline (max 2 pages)
- **Financial proposal**, that includes estimated working days and expected daily/hourly fee (honorarium is subject to negotiation and local FES rates)
- **CV** indicating relevant experience and incl. at least one **writing example**

Please note costs for professional copy editing of the final manuscript, lay-outing and printing costs will be borne by FES separately.

Deadline: Please send an offer for the project alongside the required documents via email to priyanka.kapar@fesnepal.org by **11th October, 5pm CET**.

The offer must be valid until 30th October 2021.

Please note that the offers will be weighted based on the quality of proposal (40 percent), relevant experience and qualifications (30 percent) and price (30 percent).

For further information:

Priyanka Kapar

Program Officer | Gender Justice Hub Asia

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Nepal

E: priyanka.kapar@fesnepal.org

T: +977-0-9851310395

W: <https://nepal.fes.de>