

## **Request for quotation, Technical specifications Women's Business Development Consultant**

### **Project background**

The project "Women agripreneurs for food security: resilience and development of the food system in crisis in the Gaza Strip" implemented by the Italian Association for Women in development (AIDOS) in partnership with the *Gaza Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Platform* (GUPAP) aims to improve food security and living conditions of vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip by combining emergency, development and gender approach.

Its specific objectives are : to improve the nutritional status of vulnerable households in the Gaza Strip through food distribution and awareness raising on adequate nutrition; to improve the resilience and sustainability of urban agribusinesses run by women by supporting their production, promoting their rights and role in society and socio-economic development of the country, and strengthening their management capacities; to strengthen the capacity of GUPAP in promoting the development and resilience of women entrepreneurs and vulnerable communities. For a more information on the project see **Annex 1 – Project fact sheet**.

### **Service to be provided**

Reinforce the capacities of GUPAP team supporting women agri-preneurs in the efficient, business-oriented and gender-sensitive management of their enterprises.

### **Detailed description of the tasks**

1. Assess the technical skills, competences, experience and potentials of the local project staff and identify their needs for training and technical assistance.
2. Collect and analyse existing information on GUPAP supported agri-preneurs (through focus groups with local partner) with the objectives of: a) assessing their knowledge base on gender issues in women's agro-entrepreneurship, and b) identifying gender barriers affecting women's labour market participation, access to technologies and resources such as lack of mobility, limited knowledge of agricultural practices, time scarcity, limited access to inputs, discriminatory legislation.
3. With a view to favour equal participation of women along the production cycle and with different levels of responsibility, conduct a gender-sensitive review of the training package and information materials used by the partner aimed at **thoroughly integrating the gender component** into its program and in the following subjects a) environmental, social and economic impact of agricultural production, d) economic feasibility; e) organic farming and health dimension of safe production and nutrition. The training content will pay specific attention to the gender-based constraints preventing women from effectively planning and managing their enterprises. The training materials shall be produced in English.
4. Develop and deliver a training program addressed to the local partner staff in order to raise awareness and increase knowledge of gender inequalities in the sector of women's agribusiness and possible strategies to address them in order to foster their effective participation.
5. Conduct follow-up visits to project sites to appraise existing challenges, review of supported enterprises strategy and performance, verify whether they refer to gender-based constraints and advise the local partner on ways to address them.

### **Duration of the assignment**

March 15, 2023 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024 for approximately 50 consulting days, including at least 1 mission of about 8-10 days in the Gaza Strip. Partners, together with the consultant, might assess the opportunity to organize a second mission if needed.

### **Expected deliverables**

Assessment of the skills, competences, experience and potentials of GUPAP in supporting and training women agripreneurs and of the supported women agripreneurs with the objective of a) assessing their knowledge base on gender issues in women's agro-entrepreneurship, and b) identifying gender barriers affecting women's labour market participation, access to technologies and resources such as lack of mobility, limited knowledge of agricultural practices, time scarcity, limited access to inputs, discriminatory legislation

1. Review of the partner's training package and training materials with a gender-responsive approach.
2. Development and delivery of a training program for GUPAP staff. The expert(s) will present the revised training package and techniques to the partner, who will replicate the training in the target areas. Approximately 8-10 days in Gaza
3. Ad hoc technical assistance and capacity building on business development services, business planning / counselling, training, marketing assistance, specialist support to project methodology, management systems and work-planning
4. Development of lessons learned and recommendation for partners and donor.

#### **Tentative schedule**

Phase 1: Project start-up and strengthening of the local partner  
Phase 2:

Strengthening women entrepreneurs

Phase 3: Food distribution

Phase 4: Information and networking

The consultant(s) will be involved in the 4 phases of the project with different commitment, tentatively more intensive in phase 1 (needs assessment, preparation and field delivery of training and training materials, review of GUPAP training and information materials); in phases 2 and 3 the consultant(s) may be involved for on-demand technical assistance depending on the needs identified by AIDOS and/ or GUPAP during project implementation; and finally again her/his expertise will be requested to contribute to the exchange of experiences and lessons learned during phase

#### **Required Skills and Experience**

- University degree in business administration and/or economics or similar disciplines
- Proven experience in implementing similar tasks
- Previous work experience in developing countries and/or in emergency contexts preferably in the Middle East
- Expertise and experience on gender and multicultural approaches
- Proficient English (written and spoken)
- Knowledge of Arabic is an asset
- Excellent communication and interaction skills
- Spirit of adaptation, flexibility, autonomy

The profile is completed by strong motivation for the association's mission, to work in development/emergency projects.

Knowledge of the approach and experience of AIDOS to women's micro-entrepreneurship development is an advantage. See *Promoting women-led small-scale enterprises. Practices and lessons from business incubators and support centres in developing countries.*

#### **Payment terms**

The payment terms will be agreed based on milestones to be set at the finalization of the contract.

#### **How to apply**

The offer should be sent to Clara Caldera [c.caldera@aidos.it](mailto:c.caldera@aidos.it) by the midnight of the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 and include the following:

1. **A CV** including at least two references with authorization to contact them;
2. **A technical offer** including a proposal on how the supplier intends to deliver the required service;
3. **A financial offer in Euro** for the service including VAT / any other taxation. The offer should include all costs related to the service: fees and logistic expenses for a mission to Gaza of about 8-10 days (such as travel, per diems, accommodation, insurance, local transport, hospitalities, papers, communications, consumables, and all other envisaged costs). No breakdown of the above costs is requested. The mail has to mention in the object: **Women agriprenurs Gaza [Name Surname] or [Company Name].**

## ANNEX 1

### Project fact sheet

#### **Women agripreneurs for food security: resilience and development of the food system in crisis in the Gaza Strip**

**PARTNERS:** Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS) and The Gaza Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform (GUPAP)

**INTERVENTIONS AREA** Gaza strip - The North Gaza Governorate (North Gaza strip) and the Deir el-Balah Governorate (Middle of Gaza strip)

**DURATION:** 15 months (01/01/2023 - 31/03/2024)

#### **CONTEXT:**

The humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip are sharply deteriorating - with continuous Israeli military attacks, 13 years of Israeli blockade and internal political division, poverty, unemployment, power shortages, poor drinking water, a vulnerable local food system and food insecurity, fuel shortages, weak infrastructure, delayed reconstruction processes, and the PA employees salary crisis/cuts - resulting in a protection crisis and widespread psychosocial stress contributing to eroding coping mechanisms and resilience of Gazan families.

The Palestinian territories suffer from limited job creation and a stubbornly high unemployment rate, particularly affecting youth and women. Palestine has one of the lowest rates for women's participation in the labor force globally (19.4%)<sup>1</sup>. The gap in the participation rate between men and women in Palestine is still very large, reaching higher percentages for men compared with low percentages for women.

As shown by the PCBS statistics, the widespread unemployment among women in the Gaza Strip is mainly as a result of the deterioration in economic conditions in Gaza. While women's participation in the labor market has increased over the past few years, with some women attempting to join the labor market to compensate for lost income of their male partners, women continue to have a higher unemployment rate than men. Given the socio-economic situation in Gaza, the opportunities for women to fill the income gap are minimal. In the third quarter of 2018, less than 26 percent of women in Gaza were participating in the labor force (i.e. working or looking for a job) and 78 percent were unemployed (versus 46 percent of men).

#### **OBJECTIVES**

##### **General:**

To improve food security and living conditions of vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip by combining emergency, development and gender approach.

##### **Specific:**

- To improve the nutritional status of vulnerable households in the Gaza Strip through food distribution and awareness raising on proper nutrition.
- To improve the resilience and sustainability of urban agribusinesses run by women by supporting their production, promoting their rights and role in society and socio-economic development of the country, and strengthening their management capacities.
- To strengthen the capacity of GUPAP in promoting the development and resilience of women entrepreneurs and vulnerable communities.

#### **BENEFICIARIES**

- 500 female-headed households (approx. 2.000 people) in the Northern Gaza and Deir el-Balah Governorates.
- 50 urban agripreneurs, including 35 already members of the Urban Women Agripreneurs Forum (UWAF) and 15 new women entrepreneurs active in the areas of agricultural production

- 20 community-based women's/cooperative grassroots organizations, (potential) members of the Gaza Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Platform (GUPAP)
- 14 GUPAP and UWAF operators (4 staff and about 10 volunteers)

**Indirect beneficiaries** include the extended families of the beneficiaries. It is estimated that the initiative can reach 15,000 individuals.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

### ***1. The nutritional status of poor and vulnerable households and their capacity for optimal and healthy food utilization are improved.***

The project will improve the nutritional intake of poor and vulnerable households through the distribution of "Dignity Food Baskets" (baskets). The baskets will enable households to reduce their food expenditure, thereby using the saved resources to meet other household needs. Through awareness-raising activities on the use of the baskets, the project will improve, in the long run, the eating habits of households by promoting the consumption of nutritious food available in the local market (such as that contained in the baskets) in the right quantities according to gender, age, health and economic conditions, etc.

### ***2. The resilience of urban women agribusinesses, the sustainability of their businesses, their ability to market products, and to engage in networking and discussion on political and economic issues are enhanced/increased.***

By purchasing the items of "Dignity Food Baskets" from urban women agribusinesses, the project will improve their resilience in the short term. Promoting the products of the women agro-entrepreneurs contained in the basket will stimulate demand for those goods, thus contributing to their production and, consequently, to the sustainability of the enterprises, in the long term. Through the activities of training women entrepreneurs in business development and management, access to credit, agro-ecological production, and raising awareness of their rights and the importance of reproductive health, the project will promote and support women's engagement and leadership in policy and decision-making during the crisis for equitable recognition of women's capacities in any economic recovery plan. The project will pay special attention to women from the most marginalized groups (e.g., women heads of households, working poor, women with disabilities, women involved in family farming activities).

### ***3. GUPAP's capacity to create secure purchasing/marketing channels for the products of urban women agribusiness entrepreneurs and to integrate the gender approach into its programs and initiatives is developed.***

To ensure adequate support for urban women agribusinesses, the project includes a local association strengthening component that aims to strengthen GUPAP's capacities in the following areas: a) facilitating women's market access for supply purposes (production groups, cooperatives); b) integrating a gender approach in its programs and interventions. To this end, the project will revise the Association's information and training materials from a gender perspective and train GUPAP staff on the practical integration of a gender perspective (including the key role of reproductive health) in all its activities. This will contribute to improving women's health not only with regard to absence of illness but also to mental and physical well-being, with a positive impact on their productive lives. Special attention will be given to issues such as time management and work overload as well as the division of roles and responsibility in the context of the family business; c) networking with other organizations active in the promotion of women's rights by involving specialized women's health centers active in the Gaza Strip, etc.

## ACTIVITIES

In order to contribute to **Result 1**, the following activities will be carried out:

### 1. Food distribution and community sensitisation

1.1 Selection of vulnerable households.

1.2 Transportation/door-to-door distribution of food baskets.

1.3 Sensitisation activities on adequate and balanced nutrition.

In order to contribute to **Result 2**, the following activities will be carried out:

2. Capacity development of women entrepreneurs

- 2.1 Selection of enterprises among UWAF members and of new enterprises to become new members of UWAF.
- 2.2 Quality control, packaging and purchasing of products for food baskets
- 2.3 Support to the communication of women agripreneurs
- 2.4 Training and capacity building in business management of women agripreneurs
- 2.5 Training and capacity building of women's cooperatives and grassroots community organisations (CBOs)
- 2.6 Advocacy activities on the rights of women agripreneurs.
- 2.7 Production of information material
- 2.8 Sensitization sessions on reproductive health and family planning.

*Result 3. GUPAP's capacity to create safe purchase / marketing channels for the products of women urban agripreneurs and to integrate a gender approach into its programs and initiatives is developed.*

In order to contribute to **Result 3** the following activities will be carried out:

3. Training and capacity building of GUPAP

- 3.1 Training of GUPAP staff on gender mainstreaming, networking and marketing of women's agripreneurs products.
- 3.2 Review of training and information materials on gender
- 3.3 Sharing experiences and lessons learned

**Stage of implementation**

The project has four phases of implementation.

*Phase 1: Project start-up and strengthening of the local partner*

*Phase 2: Strengthening women entrepreneurs.* The technical and management capacities of individual and cooperative women entrepreneurs will then be strengthened and sensitized on reproductive health.

*Phase 3: Food distribution.* Food baskets will then be purchased and distributed to selected households and their nutrition awareness raised.

*Phase 4: Information and networking.* Finally, the project will be promoted externally by highlighting its results and the role of women entrepreneurs for their inclusion in national development policies.

**AIDOS ROLE**

AIDOS will provide **training and technical assistance** to GUPAP staff for gender mainstreaming in its programs, strengthening networking and marketing of women's agriculture products. AIDOS will also facilitate GUPAP's advocacy, networking and exchange with other relevant regional and international organizations/programs.