

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR A MARKET ASSESSMENT AND VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS FOR THE INVESTING IN WOMEN IN THE BLUE ECONOMY IN KENYA PROJECT

1.0 About The AECF

The AECF is a development institution that supports businesses to innovate, create jobs, leverage investments and markets to create resilience and sustainable incomes in rural and marginalized communities in Africa. To date, AECF has supported 339 businesses in more than 40 value chains and in 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In the agribusiness sector, it has supported businesses across different value chains from improving seed varieties to livestock vaccines and introducing new farming systems and agribusiness models. In the renewable energy and adaptive climate change sector, we have supported businesses across home solar systems, mini and micro-grids, biogas, financial services, and adaptive climate change technologies.

2.0 Investing in Women in the Blue Economy in Kenya

The Investing in Women in the Blue Economy in Kenya (IIW-BEK) project aims *to contribute to enhanced economic empowerment of women and young women owned enterprises and their suppliers and producers along key supply chains where women are discriminated against in the blue economy in Kenya* with the following intermediate outcomes:

- *Increased performance and sustainability of women and young women owned micro, small and/or medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the blue economy*
- *Improved environment and reduced systemic gender inequalities, discriminatory social norms, and barriers that women entrepreneurs and their smallholder producers/suppliers, including informal workers, face in the blue economy*

The blue economy in Kenya generates approximately US\$1.78 billion and provides a source of income for over two million people along the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria coasts. Women-owned enterprises in the blue economy, including women suppliers face disproportionate challenges compared to men in access to finance, business skills, financial literacy, and access to markets. Although several African countries, including Kenya have in the past decade evolved as centers for impact investing, the level of capital available in these markets remains very low, and only 6% goes to women-led businesses. In the blue economy sector, financing institutions are often hesitant to lend to women due to their limited knowledge of the sector's potential, lack of understanding of the cash flow patterns and perceived higher risk of women-owned enterprises. Thus, most private investments in the blue economy are largely geared towards male-dominated large scale, specialized businesses.

IIW-BEK will seek to address these challenges to financially empower women and increase their representation in male-dominated, higher-value segments of the blue economy sector, as well as their voices in decision-making. More specifically, it will attract financing and grow more women and young

women owned MSMEs in non-traditional market segments, including those related to conserving and sustainably using coastal and lake biodiversity.

3.0 Purpose and deliverables of this Assignment

The purpose of the assignment is to provide specific technical, environmental, social, and cultural context to the AECF team drafting the IIW-BEK project implementation plan (PIP). It is expected that tasks in this assignment will be based on a human centered design approach, which includes a high-level market assessment, stakeholder engagement and a gender-based cross sectoral/value chain analysis process. Assignment deliverables will contribute to the project design validation process to ensure it complies with the donor's expectations for enhancing gender equality in selected counties in Kenya's blue economy. Stakeholder consultation, gender analysis and market assessment will identify key environmental, sociocultural issues as well as products and services with the highest potential of contributing to increased economic empowerment of women.

Women face significant risk when empowered economically, socially, and politically. Safeguarding women's wellbeing is a critical component of all our deliverables. Therefore, this assignment must determine a risk profile of the anticipated design including, risk identification, and mitigation plan for identified initiatives. Overarching themes will focus on positive participation of women in respective products, processes and services within a market system perspective while considering policy implications and interventions with gender and climate change paradigm shift, potential for scalability and replicability.

The assignment will be conducted in collaboration with members of the AECF team.

4.0 Scope of Work

The consultant will:

1. Review and **summarize existing research** on access to finance by women-led/owned enterprises in Kenya's Blue Economy – specifically in the coastal and Lake Victoria region counties.
2. Validate the findings of consultation and analysis process that was carried during proposal development. The validation will include consultation with government, private sector players, female entrepreneurs, women's business associations, donors currently supporting women in the Kenya's blue economy sector
3. **Conduct overall market opportunity mapping and documentation** of existing as well as potential value chains/sub-sectors of the blue economy where women have measurable potential for profitability, growth and decent employment. The assessment must take Global Affairs Canada's GBA+¹ approach.
4. Assess the status of access to finance by women and women-owned/led enterprises in Kenya's blue economy sector and identify value chains and cross-sectoral relationships between value chains where women have the highest potential of participation, and where a market-based approach is possible and needed.

¹ See: <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html>

5. **Identify the gaps and opportunities** for investments including risk appetites and desire for financial intermediaries to develop products and services applicable to women.
6. From 3 above, identify high-potential value chains/sub-sectors and produce value chain maps of key sectors identified for possible intervention. Based on assessment findings, document possible

interventions and approaches to expand sustainable access to economic and income generating opportunities for women and women entrepreneurs including:

- Areas for self-employment within the respective value chain(s), expansion of women participation in the value chain, opportunities for gender inclusive innovative approaches to ensure value chain competitiveness. Evaluate constraints and bottlenecks within the value chain and propose possible solutions.
 - An overview of existing financial and business support services as well as regulatory constraints and opportunities for the economic development of the value chains/sub-sectors identified and regulatory constraints specific to women and women-owned/led enterprises.
7. Work with the AECF gender expert to integrate the findings into the Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) report. The combined report will include an intersectional lens examining barriers that women owners, workers, suppliers, and traders face in the identified value chains and sub-sectors.
 8. With the AECF team, conduct a stakeholder meeting/workshop to present a snapshot of initial findings of the value chain analysis and discuss specific recommendations for the IIW-BEK

5.0 Deliverables

1. Inception report (no more than 10 pages) outlining approach, including tools to be deployed and stakeholder engagement processes, and a work plan.
2. A comprehensive report covering:
 - A market assessment and value chain analysis that includes key findings on the scope of work focus areas, duly integrating economic, social, and environmental complementary analysis.
 - A combined market and gender-based analysis (GBA+) complete with a detailed barriers analysis, gender analysis, and stakeholder analysis.
3. Possible program design options that best represent the IIW-BEK program objectives.
4. Stakeholder workshop report and a detailed list of stakeholders consulted.

6.0 Duration of Service

The assignment will be conducted over the course of two months. Given the scope of the assignment, it is expected that this assignment will be conducted by an individual consultant, or a pair of experts provided skills on gender equality and market-systems approaches are present.

7.0 Reporting

The consultant will be accountable to AECF, Programme Lead - Agribusiness

8.0 Qualifications.

The selected consultant(s) should meet or include the following qualifications:

- A value chains specialist with 8-10 years' extensive experience in value chains analysis and gender-sensitive research design, or gender and development, with a preference for substantial experience in private sector development.
- At least 5 years of practical experience in conducting market assessments, stakeholder, and data analysis; stakeholder consultations, human centered design, and programme design in the development sector.
- Good knowledge and understanding of Kenya's Blue economy and attendant sub-sectors e.g. fisheries, tourism, maritime transport, aquaculture, renewable energy etc.
- Good knowledge and understanding of SME finance and solutions to increase access to finance for women-owned/led businesses.

9.0 Proposal submission

Interested and qualified (individual or institutional) consultants are invited to submit their proposal(s) comprising the following:

- An understanding of the consultancy requirements.
- Methodology and work plan for performing the assignment.
- Detailed reference list indicating the scope and magnitude of similar assignments.
- Relevant services undertaken in the past five (5) years.
- Letters of reference from 3 previous companies/assignments.
- Registration and other relevant statutory documents (applicable to firms).
- The **Technical** and **Financial** proposal to be submitted separately
- Financial proposal clearly showing the budgeted cost for the work to be conducted by the consultant under the scope of work above.

10.0 Pricing

Dependent on the contracting mechanism, AECF is obliged by the Kenyan tax authorities to withhold taxes on service contract fees as well as ensure VAT, at 16%, is charged where applicable. Applicants are advised to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their tax position with regards to provisions of Kenya tax legislation when developing their proposals.

11.0 Evaluation Criteria

An evaluation committee will be formed by the AECF and shall include employees. All members will be bound by the same standards of confidentiality. The vendor should ensure that they fully respond to all criteria to be comprehensively evaluated.

The AECF may request and receive clarification from any Vendor when evaluating a proposal. The evaluation committee may invite some or all the Vendors to appear before the committee to clarify their proposals. In such event, the evaluation committee may consider such clarifications in evaluating proposals.

In deciding the final selection of qualified bidder, the technical quality of the proposal will be given a weighting of **70%** based on the evaluation criteria. Only the financial proposal of those bidders who qualify technically will be opened. The financial proposal will be allocated a weighting of **30%** and the proposals will be ranked in terms of total points scored.

The mandatory and desirable criteria against which proposals will be evaluated are identified in the table below.

Evaluation Criteria	Marks
Understanding of the Terms of Reference	5
Methodology and work - plan for performing the assignment	25
Demonstration of years of experience in similar work	25
Detailed reference list indicating the scope and magnitude of similar assignments	15
Financial proposal; clarity, relevance, reality to market of value/ value for money of cost for the assignment (inclusive of any applicable tax).	30
TOTAL SCORE	100

12.0 Disclaimer

AECF reserves the right to determine the structure of the process, number of short-listed participants, the right to withdraw from the proposal process, the right to change this timetable at any time without notice and reserves the right to withdraw this tender at any time, without prior notice and without liability to compensate and/or reimburse any party.

13.0 Application Details

The AECF is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The AECF considers all interested candidates based on merit without regard to race, gender, colour, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law

- AECF invites qualified consultants/firms to send a proposal to aecfprocurement@aecfafrica.org clearly marked "**MARKET ASSESSMENT AND VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS FOR THE INVESTING IN WOMEN IN THE BLUE ECONOMY IN KENYA PROJECT**" The AECF shall not be liable for not opening proposals that are submitted with a different subject.
- The proposal should be received no later than **2nd May , 2022, by 5.00 pm East Africa Time (GMT +3)** addressed to: **The AECF, Procurement Department**. All clarifications and or questions should be sent to aecfprocurement@aecfafrica.org .