PROJECT SUMMARY

Ref No.: MRIC/SISM-SG-2303	**Title:** Social Innovation Lab - Empowering Women-Led Innovation through Design Thinking Skills Labs
Local Association: Ripple Association	
Project Leader	
Ms Djemillah Mourade Peerbux	Ripple Association

TECHNICAL ABSTRACT

Design Thinking is a versatile tool for innovation. From problem solving to discovering new opportunities in any area, this proven method uses a "human-centered" or people-oriented approach. It is rooted in the belief that innovative solutions emerge from the understanding of people's needs. By encouraging creativity, empathy, and experimentation, it becomes a valuable tool for grassroots women-led initiatives and businesses. It allows them to develop innovative solutions to complex challenges that are tailored to the unique needs and experiences of their target users. The proposed project is the setting up of a Social Innovation Lab for women-led grassroot initiatives that will conduct a series of interactive skills labs designed to provide participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to implement design thinking methodologies within their organizations. The Social Innovation Lab will help to ensure that the solutions developed are relevant, meaningful, and effective in addressing the specific needs of their communities. Additionally, design thinking emphasizes experimentation and iteration, allowing women-led initiatives to test and refine their solutions in a low-risk environment. This approach can help to build confidence and skills, as well as promote a culture of innovation and collaboration. Despite the significant contributions of women-led initiatives to social, economic, and environmental development, women remain underrepresented in innovation. Women-led initiatives often face systemic barriers to accessing resources and opportunities. These unique challenges and barriers hinder their ability to innovate, grow, and sustain their work. It includes a lack of innovation and providing services and products that meet a saturated market. This disparity is particularly pronounced for grassroots women-led initiatives which also lack the resources and support necessary to scale their impact. By prioritizing user-centeredness and empathy, design thinking can help women-led initiatives identify and address the root causes of complex challenges, resulting in more effective and impactful solutions. Additionally, the workshops will provide networking and collaboration opportunities for women-led initiatives, fostering a sense of community and support that is often lacking in the social impact space. Overall, this project is a critical step toward creating a more equitable and inclusive economy, where women-led initiatives have the resources and support necessary to drive creative and impactful solutions. The project will help to build stronger, more resilient communities by empowering women-led initiatives to develop

solutions that are relevant and meaningful to their communities. By using a human-centered approach, the solutions developed will be more likely to be sustainable and effective in the long term. Supporting women-led initiatives will help to build a more inclusive and equitable society where women have an equal voice and opportunities. The Social Innovation Skills Lab will be providing a structured framework and a supportive community to promote the success and sustainability of women-led grassroots initiatives.

Key Words: Design thinking, social innovation lab, women-led initiatives