

Request for Proposal (RFP)

The current Request for Proposal (RFP) is developed for the identification and selection of the Implementing Partner to support the implementation of the “**Digitizing sectors for competitiveness project**” of the RECONOMY program (hereinafter RECONOMY) – a regional inclusive, digital and green economic development program in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and the Western Balkans (WB) countries.

1. About the RECONOMY Program

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has a long-standing commitment to the growth and prosperity of the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans. As part of this commitment, Sida has partnered with HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation for implementing RECONOMY program.

The overarching objective of the RECONOMY program is to enable women and young men, including the most disadvantaged and excluded groups, to benefit from economic opportunities by increasing their income and taking up decent/green employment/self-employment. The RECONOMY program has a four-year-long Main Phase, which started in January 2023 and will last till the end of December 2026.

The impact hypothesis of the RECONOMY program is the **generation of better income and decent/green jobs for women and young men, including disadvantaged and excluded groups, inclusively and sustainably** as a result of:

- **Improved competencies of the workforce**, either to join private sector enterprises (employment) or start their economic initiatives (self-employment);
- **Relevant and quality business and technology services** for increased investment and growth of private sector enterprises; and
- **Enhanced industry or a firm-specific enabling environment for private sector enterprises**, to do business in a better way and increase their efficiency by utilizing the opportunities of green and digital transformation.

The market systems development (MSD) approach guides the implementation of the RECONOMY program. Central to the application of the MSD approach will be working through a variety of market actors (both public and private) and supporting behavioural changes which will lead to long-term improvements in their performance, ultimately benefitting the target groups. The program plays a facilitative role in this process, acting as an agent stimulating improvements in the way in which market actors within the system perform their functions.

2. The objective of the assignment

The RECONOMY program is seeking out organisations interested in acting as Implementing Partner in this process and supporting the implementation of one of the regional projects of the program during the Main Phase: March 2023 – December 2026. For this RFP, the focus is on **Digitizing Tourism, Agriculture and Manufacturing sectors for competitiveness** in which the Implementing Partner’s activities will be carried out in the following EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine (as soon as possible).

The role of the Implementing Partner, and some selected activities and expected results during the project implementation:

- Conducting demand-side analysis of predominant practices, uptake, and international comparison of technology utilization by Tourism, Agriculture, and Manufacturing sectors in order to identify the demand for digitalization of their activities/ products/ services which should be addressed to make the sectors more accessible for the women and young job seekers in inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.
- Identify and assess the capacity and incentives of SMEs and BMOs in the EaP countries operating in the fields of Tourism, Agriculture and Manufacturing.
- Conducting supply-side analysis within the EaP countries matching needs with supply.
- Identify and assess the capacity and incentives of digital services/ products developers and relevant non-formal skills providers in the EaP countries.

- Develop interventions and business models based on the synthesis of the assessment.
- Engage identified/ selected market actors operating in the project implementation.
- Discuss, develop, and agree on business models and roles with market actors.
- Facilitate linkages between engaged market actors in accordance with the developed business models.
- Promote shared understanding, knowledge and learning among key market players about sustainable business models.
- Continuously document and share experiences of the pilot idea through regular exchanges and learning processes with other pilots and initiatives of the RECONOMY program.

3. Application Procedure

The selection of the Implementing Partners will be based on an assessment of the quality of their proposals meeting the objective of this RFP. Interested organizations (only not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations registered in Armenia are eligible to apply) are kindly asked to submit a proposal in the following structure.

3.1. Technical Proposal (max. 15 pages)

The technical proposal should be focused on **Digitizing Tourism, Agriculture and Manufacturing sectors for competitiveness** and structured around the above-stated impact hypothesis which will be the focus of the Implementing Partner's role. Since the RECONOMY program has a strong regional value addition, it is a must that the proposal focuses on ideas that have regional added values (benefitting more than one country) to inclusive, digital, and green economic development to enable women and young men, including disadvantaged and excluded groups, to benefit from economic opportunities by increasing their income and taking up decent/green employment/self-employment.

The following questions should act as a guide for the proposal development:

- What prevents businesses in target sectors (tourism, agriculture, manufacturing) to use digital solutions to increase their competitiveness and facilitate the inclusive and green growth of the sectors in order to create decent/green jobs for the target group;
- What are the key shortages or deficiencies in the skills on the demand side (in tourism, agriculture, manufacturing sectors) to use digital solutions to increase their competitiveness and facilitate the growth of the sectors in order to create jobs for the target group;
- What type of digital solutions can be applied across multiple sectors to help them grow and create more decent/green jobs;
- What could be the sector-specific digital solutions which can contribute to expanding environmental sustainability/resource-efficiency of the sectors while contributing to growth and competitiveness;
- How can the proposed solutions be related to the Eastern Partnership post-2020 priorities and contribute to achieving the objectives specified in the Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement or other relevant policies (such as green economy strategies) for each country;
- What could be the sector-specific digital solutions which are highly valuable as businesses professionalise, grow, and become more competitive;
- What are the common constraints in the EaP countries that it is not seen as a major market for the digital solutions providers (ICT sector) and so products are not developed and marketed to this audience;
- What are the shared problems and possible shared solutions in the EaP countries both, on the demand (tourism, agriculture, manufacturing) and supply (digital solutions providers) side;
- Who are considered as potential partners for the project implementation both, on the demand and supply side;
- How would Implementing Partner tackle these constraints – fill the gap between relevant market actors by considering the MSD approach? **(Please propose not more than six intervention ideas and draft business models).**

3.2. Capability Statement (max. 3 pages)

This should include details of the previous project(s) experience demonstrating the following capabilities:

- Experience in managing MSD projects (more than one project of a similar or larger scale)
- Experience in implementing projects in the following sectors:
 - Agriculture;
 - Tourism;
 - Manufacturing.
- Capacity of implementing multi-country projects (in at least two countries of EaP)
- Experience in working with professional and/or sectoral associations
- Professional linkages and nexus with other organizations in EaP countries (except Belarus)
- Experience in leveraging similar projects/interventions
- Capacity to assign/dedicate at least three full-time MSD experienced staff for the implementation with good knowledge of English (please attach CVs)
- Capacity to assign/dedicate highly experienced in MSD and with good knowledge of English full-time project manager (international work experience is an asset). (Please attach the CV)
- Capacity to develop and implement environmental policy/strategy on the organization operational level (if not existing yet)
- Capacity to identify and manage climate-related and other environmental risks and opportunities related to green transition as socio-economic and political context in the respective countries of operations and at the regional level and clear ability to integrate these aspects in design and implementation of the project
- Monitoring capacities and experience, knowledge & application of DCED standards
- Experience managing and accounting for funding
- Ability of assigned/dedicated staff to travel frequently
- List and a short description of similar activities conducted or projects implemented

4. Financial proposal

The estimated budget for the project implementation is CHF 1,000,000 and the duration for the implementation is from March 2023 to December 2026. By considering these, as well as proposed interventions, the applicant is kindly asked to provide the targets/ expected results, as a potential impact of the project implementation by providing/filling in the following indicators:

Goal - *Women and young men, in particular, disadvantaged and excluded ones, benefit from improved economic opportunities (better income and decent jobs) inclusively and sustainably*

Impact indicators	Expected results
Number of women and youth with additional income and decent and green job opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women ▪ Most disadvantaged and excluded groups ▪ Green jobs 	XXX xx% xx% xx%
Percentage of women and youth with additional income and decent job opportunities who express satisfaction with their situation	xx%
Outcome indicators	
Amount of additional investment made by private sector enterprises because of changes stimulated by the program	CHF XXX
Percentage of private sector enterprises that report higher turnover and/or profit as a result of changes stimulated by the program	xx%
Number of women and youth with improved skills relevant to market needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women ▪ Most disadvantaged and excluded groups ▪ Green skills 	XXX xx% xx% xx%
Percentage of women and youth who express satisfaction with the relevance of skills	xx%

Number of women and youth that access and use intermediation services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women ▪ Most disadvantaged and excluded groups 	XXX xx% xx%
Percentage of women and youth who express satisfaction with the relevance of intermediation services	xx%
Number of private sector enterprises report better performance as a result of clear and implemented policies/regulations/administrative requirements as a result of the program's facilitation	XXX
Percentage of private sector enterprises that report increased economic opportunities and business environment	xx%

By considering these targets and proposed interventions, the applicant is kindly asked to provide (as a separate document) the financial proposal for the implementation.

Structure of the financial proposal:

Part 1: Personnel	CHF
- List of positions	
Total part 1	xxx
Part 2: Operation costs	
- Travel & reimbursable costs	
- Equipment	
- Operational costs	
Total part 2	xxx
Part 3: Activities/Interventions	
- List of activities/interventions	
Total part 3	xxx
Overhead (10%)	xxx
Grand total	xxx

5. Timeline

- RFP publishing date: **27-Jan-23**
- Application submission deadline: **27-Feb-23**
- Submission: Application should be submitted to Helvetas Eastern Europe easterneurope@helvetas.org
- Applications will be evaluated by the RECONOMY's procurement committee and the applicant can expect to receive a decision on their proposal by **13-Mar-23**. RECONOMY reserves the right to include an exchange or test of capabilities as part of the evaluation if needed to conclude this RFP.