

Request for Expressions of Interest

Pool of Experts for Backstopping Support to RECONOMY Program

1. Background

RECONOMY is a program funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation in collaboration with partners, in two regions - Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia Ukraine, Moldova), and Western Balkans (Kosovo, North Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The program focuses on the aspirations and challenges of women and youth, as well as the strategic priorities of the countries in these regions. It was launched in 2020, with an inception phase that ended in December 2022 for the Eastern Partnership countries and in March 2023 for the Western Balkans. The main phase will last for four years, starting in January 2023 for the Eastern Partnership and April 2023 for the Western Balkans, and ending in December 2026.

During the inception phase, the program aimed to enhance regional value addition by addressing common problems, engaging partners and stakeholders, and connecting local realities with thematic and institutional dimensions. It employed systems thinking to promote inclusive and sustainable economic development. RECONOMY stands out for its design, implementation, and impact generation. It strategically analysed economic development, considering the multidimensional nature of poverty and the exclusion of women and youth. The program leveraged the knowledge of stakeholders in the regions while generating new ideas to address social inclusion, income and job creation, and environmental sustainability. It was a collaborative effort involving multiple stakeholders, and the program team possessed expertise in facilitation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge management.

The program's operations revolved around three key areas: regional management, quality assurance, and governance. The regional management component focused on interventions, partner management, and stakeholder relationships. It aimed to facilitate innovative ideas that addressed common challenges across the region, benefiting multiple countries by supporting private sector enterprises. The quality assurance component ensured the implementation of high-quality interventions through environmental and social inclusion mainstreaming, monitoring and results measurement, and knowledge management and communication. Monitoring and results measurement played a crucial role in evaluating the program's progress, while knowledge management and communication facilitated information sharing and decision-making.

In the Western Balkans, the program is managed by a team of six program officers under the regional manager, who implements four regional projects. A similar team structure is in place for the Eastern Partnership region. Senior program management provides support and oversight, while the Technical leads in the area of Knowledge management and learning, environment and climate change, gender and social inclusion as well as monitoring and results management ensure the quality of processes related to their respective areas of work. The program's lean structures allow for agility, adaptive management, and flexibility. However, the resources of a program of such complexity still require external support in various

areas of work at different stages of the program cycle management. **Therefore, RECONOMY is looking for a Pool of Experts who could provide various support based on the specific needs of the program at different stages of the program cycle.**

2. Scope of Work, Expertise Required and Deliverables

The purpose of engaging a pool of experts is to provide specialized knowledge and skills required for the successful implementation of the Main Phase of RECONOMY Program. The pool of experts will support various components and clusters of the program, contributing to its strategic, technical, and operational aspects.

2.1 Scope of Work

The pool of experts will provide support in the following areas:

A. Regional Management:

- Facilitating innovative ideas and solutions that address common challenges in the region.
- Providing strategic support to the program implementing unit (Program Officers) through various instruments, including market systems development framework, strategic design tools, and etc.
- Ensuring targeted and impactful interventions under different projects.

B. Quality Assurance:

- Developing and implementing monitoring and results measurement systems.
- Supporting the program with impact assessment, including methodology development and necessary calculations.
- Supporting in managing knowledge, learning, and communication activities through various tools, like sensemaker, and etc.

2.2 Expertise Required

The pool of experts should possess a diverse range of skills and expertise relevant to the objectives and components of the RECONOMY program. The following fields of expertise are sought:

A. Market Systems Development:

- Strong understanding of market systems development approaches.
- Experience in designing and implementing interventions to promote inclusive economic development.
- Knowledge of value chain analysis and market assessments.

B. Knowledge Management and Learning:

- Proficiency in designing and implementing knowledge management systems.
- Experience in facilitating regional exchanges and networks.
- Strong communication and presentation skills.

C. Monitoring and Results Measurement

- Strong understanding of DCED standard in results measurement for market systems development projects, including socio-economic and sex disaggregated indicators in the project results framework.

- Experience in designing intervention guides, for inclusive and green economic development projects.
- Expertise in impact analysis, market analysis, evaluations, assessment, cost benefits and etc.

2.3 Deliverables

The pool of experts will be responsible for delivering the following:

- Technical inputs, advice, and recommendations relevant to their field of expertise.
- Reports, assessments, and analyses related to market systems development, knowledge management and learning.
- Capacity-building activities, training sessions, and workshops as required.
- Contributions to program documentation, including lessons learned, best practices, and success stories.

3. Procurement Process

RECONOMY will select a maximum of three experts for each of the expertise fields listed above. It is possible for an applicant to apply for more than one field of expertise. If no suitable expert is found for one or more of the fields of expertise required, RECONOMY reserves the right to remove them from this request and to procure them through a separate procurement process.

4. Eligibility for participation

4.1 Eligible Applicants

Participation is open to all individuals or organizations with proven experience in the fields of expertise required. In case of organizations the proposed experts shall be named.

Helvetas is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce and encourages qualified candidates of all genders, backgrounds, and abilities to apply. All engagement is decided on the basis of qualifications, competence, integrity and organizational need.

4.2 Exclusion Criteria from participation

Applicants shall be excluded from taking part in the procurement procedure if they meet at least one of the Exclusion Criteria described in the Annex 1.

Applicants must certify on honour in their Expressions of Interest that they are not in any of the situations described in the Annex 1 - Exclusion Criteria. Please use template provided in Annex 2.

5. Qualifications and Selection Criteria

To be considered for the Pool of Experts, applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Advanced degree in a relevant field (economics, business administration, development studies, etc.)
- Minimum of five years of professional experience in market systems development, monitoring and results measurement according to DCED standard, knowledge management and learning.
- Proven expertise and track record in specific fields of specialization.
- Good understanding of social and economic inclusion of women and youth, including the most disadvantaged and excluded groups.
- Strong analytical, communication, and intercultural skills.
- Familiarity with the regions and their economic development context is desirable.
- Fluency in English
- Knowledge of regional languages is an asset.

6. Application Procedure

6.1 Language of the Expressions of Interest: ENGLISH

6.2 Documents to be submitted:

Expressions of interest should include the following documents:

- Letter expressing interest to provide backstopping support by stating which fields of expertise are being applied for,
- Curriculum vitae of the expert highlighting relevant qualifications and experiences,
- Cover letter outlining the expert's fields of expertise and how they align with the objectives of RECONOMY Program,
- Contact details of three professional references,
- Financial offer – daily fee rate requested in CHF,
- Certification on Honour,
- Declaration of Availability and No Conflict of Interest (Annex 4).

Note: All above listed documents are mandatory for submission. If any of these documents is not presented, the expressions of interest will not be qualified for the evaluation process.

Upon request, the applicant will present documents proving the qualifications and experiences declared in the CV (copies of diplomas, certificates, other confirmation documents, etc.).

6.3 Submission of Expressions of Interest

Expressions of Interest should be delivered in **pdf format** to reconomyprocurement@helvetas.org, with the subject line "Expert Pool Application - RECONOMY Program", by **11 October 2023**.

7. Evaluation

Expressions of Interest will be evaluated based on the qualifications and selection criteria outlined above. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview or additional assessments to assess their suitability for the pool of experts.

7.1 Awarding Criteria

Expressions of interest will be evaluated based on the **Best price – Quality ratio** criteria as follows:

- A. Quality of Qualification - 80%
- B: Financial offer (Daily fee rate) – 20%

7.2 Evaluation Criteria

A. Qualification Criteria		Max Points (80)
A1. General Qualification		
A1.1	Strong background in the field of expertise	15
A1.2	Experience with the social and economic inclusion of women and youth, including the most disadvantaged and excluded groups	5
A1.3	Familiarity with the regions and their economic development context	5
A1.4	Presentation, explanation and communication skills	5
A1.5	Fluency in English and knowledge of a regional language	10
A2. Professional Experience		
A2.1	Relevance of the professional experience in the field of expertise (market systems development/ monitoring and results measurement according to DCED standard/ knowledge management and learning)	20
A2.2	Proven similar assignments of expertise in the specific field of specialization with international, regional and national organizations carried out (whenever possible share samples)	20
B. Financial Offer (Daily fee rate) Criteria		Max Points (20)
B.1	Daily fee rate requested is well aligned with the international / regional market daily rates	10
B.2	To what extent the quality of qualification corresponds to the daily fee rate requested.	10

Shortlisted applicants will be selected based on the total score attained.

To be shortlisted the applicants should pass:

- a. the minimum score of 60% of the qualification score of 80 points, and
- b. the minimum score of 50% of the financial offer score of 20 points.

The expressions of interest that do not pass the minimum qualification score are not considered eligible for further consideration, and their financial offers will not be evaluated.

8. Conditions

- **The experts selected in the pool will be engaged on an on-call basis, with specific assignments and duration to be determined based on the program's needs.**
- Selected experts will be engaged as individual consultants on a contractual basis. The detailed terms and conditions of the contract will be negotiated based on the specific assignments and deliverables.
- The expected workload is set to maximum 20 days a year.
- RECONOMY Program will establish a framework agreement with all selected experts. Terms and conditions outlined in this framework agreement remain valid for the whole program duration and cannot be changed for specific contracts. Framework agreements do not guarantee that all selected experts will be contracted for 20 days a year.
- The daily fee rates requested in the expressions of interest must include all taxes and remain unchangeable during the whole duration of the program.
- The **HELVETAS General Conditions of Business** shall be deemed accepted on submission of expressions of interest (Annex 3)
- Availability for travel within the regions may be required. Cost for travel, accommodation and per diem are regulated in the contract based on internal rules of HELVETAS.

9. Confidentiality

RECONOMY acknowledges that the information received from Applicants under this Request for Expressions of Interest (REoI) may be of a confidential nature. RECONOMY shall use the same degree of care with Applicant's confidential information as it uses to protect its own confidential information.

10. Further Information

Any clarifications or questions regarding this REoI shall be sent to email address reconomyprocurement@helvetas.org no later than 7 working days before the REoI closing date.

The applicants can expect to receive information about the decision on their expressions of interest by **1 November 2023**.