

**Terms of Reference (TOR)  
for an Assignment Requiring the Services of an Individual  
to be Engaged Through an Individual Contract (IC)**

**Expert in Agro-food Value Chain Development to carry out an assessment of the freekeh value chain in Lebanon, including the development of an assessment report, an action plan and technical specifications for supporting the assessed value chains.**

**A. Project Title:** Support to strengthen the freekeh value chain in Lebanon

**B. Project Description**

Lebanon has experienced severe economic and social impact since the eruption of the Syrian crisis. As of January 2017 the number of registered displaced Syrians is 1,017,433 which amount to roughly 25% of the overall population of Lebanon. Livelihoods in Lebanon have been severely impacted by the demographic and economic shocks as a consequence of the Syrian conflict.

In 2015, the Ministry of Agriculture launched its 2015-2019 strategy, with the mission “to improve the performance of the agricultural sector contributing to the economic, social, environmental and sustainable rural development of Lebanon.” The Strategy outlines three specific objectives: I) to provide safe and quality food; II) to improve the contribution of agriculture to the economic and social development of the country; III) to promote the sustainable management of natural and genetic resources. Within this strategy specific targets were set to be reached by 2019 which include: increasing agricultural exports by 10%; increasing the irrigated agriculture land by 20,000 ha<sup>2</sup>; updating the irrigation systems of at least 1,000 ha<sup>2</sup> annually through subsidizing equipment to encourage farmers to update their irrigation systems; as well as building 50 mountain lakes and linking them to irrigation systems.<sup>1</sup>

There are over 1,400 cooperatives operating in Lebanon. 1,201 cooperatives are considered to be active cooperatives, out of which 799 are agricultural cooperatives. The majority of cooperatives are present in South Lebanon, followed by North Lebanon and the Bekaa region.<sup>2</sup> In spite of the potential for growth of Lebanese agro-food production and expansion to international markets, cooperatives within this sector often face several challenges. These among others include high operational costs, limited marketing and sales skills and outdated and old equipment and facilities which impacts the quality and productive capacities of cooperatives and hinders their ability to meet international food safety and quality standards.

The implementation of initiatives to strengthen value chain development is a crucial approach to enhance economic development, generate job opportunities and support inclusive economic growth. Moreover, strengthening value chains has the potential to provide economic benefits at multiple levels creating a trickle-down effect on vulnerable groups. The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the "Lebanese Host Communities Support Project"

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, MoA Strategy 2015-2019, 2015

<sup>2</sup> Polat, Hüseyin Cooperatives in the Arab World: Reaffirming their validity for local and regional development background paper for the Sub- Regional Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Cooperatives in the Arab States International Labour Organization. Regional Office for Arab States Beirut November 2010.

(LHSP) in 2013 as a comprehensive, coordinated and durable response towards the Syrian Refugee Crisis and its implications on the country. The Livelihoods and Local Economic Development Strategy under LHSP seeks to address the challenges faced by Lebanon, in light of the Syrian crisis, in relation to the deteriorating economic conditions in the country and the increasing unemployment rates, poverty levels and consequently social instability, particularly in the most vulnerable host communities. This includes holistic interventions to strengthen value-chains. UNDPs approach to value chain development focuses on strengthening the competitiveness of value chains while allowing for the incorporation of a growing number of workforce. UNDP takes a system-wide perspective to value chain development, by addressing constraints at multiple levels (micro, meso and macro). Activities in this regard include supporting both domestic value chains (e.g. strengthening and linking rural producers with urban markets) as well as linkages to international / global value chains (e.g. upgrading and linking domestic producers with firms abroad).

The production of Freekeh is identified as a value chain that needs to be strengthened throughout the different phases of processing from harvesting of the green wheat, roasting, seed dehulling, drying and sterilizing of the freekeh seeds, packaging, and marketing. Freekeh is known for its highly nutritious value, as it is high in protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals and low in glycemic index, making it appropriate for managing diabetes. The modern Freekeh processing method generates new job opportunities for women-led cooperatives in rural areas, as opposed to the traditional method, where the women's role was only limited to packaging the end product sold to them in bulk at high prices.

### C. Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for carrying out an assessment of the freekeh value chain in Lebanon. The assessments should include mapping and analyzing needs in relation to both vertical linkages (e.g. identifying constraints such as productive fragmentation and absence of effective local and national networks and identifying opportunities for increased collaboration and involvement of MSMEs/cooperatives with larger firms) and horizontal linkages (e.g. access to business services, economic development services, business associations and finance etc.), identifying other possible weaknesses and opportunities in the targeted value chains (e.g. weaknesses in productive performance, productivity and technological innovation), as well as regional or national level constraints to the advancement and competitiveness of the specific value chain (e.g. lack of quality and safety standards and control, lack of national or territorial marketing).

The assessment should identify targeted interventions to strengthen the value chain such as upgrading and strengthening the weakest links in the value chains (e.g. addressing infrastructure, technical capacity or financial gaps) to improve the overall competitiveness of the value chain, creating new linkages in the value chain (regionally, national or internationally) or strengthening existing ones to improve the efficiency of value chains. The assessment should in this regards result in the development of an action plan and technical specification for supporting the value chains. Taking a system-wide perspective to value chain development the assessment should identify any needs for interventions within the following 3 levels of intervention:

At the **macro level** identifying any needs for: supporting governmental integrated policies or networks of productive and non-productive stakeholders, supporting the organization of national partnerships, establishment of common production standards, enhancing national marketing strategies and optimizing strategic services (commercialization, marketing, brands, quality and food safety control etc.), supporting

action research to enhance national and territorial knowledge for value chain development and facilitating access to international markets and international relationships and partnerships mainly through decentralized cooperation.

At the **meso level** identifying any needs for: strengthening regional and local institutions providing support services for the optimization of value chains, supporting development of regional and local networks, increasing awareness of regional and local actors, harmonizing strategies, marketing of activities at the local level, supporting the organization of local partnerships and creating territorial linkages.

At the **micro level** identifying any needs for: interventions to reduce cost (e.g. energy, water and industrial waste etc.), improve production performance, strengthen cooperative management, enhance commercial capacities, valorise human resources, support the use of new and/or more environmentally friendly technology, support the achievement of international quality and health standards for exportation and addressing other specific constraints or opportunities in support of the value chain.

As a cross-cutting concern the assessment should include the identification of activities that can contribute to the economic empowerment of women, including activities that may support women in moving beyond production activities. Beyond production activities refers to all agricultural value chain functions outside of production including but not limited to input and agricultural services, processing, marketing and retail sales.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of the assignment is to assist in the transfer of knowledge to stakeholders which will lead to at least one of the following:

- Improved quality
- Improved productivity
- Improved processing efficiency
- Improved Packaging
- Increased revenues
- Increased job opportunities

On this basis and in the framework of UNDP's support to Value Chain development the expert in agro-food value chain development should achieve the following results/deliverables:

1. Development of a value-chain assessment report for the freekeh value chain in Lebanon.  
The assessment report should include the identification of needed interventions within the above noted 3 levels of intervention: macro, meso and micro level; and include mapping and analyzing needs in relation to both vertical and horizontal linkages. Moreover, it should include the identification of activities that can contribute to the economic empowerment of women.
2. Development of a detailed 1 year support action plan for the assessed agro-food value chains, including needed activities, timeline and actors to be involved.
3. Development of technical specifications for the needed support of the agro-food value chains

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<sup>3</sup> Markel, Erin and Lindsey Jones. *Women's Economic Empowerment: Pushing the Frontiers of Inclusive Market Development*. USAID. 2015

- in accordance with the support action plan, including but not limited to: specifications of any identified needed equipment for the cooperatives operating within the assessed value chains, TORs for any technical consultants needed to support the development of the value chains, specifications for any requirements to be met for entering new markets, etc.
4. Contribute to the technical evaluation of the equipment recommended or the technical consultant service requested under the value chain within the UNDP procurement process.

The following activities are requested to fulfill the above mentioned scope of work:

- 1) Desk review of existing value chain analysis.
- 2) Definition of the gaps in each value chain and the intervention needed to be prioritized.
  - a) Identify the stakeholders:
    - i) Farmers, cooperatives, MSMEs
    - ii) Education centers
    - iii) Suppliers
    - iv) Research institute
    - v) Ministries
    - vi) Other
  - b) Assess the stakeholders and define the intervention needs as per the value chain gap analysis.  
The interventions should include:
    - i) Definition of training needs
    - ii) Definition of new agriculture practices or production methods
    - iii) Definition of the new tools and equipment needed
    - iv) Identification of new markets
  - c) Development of specifications and Terms of Reference (TORS) for the defined interventions under activity 2b.
  - d) Contribute to the technical evaluation
- 3) Provide needed reporting on milestones and end of intervention

All the above noted activities should be carried out in close coordination and collaboration with UNDP staff.

#### **D. Expected Outputs and Deliverables**

The below table is a summary of the output/deliverables and the target delivery dates. The consultant will be working for 60 days distributed over a period of 8 months.

	<b>Deliverables/ Outputs</b>	<b>Estimated Duration to Complete</b>	<b>Target Dates Due</b>	<b>Review and Approvals Required</b>
1	Updated detailed work plan for carrying out the value chain assessment, action plan and specifications.	1 day	During 1 <sup>st</sup> week of contract signature	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.

2	Provision of value chain assessment report.	20 days	1 month from contract signature	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
3	Provision of value-chain support action plan.	15 days	1,5 months from contract signature	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
4	Provision of technical specification for necessary activities defined through value-chain assessment and action plan.	13 days	2 months from contract signature	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
5	Presentation of results address to MoSA and UNDP	1 day	3,5 months from contract signature.	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
6	Reporting on the activities	5 days	Bi-weekly update to UNDP on progress towards the work plan. This should include sharing drafts of the work carried out for feedback by UNDP.	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
7	Contribute to the technical evaluation of the equipment recommended or the technical consultant service requested under the value chain within the UNDP procurement process.	5 days	Up to a maximum of 8 months after the contract signature.	UNDP - Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator.
	Total	60 days		

#### **E. Institutional Arrangement**

The consultant shall be working under the direct supervision of the Senior Livelihood and Local Economic Development Coordinator of UNDP among others and under the overall guidance of the LHSP CTA.

## **F. Duration of the Work**

The duration of the assignment is 60 days distributed over a period of 8 months.

## **G. Duty Station**

The IC will have Ad-Hoc meetings at LHSP offices, AAIB Building 1st floor, Beirut, Lebanon with visits to all relevant Governorates in Lebanon.

## **H. Qualifications of the Successful Individual Contractor**

### **1. Academic qualifications:**

Bachelor degree in Agriculture, agro-food development, agro-business or other related field. Master degree related to these field will be a plus.

### **2. Years of experience:**

- Relevant experience in carrying out assessments in the fields of agro-food development, agro business and value chain development: at least 5 years;
- Relevant experience in writing technical reports and specifications assessments in the fields of agro-food development, agro business and value chain development;
- Experience in working with national and local authorities and other actors in the agro-food sector in Lebanon;
- Proven experience in similar value chain analysis in Lebanon or the region;
- Previous experience in the freekeh value chain is an asset.

### **3. Competencies:**

- a. Established knowledge about the agro-food sector, local economic development and value-chain development;
- b. Proven strong oral and written communication skills;
- c. Ability to work under pressure, meet deadlines and handle multiple tasks simultaneously and accurately;
- d. Produces quality outputs in a timely manner when assigned a given task;
- e. Listen actively, acknowledging and responding constructively to other points of view;
- f. Full commitment to UNDP rules and regulations

### **4. Language Requirements:**

Excellent written and spoken Arabic and English

## **I. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments**

The consultant shall be paid based on the completion and acceptance of each deliverable based on the total number of days per the respective deliverable. In this respect, the consultant shall take into consideration the following:

- i) A daily working fee must be all-inclusive (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communication, consumables);
- ii) Pricing shall be submitted as follows:

	Type of the daily work	Number of days	Daily fee (in USD)
1	Updated detailed work plan for carrying out the value chain assessment, action plan and specifications.	1 day	
2	Undergoing and provision of value chain assessment report.	20 days	
3	Provision of value-chain support action plan.	15 days	
4	Provision of technical specification for necessary activities defined through value-chain assessment and action plan.	13 days	
5	Presentation of results address to UNDP	1 day	
6	Reporting on the activities	5 days	
7	Contribute to the technical evaluation of the equipment recommended or the technical consultant service requested under the value chain within the UNDP procurement process.	5 days	
Total (in USD)		60 days	

- iii) Payments are applicable after submitting the final accepted version of the deliverables made by the Consultant, approved by the Senior Livelihoods and Local Economic Development Coordinator, which shall serve as the basis for the payment of fees. Payment will be done based on the number of completed working days per the respective deliverable.