REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI)

(CONSULTING SERVICES)

Firms Selection

Climate Resilience and Agriculture Development Project in Albania

Project ID Number: No.**: P178715**

IBRD Loan Number: **94890**

Assignment Title: “Support the establishment and medium-term operation of the two clusters, branding of the selected products and placing the products in the market, etc. (olive oil cluster)” in the region of Berat

Reference: AL-MARD-389908-CS-QCBS

The World Bank is assisting the Government of Albania (GoA) with the financing of the Climate Resilience and Agriculture Development project (CRAD). This project aims to increase competitiveness and climate resilience of priority agri-food value chains focusing on (i) promoting climate smart and resilient value chains, (ii) promoting typical products and value addition (iii) developing Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) IT Platform (iv) modernizing selected irrigation and drainage schemes for high-value agricultural production (v) enhancing compliance with food safety and quality standards and (vi) strengthening evidence-based decision making for resilience and sustainable agri-food systems.

The services required to be contracted aim to support the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) in ensuring successful implementation of the contract “Support the establishment and medium-term operation of the two clusters, branding of the selected products and placing the products in the market, etc. (olive oil cluster)” in the region of Berat.

The MARD seeks the Consulting Services of a qualified company/firm with the objective to assist MARD with Support the establishment and medium-term operation of the two clusters, branding of the selected products and placing the products in the market, etc. (olive oil cluster)” in the region of Berat. The objective of this activity is to offer technical assistance for the establishment of an olive oil consortium in the Berat region. The primary goals of this consortium are to unite producers and processors into a single entity responsible for olive oil production, processing, marketing, branding activities, and interaction with certification bodies. Establishing an olive oil consortium in Albania is deemed crucial for enhancing market access and product differentiation.

Specific objective

The specific objective of this phase is to establish a sustainable consortium of olive oil producers to produce quality olive oil and table olive under a common brand and commercialize it in high-end outlets (e.g., Hotel Restaurant and Catering sector) while promoting the specificity of the local territory. The consortium will support all stakeholders across the olive oil value chain in continuously improving the quality of the olive oil placed on the market. Additionally, it will provide training on best practices to develop and maintain the highest possible quality standards and improve marketability of olive oil.

Specific Scope of work

Activity 1: Market study and value chain analysis

The Consultant will prepare a market study and a value chain analysis for the olive oil and table olive sector centered on Berat region to identify key bottlenecks in the production, post-harvest, processing and commercialization activities to design several scenarios of development for the future consortium.

Activity 2: Development of a strategy and business plan

Based on the previous activities, the Consultant will introduce a conceptual scenario with draft project goals and strategy, concept, key activities, with first estimation of costs, functionalities, and management based.

Activity 3: Support to consortium members selection

The Consultant will support local authorities in selecting the future participatants to the technical assistance program leading to the creation of an olive oil consortium in Berat.

Activity 4: Improve production and post-harvest techniques

The Consultant will strengthen the capacity of consortium members in olive cultivation and post-harvest technics to improve final quality of olive oil produced and support sustainable management practices (water use, pesticides). The Consultant will provide one expert (agronomist) responsible for organizing on-field trainings and monitoring of the production for two/three years. The expert will be responsible for producing the training program and materials based on phase I preliminary assessment.

Activity 5: Develop olive oil quality

The Consultant will support consortium members in developing unique quality olive oil connected to the specificities of Berat territory and olive production. The Consultant will provide a quality expert who will develop a training package, theoretical and practical, about quality improvement in olive oil processing.

Activity 6: marketing, promotion and branding development

The marketing and branding expert from the Consultant will deliver specific trainings to consortium members to improve access to market of local olive oil on high-end markets (HoReCa, export) through a marketing and communication strategy, the development of a specific branding linked to the olive oil characteristics and territory and several BtoB promotional events. The experts will be responsible for producing the training program based on phase I preliminary assessment and the training material.

Activity 7: organize a study tour

The Consultant will be in charge of organizing a study tour in one of the main olive oil producer’s countries in the Mediterranean region (e.g., Italy or Spain) for the consortium management staff or representatives (10 persons). The study tour will represent an opportunity to share best practices in olive oil production and inspire the consortium in its approach to market and the promotion of olive oil.

The duration of the consultancy services is about 16 months in 2 years.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The Consultant shall be a firm or group of firms with the following minimum qualifications:

* The Consultant should be a reputable consultancy firm with demonstrable knowledge and experience of at least 7 years with agronomy, marketing of agriculture products and training program for similar projects preferably related to olive oil sector;
* At least 3 similar contracts achieved during the last 5 (five) years in the development of agriculture clusters or consortiums of producers (in olive oil sector);
* Experience in working in the Balkan region would be considered an asset.

The credibility of mentioned experience shall be presented in a list of the required similar project/contracts as required above, including description of services provided (including information on contract value, contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration, assignment budget, percentage carried out by consultant in case of association of firms or subcontracting and main activities) and accompanied by certificates/confirmation of orderly fulfilment of the contracts verified by other party from such contracts. It is required to provide examples of assignments of similar nature.

The Consultant may associate with other Consultants in the form of a joint venture or of a sub-consultancy agreement to complement their respective areas of expertise, strengthen their technical responsiveness of their proposals, make available bigger pool of experts, provide better approaches and methodologies.

The applicants will be assessed in order to determine a shortlist comprising the most qualified firms. The criteria to be used for shortlisting will be the following:

* Core business and years in business – 30 points
* Past experience in similar assignments – 60 points
* Availability of qualified staff among the firm to perform the assignment – 10 points

The CVs of Key experts will not be evaluated during the shortlisting process.

The shortlisting criteria are:

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| --- | --- |
| Evaluated Grid | Points |
| Core business and years in business | 30 |
| Experience in similar assignments | 60 |
| Firms’ organization and staffing | 10 |
| Total | 100 |

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016 revised November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

The consultant will be selected based on Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Procurement in Investment Project Financing Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services July 2016 (revised November 2020).

Interested Consultants may obtain further information concerning the Terms of Reference at the official website of MARD:https://bujqesia.gov.al/projekti-qendrueshmeria-ndaj-klimes-dhe-zhvillimit-ne-bujqesi/, or at the address below, during office hours 08:30 to 16:00 (Monday to Thursday) and 08:30 to 13:00 on Friday.

Expressions of Interest (EoI) in English language must be delivered no later than June 23, 2024 hardcopy (in person or by mail) to the address below, within office hours, and/or electronically at the below e-mail address.

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

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Attn: Mr. Arben Molla

Project Manager