



**THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION**  
**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**  
**REGIONAL IMPACT PARTNER ORGANIZATION (IPO)**  
**EASTERN AFRICA**  
**AUGUST 2024**

**ABOUT THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION**

The Mastercard Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and one of the largest foundations in the world. It works with visionary organizations to advance education and financial inclusion to enable young people in Africa and Indigenous youth in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. Established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company, the Foundation is an independent organization separate from the company, with offices in Toronto, Kigali, Accra, Nairobi, Kampala, Lagos, Dakar, and Addis Ababa. Its policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by the Foundation's Board of Directors and leadership.

**THE FOUNDATION'S WORK**

In 2018, the Mastercard Foundation launched its [Young Africa Works](#) strategy to enable 30 million young Africans to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030. Young women make up 70 percent of this target. [Young Africa Works](#) outlines the Foundation's focus on supporting solutions to the youth employment challenge - harnessing players, often across sectors, to create a supportive environment where vulnerable and marginalized young people can thrive in work and where entrepreneurs and small enterprises can succeed and grow. The Foundation implements Young Africa works through our programming platforms: **Country programs<sup>1</sup>, the Pan-African program, Education and Transitions, and Special programs.**

[Read more about the Foundation.](#)

**THE FOUNDATION'S APPROACH TO IMPACT**

The Foundation's innovative and pioneering [Impact Strategy](#), adopted in 2020, has inspired the Foundation to conceive of monitoring and evaluation differently from conventional funder approaches. It advances a holistic yet practical approach to impact at the mission, strategy,

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<sup>1</sup> Country programs focus on prioritized countries, namely: Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) region.



program portfolio and partnership initiative levels. It encourages innovative, systems-informed approaches to understanding and working towards transformative impact, from individual to systems level. It commits the Foundation to go beyond measuring outputs to measuring outcomes, and in doing so, in a manner that elevates the voice of young women and men in determining what sustainable and transformative change means to them, their families, their communities, and societies.

Implementing partners conduct monitoring, measurement and evaluation activities relevant to their program. These activities serve various purposes, including systematic tracking of change and progress towards outcomes and impacts, understanding the potential to scale and fostering lessons learned and generating evidence to guide programming, strategy, and investment decisions. Additionally, the Impact Strategy provides independent evaluations, nuanced data systems for monitoring and impact reporting, evidence synthesis and support for the design and assessment of outcome-focused investments and portfolios.

Impact Partner Organizations (IPOs) support the work of the Impact Team, playing long-term strategic advisory, reviews, assessment, evaluation, and technical roles across the work of the Foundation programming platforms. Each IPO comprises an evaluative research organization/company or consortium of organizations/companies.

The Foundation is seeking Regional IPOs to support **Country Program Platforms across East Africa, which includes Country Programs in Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda.** Further information on Country Programs is available here: <https://mastercardfdn.org/our-work/where-we-work-in-africa/>

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE: THE EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR AN IMPACT PARTNER ORGANIZATION (IPO)**

The Mastercard Foundation seeks the services of a highly capable, versatile, and innovative IPO that can support the impact work across the Foundation's Country Program Platforms for up to three (3) years.

It is expected that a consortium rather than one organization will fulfill the wide range of impact services and relevant specialized skills required. The IPO should be able to cover wide geographic locations at a regional level. The IPO should be an African-led organization<sup>2</sup>. In the case of a consortium, the lead organization should be an African institution.

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<sup>2</sup> Criteria for classification as an African- led organization (must meet all four):

1. The organization is incorporated and registered under the laws of an Africa country.
2. The organization has its principal place of business in Africa.
3. The organization is not controlled or governed by, nor is the decision-making power held by, a foreign entity or an individual/individuals who are not citizens/permanent residents of the region.
4. The organization has a primarily African board and/or is led by an individual/individuals originating from an African state.



The IPOs will support the Foundation's impact work in two core areas:

**Program support** – strategic design towards impact, including MEL framework design, Theory of Change (ToC) development and learning agendas.

**Impact technical delivery** includes impact measurement and evaluations, including baselines, strategic/ programmatic reviews, data quality assurance, quarterly and annual impact reporting, impact innovation work, and impact capacity strengthening.

The IPO will play a strategic advisory role as well as a technical role. It will provide rigorous and independent advice and evidence to contribute to the Foundation's decision-making and adaptive management processes. It is expected to be a thought partner in framing and detailing the work, with a good understanding of systems and transformation concepts and practices and the use of the mission-relevant lenses of sustainability, equity, inclusion, resilience, and youth-centred work.

The IPO will be flexible, able to adapt to changing issues and circumstances, and demonstrate values that resonate with those of the Foundation; we want to work with technically qualified organizations that are passionate, creative, and principled and who will constructively challenge the Foundation and the impact/evaluation field.

The IPO will focus on impact-related work at the following levels:

1. *Ecosystem level.* Assessing the contribution of the Foundation's initiatives in transforming relevant systems and sectors for young women and young men to thrive in and shape economies and societies that are equitable, resilient, and sustainable.
2. *Strategy or operating model level.* Assessing the effectiveness of chosen strategies and operating models in achieving objectives and outcomes relative to need – including the need for the realization of scalable and sustainable impact through large-scale systems-oriented and transformative change.
3. *Portfolio level.* Assessing the effectiveness of portfolios<sup>3</sup> of investments in relevant thematic areas, including the strategic choices made and the collective contributions of the portfolio to scalable and sustainable impact.

The IPO is generally not involved in monitoring individual investments or initiatives, this is done by the implementing partner. However, the IPO can be helpful during the program's initial setup phase (co-creation or inception) by assisting partners in developing their MEL/Impact frameworks and learning agenda and advising on the same. Additionally, the IPO may be called upon periodically to review specific partnerships, assessing their achievements, risks, and potential for scaling up.

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<sup>3</sup> Portfolios are designed towards the delivery of shared **higher-level outcomes** which guide programming across the Foundation, The Foundation has selected 7 outcome themes to strengthen a shared focus towards **systemic change at scale**: Market opportunities, financial inclusion, tech solutions, skilled and capable young people, organizational effectiveness, institutional environments, youth rights, inclusion, and voice.

The Foundation is recruiting three (3) Regional IPO/ IPO consortia who will be retained and called upon, or assigned, to support different Impact-related assignments within each of the designated Regions. For each high-level assignment, there will be a Scope of Work (SoW) issued, and in response, the IPO will develop an inception note to align on the scope, required expertise/ team, duration of assignment and budget for approval prior to commencing the work. All work will be done under supervision and with the help of Impact Team members. Adjustments in responsibilities, priorities and approaches may be necessary; flexibility in the IPO approach to its work is therefore important. An outline of potential assignments for each of the functions is provided below.

## **A) Program support.**

### **1. Strategic design towards Impact.**

*Strengthening the change logic.* Facilitate the development of/ review and/or validation of theories of change at Country/Thematic strategy, portfolio and/or initiative level.

*Strengthening outcomes and measurement frameworks:* Develop MEL frameworks at the Country strategy and thematic program platform level; Support individual programs in the design, development, and review of MEL (Monitoring Evaluation and Learning) frameworks and learning agendas to ensure clear plans, tools and templates for tracking and reporting on impact.

*Supporting impact planning:* Development of impact measurement and reporting plans for the different strategies and programs that deliver appropriate baselines, semi-annual outcomes monitoring and an annual impact assessment report.

*Advise on intervention design:* Provide evidence-based advice on the most synergistic and catalytic areas for investment, keeping in mind systems and complexity principles, as well as progress and development trajectories over time as the contexts evolve.

## **B) Impact technical delivery**

### **1. Impact measurement and evaluations**

*Deepen engagement with systems and transformative change:* Provide advice on feasible frameworks and measurement approaches, informed by insights about systems change and transformative impact in this thematic area.

*Provide a range of evaluation services:* Services will include conducting baselines, strategic/programmatic reviews or evaluations, developmental evaluations, rapid reviews of components of initiatives such as strategies, business models, scaling strategies, partnership management, etc. These reviews and evaluations will contribute to the evidence used by the Foundation to take programming, strategy, and investment decisions.

*Help assure data and reporting quality:* undertake verification and data quality assessments (DQA) to ensure data collected and reported by partners are in line with the (data) quality



assurance requirements of the Mastercard Foundation, and that the impact system provides quality learnings.

*Facilitate adaptive management and impact reporting for learning and accountability.* Support or conduct quarterly/annual impact monitoring of progress to support adaptive management, facilitate learning and sense making processes and produce a summative Annual Impact Report of the initiatives and/or portfolio - highlighting the Foundation's contributions to the broader landscape, and determining whether and how the model used contributes to the improvement of the lives of young people in a sustainable, equitable and resilient way.

## **2. Field building**

*Apply a decolonization lens on Impact design and implementation.* Provide advice, in consultation with the relevant Impact team specialist on Made in Africa Evaluation, on how to ensure a decolonization lens on implementation and measurement. The IPOs should be able to strengthen Indigenous ways of evaluation and African realities in evaluation.

*Strengthening the field of evaluation in Africa.* Foster young impact leaders. Implement an initiative as part of the Impact Team's Young Impact Associates Program to identify, train and mentor Young Impact Associates in relevant Impact work (impact monitoring, evaluations, annual impact reporting) in a manner that is inspiring and motivating for young professionals and may become a relevant professional opportunity for them, participate with other IPOs in reviewing progress and lessons learned from the young impact associate program.

*Strengthening evaluation practice of the Foundation.* Provide advice on new and emerging practices, such as foresight/future thinking and transformative evaluation, and support the Foundation to integrate practices enabling the Foundation to realize impact.

## **3. Special Impact Work**

*Real-time evaluation.* Support real-time/ dynamic evaluation to facilitate complex, innovative programs to learn in real-time from key successes and challenges and make timely decisions to course correct and improve the achievement of outcomes.

*Support convenings.* Support and participate in special impact-related convenings of stakeholders as well as annual partner forums aimed at sharing results and lessons.

*Support the co-creation of youth narratives.* Advance the use of quantitative and especially qualitative data in analytics to generate reporting that elevates narrative as a critical way of understanding the life journeys of young (entrepreneurial) women and men.

Implement other special impact tasks that may be requested by the Foundation at short notice.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION**

The Foundation is keen to hear from African-led firms, organizations, and consortia with a strong interest and deeply demonstrated experience and capabilities to take on the abovementioned responsibilities. The consortium can be African or a combination of African and non-African organizations, however, the consortium lead should be an African-led organization, this requires meeting all four of the following criteria:



- Principal place of business is in Africa.
- Incorporated and registered under the laws of an African country.
- A primarily African board and/or is led by a citizen of an African country.
- Not controlled or governed by, or with decision-making power held by a foreign entity or an individual(s) who are not citizens or permanent residents on the continent.

This section highlights the minimum requirements for selection.

### 1. Experience in, and knowledge of the context.

- i. Considerable Regional reach, with demonstrations of relevant work across the Countries located within the specific Region to which the IPO is applying.
- ii. Deep understanding of:
  - The Foundation's thematic and cross-cutting program pillars (which include Agri-Food & Climate systems, Digital Economy, Education, Entrepreneurship, Gender, and Financial Inclusion) as pertain to youth employment in the formal and informal sectors in Africa:
    - Entrepreneurship development, including financial and non-financial interventions and factors for an enabling ecosystem. Comprehensive knowledge of the financial landscape in Sub-Saharan Africa, including the challenges and opportunities presented by Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), Financial Technology Companies (Fintech's), and Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs). Expertise with Financial instruments, including guarantee financing tools, and a deep understanding of the role of these tools in increasing access to finance in sectors of interest.
    - Agriculture and Agri-Food systems, the influence of climate change, market systems, small scale farmers and employment in the sector.
    - Digital Economy influences in the space, market landscape, ecosystem players, and youth employment in the formal and informal sectors in Africa - and how this connects with trends in the rest of the world.
    - Gender transformative approaches and addressing systemic barriers to entrepreneurship and workforce development for young women.
    - Education systems and programming including: Knowledge of higher education, technology for education, TVET, and education innovation in Africa and globally; and demonstrated experience working within education systems in Africa in a research and evaluation capacity, with an understanding of institutional and systemic constraints and opportunities.
  - The Regional Context, including global trends and risks that influence the Region, as well as the roles played by the private and public sectors, along with other stakeholders.
  - Resilience framing at individual, societal and systems levels.
  - The dynamics of dignified and fulfilling work for young people.

- Meaningfully engaging diverse young people in youth-focused development efforts

## 2. Strategic and technical expertise

### i. Considerable experience in:

- Strategy design, monitoring, evaluation and learning across the different thematic areas and program platforms highlighted in this REOI.
- Designing, implementing, and adapting impact monitoring and measurement systems and tools, incorporating in practice aspects such as Responsible Data Standards, data equity standards and gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI).
- Technical knowledge and methodological expertise in a wide range of evaluation approaches and methods, including the evaluation of complex programs and indigenous evaluation.
- Strategic management, framing, political positioning and influencing strategies.
- Leading and facilitating the development of theories of change aimed at shifting systems towards transformative change.
- Stakeholder Engagement and Participatory Approaches: Strong skills in engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders, including mandated institutions in the sectors of interest, public, private sector actors, program participants, and other partners. This entails using participatory tools and processes to foster a culture of learning and adaptability, essential for the program's success.
- Designing learning agendas and collectively engaging in sense-making that can inform adaptive management.
- Systems-informed impact measurement and evaluation

## 3. Capacity development

### i. Demonstrated experience in:

- Strengthening capacities in systems innovation
- Designing and facilitating training and coaching, especially for young evaluators and other sector players who may not traditionally understand broader impact concepts or approaches to systems innovation.

## 4. Communications and reporting

### i. Executive-level communication reporting to Boards and Executive Teams, as well as technical and programmatic communication

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## 5. Management and leadership



Considerable experience (15 years or more), especially in the case of the proposed consortium leader(s), in working in and/or managing a consortium of similar configuration.

## 6. MANAGEMENT AND IPO REPORTING

An assigned senior Impact team member will manage the IPO's day-to-day work and collaborate with various impact team members depending on the specific assignment. The selected IPOs will become part of a network of IPOs working across the foundation.

### HOW TO RESPOND TO THE REOI

If you have an interested organization or consortium and you are motivated by the exciting and challenging impact work of the Foundation, please send us an EOI of no more than 10 pages providing details (using links where available) outlining the following:

1. Briefly describe the organization or consortium capacity and experience that meets the abovementioned requirements.
2. Specify the proposed coordinating/managing organization and other consortium partners (if relevant) and their roles; Specify the type of organizations for all consortia partners.
3. Provide a Risk Analysis and Mitigation Framework: This indicates a plan to identify potential risks associated with the consortium and strategies to address them.
4. Provide 3-5 sample bios of staff who have led relevant strategic level and technical impact/monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) work.
5. Provide examples of work in areas similar to the required IPO services, including short descriptions of relevant strategic level and technical impact/MEL assignments (landscape and technical level) undertaken, descriptions of geographic experience and presence; with links to copies of reports or summaries, and/or permission to contact your clients to ask for references about this work.
6. Brief insight into your approach to strategic level and technical impact/MEL assignments and any preferred methods. We are interested in seeing where your practice and passion lie on a continuum from core traditional approaches to newer impact/MEL approaches and innovations. All relevant experiences and skills are valued and will be useful, so please speak to your core expertise, passion, and interests.

We will conduct an information session during the third week of August 2024 to answer questions regarding this REOI and the relevant program platforms. An online invitation link will be sent to all interested organizations. In the meantime, you may send any questions to [RegionallImpactPartnerOrganization@MASTERCARDFDN.ORG](mailto:RegionallImpactPartnerOrganization@MASTERCARDFDN.ORG) with the subject line: 'Question on Regional IPO REOI.'

Please send your Expression of Interest (EOI) with the subject line "EOI Regional IPO [Specifying the Region to which you are applying] by **September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, COB Eastern Africa Time (EAT)** to [RegionallImpactPartnerOrganization@MASTERCARDFDN.ORG](mailto:RegionallImpactPartnerOrganization@MASTERCARDFDN.ORG)





We intend to meet and interview qualified consortia in October to select an IPO. The selected IPO will be expected to begin work in **January 1st 2025**, so please consider this in your responses.

All materials sent to the Foundation will be kept confidential, and we will not use the materials in any way other than to help us understand your expertise and interest.