CENTRE FOR CATALYZING CHANGE (C3)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

(RFP)

Livelihoods and Care Economy: A Rapid Assessment of Livelihood Opportunities for Women in the Rajeevika Network across Eight Implementation Districts of Rajasthan

RFP Reference No.	
Date of Issue	
Submission Deadline	22.11.2026, 8:00 PM IST
Issuing Organization	Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3)
Assignment Type	Qualitative exploratory study (rapid assessment)
Implementation Geography	Alwar, Dausa, Kota, Rajsamand, Udaipur, Dungarpur, Pratapgarh, Ajmer- Rajasthan

1. Invitation to Agencies

The Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3) invites proposals from qualified research organizations to conduct a qualitative, exploratory rapid assessment of livelihood opportunities available to women in the Rajeevika network across eight implementation districts of Rajasthan. This should include an examination of the care economy through the lens of unpaid care acting as a critical barrier shaping women's ability to participate in, sustain and benefit from livelihoods; an examination of structural investments in expanding equitable care systems, provisions and gender responsive infrastructure; and care services as an emerging avenue for women's employment and income generation with**.** the potential of the care economy to absorb women workers.

The selected agency will examine the livelihood opportunities that women in Rajeevika-supported self-help groups (SHGs) and federations can access today, the enablers, challenges, and barriers including unpaid domestic care work that shape their access to these opportunities, and whether there is both potential and unmet need within the care economy to create decent work for them. The study will be contextualized to Rajasthan and grounded in an intersectional lens. Organizations with proven expertise in qualitative and gender research, women's economic empowerment, and field research in rural Rajasthan are invited to submit their technical and financial proposals in accordance with this Request for Proposal (RFP).

2. Introduction & Organizational Context

Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3) is a not for profit organization that improves the lives of women and girls in India. Through local partnerships and programs, C3's proven approach to development gives women, young girls and boys the tools they need to improve their lives, as well as that of their families and communities.

In Rajasthan, C3 partners with the Rajasthan State Rural Livelihood Mission (Rajeevika), to strengthen women's collectives and expand members' access to economic opportunities through strategies that are underpinned in transforming gender social norms that impact women adversely.

Women in India have a limited share of financial opportunities, independence and decision-making powers, while shouldering a disproportionate share of unpaid childcare, eldercare, domestic work and care for persons with disabilities. This "invisible" labour constrains their participation in education, skilling, paid employment, entrepreneurship and leadership.

At the same time, the care economy, spanning childcare, eldercare, care for persons with disabilities and chronic illness, and related community health and nutrition services, is increasingly recognized as a sector that can both generate employment for women and reduce the burden of unpaid care work that limits women's participation in paid work. C3 is commissioning this rapid assessment to generate grounded evidence on the situation of

all these dimensions and to inform its women's economic empowerment strategy going forward.

3. Study Goal, Objectives and Key Questions

3.1 Goal

To generate contextualized, intersectional evidence on the livelihood opportunities available to women who are part of the Rajeevika network across eight implementation districts of Rajasthan, and on the potential of various livelihood streams to absorb women workers and entrepreneurs, in order to inform strategies and recommendations for C3 and its partners.

3.2 Objectives

- Map the livelihood opportunities (farm, non-farm, enterprise, wage employment, and scheme-linked) currently available to and pursued by women in the Rajeevika network across the eight districts.
- Identify the enablers, challenges, and barriers that women face in accessing, sustaining, and growing these opportunities.
- Assess the constraints posed by women's unpaid care and domestic responsibilities on their participation in livelihoods and paid work; identify policy priorities and institutional mechanisms required to strengthen availability and accessibility of care services; and assess the potential of the care economy to generate employment opportunities for women.
- Analyze how experiences of access and exclusion differ across social groups and geographies, using an intersectional lens.
- Develop actionable recommendations and strategic options for C3, Rajeevika, and other stakeholders going forward.

3.3 Indicative Research Questions

Agencies are expected to refine the following questions during the inception phase:

- **Livelihood landscape:** What livelihood opportunities are available to women in the Rajeevika network in each district, and which are women actually taking up? How do these vary across districts and agro-climatic or socio-economic contexts?
- **Enablers and barriers:** What individual, household, community, market, and institutional factors enable or constrain women's access to these opportunities (e.g., skills, mobility, social norms, unpaid care responsibilities, access to credit, assets, markets, information, and government schemes)?
- **Care economy demand and Institutional Framework:** What is the nature and scale of unmet need for care services (childcare, eldercare, disability and illness care) in the target communities? How are these needs currently met, and by whom? What gaps exist in the existing public and community-based care infrastructure, service delivery mechanisms and institutional arrangements? What policy and institutional measures are needed to develop an accessible, affordable, quality and gender-responsive care services framework?
- **Care economy supply and readiness:** Are women in the network interested in, and positioned to take up, paid care work? What skills, certification, institutional models (e.g., SHG- or federation-run care enterprises, crèches), and financing would be needed for care work to offer decent and sustainable livelihoods? What opportunities exist for linking women's collectives with public care service delivery systems and emerging market demand for care services?
- **Intersectionality:** How do caste, religion, age, marital status, disability, landholding, education, and migration status shape women's livelihood options and their position within the care economy?
- **Way forward:** Which strategies, partnerships, and policy linkages hold the most promise for expanding decent livelihood opportunities for women?

4. Scope of Work / Services Required

Agencies are expected to propose a methodology that addresses all of the following components:

4.1 Inception and Study Design

- Inception meeting with C3 (and Rajeevika, as appropriate) to confirm study scope, research questions, and district-level priorities.
- Rapid desk review of relevant literature, programme documents, Rajeevika data, and policy frameworks relating to women's livelihoods, unpaid care responsibilities, and the care economy including public and community-based care services and institutional frameworks in Rajasthan and India.
- Finalization of the study design, sampling approach, and site selection across the eight districts, ensuring representation of diverse geographies and social groups.
- Development of qualitative tools (e.g., FGD guides, KII guides, participatory tools, case-study templates) in Hindi, with local dialect support where needed, and pre-testing of tools.
- Submission of an inception report including the study design, tools, sampling frame, fieldwork plan, ethics and safeguarding protocol, and data management plan.

4.2 Qualitative Data Collection

The agency will conduct qualitative fieldwork across all eight districts. Indicative respondent categories include:

- Women SHG members, including women from marginalized groups and those not currently engaged in paid work.
- VO and CLF leaders, community resource persons, and other community cadres.
- Rajeevika staff at state, district, and block levels.
- Existing paid care workers and care providers (e.g., anganwadi workers, ASHAs, crèche workers, private or informal caregivers).
- Households with care needs (young children, older persons, persons with disabilities or chronic illness).
- Employers, market actors, training providers, and private sector or social enterprises in livelihoods and care.
- Government officials and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., Panchayati Raj Institutions, Women and Child Development, Skill Development, and Social Justice departments).
- Men and other family members, where relevant, to understand household-level norms and decision-making.

Agencies should propose an appropriate mix of methods (e.g., FGDs, in-depth interviews, KIIs, participatory exercises such as livelihood and care mapping or daily time-use exercises, and case studies), along with a justified sample size per district.

4.3 Analysis, Reporting and Recommendations

- Systematic qualitative analysis (e.g., thematic analysis using a coding framework agreed with C3), disaggregated by district and social group wherever possible.
- Presentation of preliminary findings to C3 (and Rajeevika, as appropriate) for validation and feedback.
- Preparation of a draft and final report with findings and recommendations for strategies going forward.

4.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Responsibilities

- Finalize the study design and tools in consultation with C3.
- Recruit, train, and supervise a field team with appropriate language skills and gender balance, including training on research ethics, consent, and safeguarding.
- Secure ethics approval from a recognized ethics review board, if required, before fieldwork begins.
- Conduct fieldwork across all eight districts, maintain data quality, and manage data securely.
- Analyze data and prepare all deliverables listed in Section 6.

C3 Responsibilities

- Provide relevant programme background, documents, and available data.
- Facilitate introductions and coordination with Rajeevika at state, district, and block levels.
- Review and provide timely feedback on the inception report, tools, and draft deliverables.

5. Technical & Methodological Expectations

Considering the operational realities of rural Rajasthan and the rapid nature of this assessment, agencies must propose practical, rigorous, and locally grounded approaches that address the following:

- **Intersectionality Lens:** Design sampling, tools, and analysis to capture how gender intersects with caste, tribe, religion, age, marital status, disability, landholding, education, and migration status, and ensure the voices of the most marginalized women are included.
- **Contextualization to Rajasthan:** Account for district-level diversity (e.g., desert, tribal, and agrarian regions), local social norms around women's mobility and work, seasonal migration, and the existing scheme and institutional landscape.
- **Rigour within a Rapid Design:** Propose a design that is feasible within the rapid timeframe while maintaining methodological rigour, including a clear sampling rationale, saturation logic, and quality assurance processes.
- **Participatory and Care-Sensitive Fieldwork:** Use participatory methods and schedule fieldwork around women's paid and unpaid work responsibilities, so that participation does not add an undue burden.
- **Localization:** Ensure all tools and community-facing materials are available in simple Hindi, with local language/dialect support where required.
- **Ethics, Consent and Safeguarding:** Establish clear protocols for informed consent, confidentiality, data protection, and referral pathways for any disclosures of violence or distress arising during fieldwork.

6. Key Deliverables & Outcomes

The selected agency will be responsible for delivering the following key outputs:

- **Inception Report:** Including refined research questions, study design, sampling plan, fieldwork plan, ethics and safeguarding protocol, and data management plan.
- **Finalized Research Tools:** Pre-tested qualitative tools in Hindi (and local dialects where relevant), with English versions.
- **Fieldwork Completion Note and Data Set:** A summary of fieldwork completed against the sampling plan, along with anonymized transcripts/notes and the coding framework.
- **Preliminary Findings Presentation:** A presentation of emerging findings to C3 (and Rajeevika, as appropriate) for validation.
- **Final Report with Findings and Recommendations:** A comprehensive report presenting district-wise and cross-cutting findings on livelihood opportunities, enablers and barriers, and the care economy, including the implications of unpaid care responsibilities for women's economic participation, gaps and opportunities in public and community-based care services, and the potential for creating decent and sustainable livelihoods for women in the care sector. Findings should be analyzed through an intersectional lens, with clear recommendations for strategies going forward. The report should include an executive summary and short case studies.

Agencies should propose realistic and clearly defined quality standards for each deliverable. Any limitations of a rapid qualitative design (e.g., non-generalizability of findings) should be explicitly identified, along with how they will be mitigated.

7. Agency Eligibility Criteria

To be considered, vendors (or vendor consortia/partnerships) must be able to demonstrate:

- Registration as a legal entity in India (Section 8 company or private limited company) with at least three years of operating history. We do not accept proposals from NGO's and Organisations which are registered under FCRA.
- Demonstrated prior experience in qualitative and/or mixed-methods research on at least one of: women's economic empowerment and livelihoods, the care economy, gender and social inclusion, or SRLM/NRLM programmes.
- Field capacity to operate across multiple districts of Rajasthan, including Hindi-speaking (and, where relevant, local-dialect-speaking) field researchers, with women researchers on the team.
- A safeguarding policy and research ethics protocol, or willingness to adopt C3's safeguarding requirements.
- A sound financial management and statutory compliance track record, evidenced through audited financial statements for the last two years.

Consortia and partnerships (e.g., a research/technical lead paired with an organization providing field operations in Rajasthan) are welcome and should clearly describe the division of responsibility between partners.

8. Proposal Submission & Evaluation Criteria

Interested organizations are requested to submit their technical and financial proposals as separate files. Full submission instructions, including the deadline and designated e-mail address, are set out in Section 11.

8.1 Technical Proposal

The technical proposal must include:

- Understanding of the assignment, including the context of women's livelihoods and the care economy in Rajasthan.
- Organizational profile and relevant experience, including at least [two] references from comparable prior assignments.
- Proposed study design and methodology, including research questions, sampling strategy and sample size per district, data collection methods, and the approach to applying an intersectionality lens.
- Data analysis and quality assurance approach.
- Team composition and CVs of key personnel, clearly identifying the research lead responsible for technical quality and the person responsible for field management.
- Work plan and timeline, mapped to the milestones in Section 10.
- Ethics, consent, data protection, and safeguarding protocol.
- A clear statement of scope limitations — what the proposed budget and timeline can and cannot deliver — rather than open-ended promises.

8.2 Financial Proposal

The Financial Proposal shall include:

- A detailed, itemized budget covering all cost components, including personnel, tool development and translation, field team training, fieldwork, travel and accommodation, respondent-related costs, transcription and translation, analysis, reporting, ethics review (if applicable), contingency, and organizational overheads.
- A clear justification for each budget line, specifying the basis of cost estimation (e.g., unit costs, daily rates, person-days, and quantities) and the underlying assumptions related to project scope (e.g., number of districts, sites, FGDs, and interviews).
- Organizational overheads must be presented as a separate budget line and shall not exceed [10]% of the total project cost.

8.3 Format

- Technical proposal: maximum [15] pages, excluding CVs and annexures.
- Financial proposal: submitted as a separate document/sheet.
- Proposals must remain valid for [90] days from the submission deadline.

9. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in two stages. Technical proposals will be scored first; only vendors scoring at least 70 out of 100 on the technical evaluation will have their financial proposals opened and scored. The final ranking will combine technical and financial scores using a 70:30 weighting.

Technical Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Max. Score
Organizational experience and track record in qualitative research on women's livelihoods, the care economy, and/or gender in Rajasthan	20%	20
Soundness and appropriateness of proposed study design and methodology, including sampling and the intersectionality lens	30%	30
Qualifications and relevant experience of proposed key personnel	20%	20
Work plan, timeline realism, and field operations capacity across eight districts	15%	15
Approach to analysis, quality assurance, and generating actionable recommendations	10%	10
Ethics, consent, data protection, and safeguarding protocol	5%	5
Technical Score Subtotal	**100%**	**100**

Financial proposals from technically qualified vendors will be scored on a value-for-money basis — the lowest responsive, compliant cost receives the highest financial score, with other compliant bids scored proportionally against it — weighted at 30% of the final combined score.

10. Indicative Project Timeline

The assignment is slated to commence upon vendor selection and contract finalization. Given the rapid nature of the assessment, the total duration is expected to be approximately 6 weeks. Exact milestones will be confirmed during contract negotiation; an indicative phasing is set out below [durations to be finalized]:

Phase	Key Activities & Deliverables
Phase 1: Inception	Inception meeting; signing of formal agreement; desk review; finalization of study design, sampling, and site selection; tool development and pre-testing; ethics approval (if required); submission of inception report.
Phase 2: Fieldwork	Training of field team; qualitative data collection across the eight districts; fieldwork monitoring and quality checks; submission of fieldwork completion note.
Phase 3: Analysis	Transcription and translation; coding and thematic analysis; presentation of preliminary findings to C3 for validation.
Phase 4: Reporting	Submission of draft report; incorporation of feedback; submission of final report with findings and recommendations, and project completion documentation.

11. Submission Instructions

- Submit to: procurement@c3india.org
- Subject line: "Proposal for Livelihoods and Care Economy Rapid Assessment – [Agency Name]"
- Deadline: 22.11.2026, 8:00 PM IST. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.
- Queries: Written questions only, submitted by 17.11.2026 to the e-mail address above. Responses will be circulated to all agencies who have expressed interest, to keep the process fair and transparent.
- Contact for this assignment: State Head – Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3), Jaipur, Rajasthan.

12. General Terms & Conditions

- This RFP does not commit C3 to award a contract. C3 reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, or to cancel this process at any stage, without assigning a reason.
- C3 is not liable for any costs incurred by an agency in preparing or submitting a proposal, including presentation costs.
- All information shared by C3 in connection with this RFP, and all proposal content submitted by the agency, will be treated as confidential by both parties.
- The selected agency will be required to comply with C3's safeguarding policy and the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013, and to ensure all field staff are appropriately screened.
- The selected agency will be required to agree a data-protection and consent protocol consistent with the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, prior to any fieldwork involving participant or community data.
- The agency must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest in its proposal.
- The final scope, budget, and duration will be confirmed with the selected agency during contract negotiation and may vary from the indicative parameters in this RFP.
- Intellectual Property: All tools, data, transcripts, analyses, reports, and other materials generated during this assignment shall remain the sole intellectual property of C3. The agency may not publish or present findings without C3's prior written approval.
- Personnel Continuity: The vendor must guarantee that the proposed technical leads will be personally available and accountable for the full duration of the assignment, without unilateral substitutions.