

Pre-bid Conference Note – RFP/101/19 – RFP for Implementation of Small Business Grants and Piloting of Savings Groups to Revitalize Local Economies Returned, and Resident Community Members, Salah al-Din Governorate, Iraq

Date & Time: 24 April 2019 at 2 p.m (Iraq time).

Venue: UNDP Conference Room via Skype

Organizer: UNDP/ICRRP

Purpose: Informative meeting related to the competitive bidding announced on Implementation of Small Business Grants and Piloting of Savings Groups to Revitalize Local Economies Returned, and Resident Community Members, Salah al-Din Governorate, Iraq.

Reference: IRQ-10-RFP/101/19

Meeting participants:

Representatives from the NGOs:

1. Elsa Dahan, Reporting Officer/Public Aid Organization- Erbil office
2. Eliana Hysollari, Grants and Reporting Associate/Relief International Iraq
3. Dr. Brent Downes, International consultant/ international development and community development.

From UNDP:

1. Mitchell McTough, Livelihoods Support Officer/UNDP ICRRP
2. Ary Sheksaeed, Procurement Assistant/UNDP SC

Objectives

UNDP aims to implement a project to create new small businesses and fill key gaps in saving and financing, whilst conducting a comprehensive assessment into savings groups for local economic revitalization. Support for community saving and financing mechanisms will be provided by building upon the experience and information of the pilot project and study in the KRI. The project will build on the institutional knowledge of promoting saving and community financing to reach more communities in additional locations.

Therefore, the main purpose of this project is to:

- Provide small business grants and facilitate market linkages through agreements with buyers and/or suppliers, to ensure the value chains are strengthened and made more sustainable.
- Carry-out an assessment on savings groups and small businesses in target locations, focusing on returnees, host communities and displaced persons.
- Facilitate the creation of community-based savings groups among SME owners and saving group members and support their operation through mentoring, linking businesses with markets.
- Promote the participation in savings groups by raising awareness about the importance of saving and saving as a mechanism of self-financing.
- Raise awareness about institutional saving and finance mechanisms available to communities.

Pre-bidding meeting

UNDP Iraq announced the public bidding inviting eligible service providers/NGOs to submit a proposal to carry out the project. The purpose of this meeting is to provide information and clarification related to bid documents to enable the offerors to submit responsive proposals.

Ary Sheksaeed welcomed the participants and expressed his appreciation for their interest in the announced bidding and presence in the pre-bid conference. Then, he provided detailed information on the bidding process, going through the RFP document and explaining the requirements in detail. The following points were highlighted:

- Bid validity is 120 days from the deadline of the RFP submission;
- Recommended presentation of the Technical and Financial proposals, use of provided templates;
- Completeness of the required documentations, i.e. all forms duly completed, and documentations listed in the Form B – Bidder Information must be submitted;
- Importance of thorough review of TOR;
- Evaluation criteria with corresponding scoring and weight;
- Selection method based on cumulative analysis where technical component comprise 70% and financial weigh 30% out of total 100%. The passing threshold for the technical offer is 70% of total technical scoring;
- Submission through eTendering system, where the financial offer must be properly labelled, and password protected. No any price in the eTendering submission is to be disclosed.

Mr. Mitchell McTough briefly described the scope of work expected undertaken and shared a background information on the announced assignment in detail.

The following points were noted:

Questions and answers

No.	Questions raised by participants	Response provided by UNDP
1	Concerning the assessment on possible existing saving groups, and any additional saving study report, I would like to know if the assessment should already be existing in our work and if so if this is conditional for obtaining the bid?	Any existing reports will be advantageous to informing a bidder's proposal and providing for primary data.
2	My understanding from the TOR is that there are 40 people divided in 20 small saving groups, is that right? Or small sub-groups of 5 ?	Bidder's may introduce the modality that is most fitting to their organisation. The division was to made as a guidance to indicate an relatively equal distribution between the target groups. For example 14 individuals from returnees, 14 from IDPs and 12 from HC. The savings groups can be at the size the bidder decides is most favorable to the pilot.
3	The RFP states that one month should be dedicated to reporting, while five months are for implementation. Can we still conduct post-distribution monitoring and follow ups	The final month can be used for PDM.

	during the 6th month? Or do we have to limit the last month only to reporting?	
4	We see 6 months as a very short time for establishing savings groups. So, we would like to know if UNDP has any mechanisms in place to monitor the groups once the program implementation is completed?	It is not necessarily for saving groups to start over a cycle of 12 months, this can be shorter, typically 9-12 for larger groups. For the saving groups the saving cycle can be up to 5 months and some cases this may be as low as 3 months, depending on the consensus of the group's members, with a smaller group of 40 broken into even smaller savings groups this can be likely be shorter. The concern over monitoring should be considered in the bidder's exit strategy or mentioned in the monitoring system framework. For example, partnerships with local authorities, training on M&E with these entities and establishing links between savings groups. As these groups should be independent internalised simplified monitoring can be developed, to ensure the groups are self-regulating).

At the end of the meeting, the companies are requested again to thoroughly examine the RFP and submit their proposals in accordance with the requirement.