**Scope of Work**

**Project title:**  Bolstering Agriculture Systems Ability to Invest, Nourish and Employ **(BASATINE).**

**Activity title:** Business Development Support Services

**Project Location(s):**  Tripoli & Akkar.

1. **About Mercy Corps**

Mercy Corps exists to alleviate suffering, poverty, and oppression by helping people build secure, productive, and just communities. The agency pursues its mission through emergency relief services, sustainable community development, civil society and economic development initiatives. Mercy Corps has been present in the Middle East since the 1980s and currently has offices in Yemen, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Libya. Working in Lebanon since 1993, Mercy Corps has implemented community development programs focused on promoting economic development and increased opportunity for disadvantaged communities, while responding to emergencies as they emerged in the country. In 2012, the program portfolio shifted in response to the massive refugee influx from Syria and Mercy Corps in Lebanon has solidified its emergency response programming while integrating longer-term development programming by focusing on key sectors: Protection, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Governance and Conflict, and Livelihoods.

1. **About the Program**

The Bolstering Agriculture Systems’ Ability to Invest, Nourish, and Employ (BASATINE) consortium, led by CARE International with Mercy Corps, Al Majmoua, George N. Frem Foundation, Berytech and LOST, is implementing a 4-year intervention to support farmers and other value chain and associated sector actors in areas of **Bekaa** and **Akkar**, focused on the production of **wheat and vegetables, seeking a territorial approach, and promoting linkages with other value chains.** Through complementary interventions designed in alignment with the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, the project will immediately address food insecurity and provide needed income and technical support to farmers to survive the current economic crisis as well as improve the capacity of food systems to maintain employment and growth in the longer term via stronger domestic production and system linkages. This will ultimately contribute to greater economic stability, particularly for women, improved rural development, and more positive social cohesion between host/refugee communities at a local level.

To address the overall objective (impact) of sustaining the capacity of Lebanese agriculture to produce food for the local market and create and maintain jobs, to contribute to the prevention of tensions between host communities and refugees, the consortium has designed a multi-pronged approach based on the following Theory of Change in direct alignment with MoA’s most recent National Agriculture Strategy (NAS):

**IF** agriculture market system actors adopt more climate-adaptive, profitable, and sustainable farming methods and are supported to restore livelihoods and productive capacity, **and IF** the efficiency of agriculture market systems and the viability and competitiveness of locally-produced agricultural outputs are improved, **THEN** this will contribute to more resilient and sustainable local agriculture market systems that create and maintain income generation and employment opportunities for more resilient, socially-cohesive, inclusive and food-secure host community and Syrian refugee households.

### Overall Objective: To help sustain the capacity of Lebanese agriculture to produce food for the local market and create and maintain jobs, to contribute to the prevention of tensions between host communities and Syrian refugees.

**Mercy Corps involvement in BASATINE:**

Mercy corps will be supporting 78 SMEs (Small and Medium enterprises) operating along the vegetables, wheat and cereals value chains and located in Akkar, the North and Bekaa. The program will target agri-food processors, and associated sector actors and SMEs operating along the targeted value chains to scale up their businesses, leverage their capacity and strengthen market linkages and trade relationships between farmers and all other targeted value chain actors. The support will be established based on the tested Mercy Corps SME model that includes a blended approach of technical support, business development coaching, and provision of in-kind equipment based on the needs of selected businesses.

1. **Description of the required service**

Mercy Corps is seeking to contract service providers specialized in business development to provide support to small and medium enterprises under the SME support component; via one to one coaching and follow up visits. The service provider needs to collaborate with focal points in the SME to drive business growth within the SME. Furthermore, the business development plan needs to be tailored for each SME, the purpose of this plan will be identified at the first stages of the collaboration which is the assessment. The approach and implementation strategy might vary between the SMEs depending on identified needs, coaching methodology and topics.the service provider should provide the support over maximum 6 months .MC will closely follow up with the consultants to evaluate and keep track of the consultancy outcome.

1. **Target participants**

3 small enterprises divided between Akkar & T5. All the SMEs are **food processors**. operating along the vegetables, wheat and cereals value chainsTargeted businesses have different business models with a common need for business development plans.

**Approximate turnover of the targeted businesses is 10,000 USD.**

1. **Business development support revolve around, but are not limited to, the below topics:**

The consultant might cover one or all of the below points based on needs identified :

* Sales, e.g. the business developer must assess new market opportunities, with such set goals, the business provider must stimulate the salesman to target the customer base in the new strategy.
* Marketing, e.g. The business developer must redirect the marketing budget to the right campaign. The business developer should help SME set the right Marketing plan to reach the targeted clients.
* Strategics initiative and/or partnerships, E.g. When entering a new market i.e. the export market, the business developer should assess the pros and cons to advise if the best approach is to go solo or have an alliance with a local firm.
* Development of a new product or service line, based on facts collected by the business developer to enter a new potential market, might require that certain products must be customs related. or a demand similar to the SME products is in high demand, in this case the business developer must assess if the SME can enter this market, and advise on the approach to enter the market.
* Product management, e.g. in case of export, certain ingredients or packaging are not allowed in some countries the business developer must work closely with the SME to adhere to these standards. - taking into consideration cost , legal approvals etc…
* Project management and business planning, E.g, in case of a business expansion , does the new expansion requires a new facility to fill the demand in the new market or the best approach to outsource, or is it better to build a facility outside the business area, example it is a better for the new production line to be located in the north for cheaper overhead or be close to the original facility for logistics matters. Such decisions are finalized by the business development team based on their cost- and time-related assessments.
* Vendor management, e.g. in case the new business needs external vendors, For example, will the shipping of a product need a dedicated courier service? Will the firm partner with any established retail chain for retail sales? What are the costs associated with these engagements? The business development team works through these questions.
* Negotiations and networking, to enter certain retailers. The business developer must have soft skills, e.g. the business developer might use his connection to help the SME enter hypermarkets such as spinneys.
* Cost savings, Business development is not just about increasing sales, products, and market reach. Strategic decisions are also needed to improve the bottom line, which includes cost-cutting measures. An internal assessment revealing high spending on logistics, for instance, may lead to a new distribution solution, such as partnership with a logistics company.
* Developing a strong operational hierarchy and strong team structure.
* Coach SME on developing managerial skills.
* Talent acquisition development. Supporting SME on finding the right skills for the right position, approaches used , developing ToRs.

Any other topic suggested by the consultant based on the needs of businesses.

1. **Required Tasks from the Service Provider**

The purpose of this assignment is to assist the business owners and their respective teams and employees to develop the business in order to expand internally or externally, to seek new opportunities and new markets which will positively affect their business and their income.

Detailed tasks are described as below:

* Attend a kickoff meeting with Mercy Corps Program team to agree on communication channels, Implementation methodology, schedules, required support for each SME, approaches etc.… and to assign focal points for coordination during coaching/implementation from both parties.
* Detailed schedule for the meetings must be prepared directly after the kick-off meeting and shared with the BASATINE team before starting the intervention: dates, timing, topics, approaches and trainers’ names must be included. The program team must approve any change on the schedule if needed.
* Review the in-depth assessment conducted by Mercy Corps team with the selected SMEs on related topics.
* Conduct on-site first assessment meetings with selected SMEs to identify their needs. the business developer must know the following before the start of the intervention;
* The current state of the business in terms of SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats)
* The current state of the overall industry and growth projections
* Competitor developments
* Primary sources of sales/revenues of current business and dependencies
* The customer profile
* New and unexplored market opportunities
* New domains/products/sectors eligible for business expansion, which may complement the existing business
* The long-term view, especially with regards to the initiatives being proposed
* The cost areas and the possible options for cost-savings
* Prepare and share all the needed tools and documents relevant to the intervention to be delivered prior to any intervention implementation with MC programme staff.
* Development of a full report detailing progress of businesses during and after completion of the implementation, listing the reached goals, areas of improvement, challenges, recommendations for future improvement, any other impact resulting from the intervention.
* Ensure Regular coordination and follow-up with the SMEs (schedule meetings, sessions etc.) as well as with MC BASATINE staff.
* Include a mitigation plan for any possible delays or changes subject to the country’s situation.
* Abide by BASATINE reporting mechanism to allow for continuous monitoring of activities.
* Identify and communicate risks to the BASATINE team and call for intervention when required.

● The consultant might suggest future in-kind needs for business.

1. **Methodology & delivery of the service:**

* The service provider should deliver the program on site, at the SME premises located in Akkar & T5.
* The implementation methodology must be a collaborative approach where SME’s personal will be involved in brainstorming, exploring opportunities and Proposing plans. The service provider must present clearly the outcome of the coaching/implementation of the business development strategy to the SME. The purpose of this intervention is to help SME think outside the box, and expose them to new markets and opportunities.
* The evaluation methodology won’t be limited to pre and post reports, satisfactory level of the intervention must be assessed,SMEs must be satisfied and well informed about the development of their businesses due to this intervention.
* follow-up visits might be required by the consultant, depending on the type of the strategy proposed.

1. **Duration of consultancy:**

The full duration of the intervention should be less than one year . During this period, the BDS provider should be available to deliver the required assistance to the suggested MSMEs in the specified area based on the agreed strategies designed and approved by the BASATINE team.

1. **Service provider qualifications**

* Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in providing business development solutions.
* Proven experience in providing similar development services to small and medium enterprises and strong understanding of the Lebanese market.
* Strong conceptual and analytical skills
* Ability and willingness to travel to Akkar, North Lebanon, Bekaa and Baalbeck.
* Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team.
* Fluent Arabic speaking and writing skills. Strong English writing skills are preferred.

**10. Submittals**

Service Providers interested in applying to this call shall submit the following documents:

* Profile of Company/Firm/Consultant
* CV’s of coaches/trainers (can be 1 or more consultants who will work directly with MSMEs specialized in specific training areas) + mentioning the area of intervention, roles and responsibility for each staff.
* A detailed technical proposal that must include all proposed intervention for SMEs detailed methodology, timeline.
* List of similar projects conducted - the list will include a briefing on the type of support given to the enterprises highlighting relevance to the tender). Similar projects must evolve around consultancies and not training. us List of references for similar projects conducted (at least 3 references with names, phone numbers)
* A scan/copy of the firm’s/Consultant registration at the Ministry of Finance. In case the firm cannot provide this document, and is selected for this consultancy, Mercy Corps will deduct the 7.5% services tax imposed by the Ministry from submitted invoices.
* Detailed budget (the budget submitted by the Service provider should clearly show the rate per each intervention **(listed under section 5)**, and follow-up visits for each program targeted locations.

**12. Deliverables/Reporting:**

Deliverables should include the following 3 reports and additional documents:

| **Deliverable** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | **Business assessment reports including:**   1. Pre strategy figures and facts, that are considered as baseline (E.g. total revenue, profit margin, number of clients, market etc…) to be reviewed and agreed by MC staff. Refer to section 6 2. Proposed intervention detailing approaches, tools and projected result of the support.(The proposal refers to section 5). 3. Proposed  timelines  for  completion  of  selected interventions  are  met  and  deliverables  submitted  on  time   and as per the standards described in the TORs. (Overall  performance  at  the  end  of  the  contract  will  be  evaluated  against  the  following  criteria:  deliverables proposed and approved by the service provider and MC staff.) |
| 2 | **Final report including**:   1. The minutes of the meeting with the SME representative to discuss the status and the proposed plan in the presence of the MC SME coordinator, the purpose of the meeting is to show and explain the proposed plans to SME and demonstrate how it will affect their businesses. 2. Final report should include the final strategy agreed between the consultant and the SME, it should also detail the progress that will be achieved by the business, proposed intervention achieved (if applicable) , strengths and weaknesses of businesses, areas of improvement, challenges, measuring relevant KPIs, proposed ways of improvement, etc…SME feedback will be taken into consideration. 3. Attendance sheets. Original and signed attendance sheet should be submitted to BASATINE team ( the participant, the trainer and BASATINE focal point should all sign on it) 4. Any risks or challenges facing the intervention |

**11. Evaluation Matrix:**

| **Criteria** | **Weighting %** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Profile of the company/consultant + CVs of implementing staff with their respective roles. | 10% |
| 1. Relevant experience (refer to the section of submittals to see all details) | 40% |
| 1. A detailed technical proposal including Intervention plan, Methodology & timeline **( refer to the section 5 & 7)** | 30% |
| 1. Budget | 20% |