

# Terms of Reference for Consultancy

## Social Component

### Pilot Technical Concept and Plan

#### Izbet Alhamra – Beheira -Egypt

Project Title	<b>Al-Murunah Project: Building Climate Resilience through Enhanced Water Security in MENA</b>
Implementing organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- International Water Management Institute (IWMI)</li><li>- Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)</li></ul>
Project Location	Izbet Alhamra, Abu Almatamir district, Beheira Governorate

## I. Background

In response to water and climate change challenges in Egypt, the Government of the United Kingdom (FCDO) has funded the five-year “Al Murunah” Project with the objective of increasing water security in the MENA region through the integration of Resilient Nature-Based Solutions for Water (RNBSW) and Agricultural Water Management (AWM) in the face of climate change and land degradation. While identifying and demonstrating pragmatic approaches to investing in NBSW/AWM in the region, the initiative will focus on four countries - Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and Egypt. The central premise of the Al Murunah Project is that appropriately designed on-the-ground NBSW and AWM interventions can, in tandem, enhance water security in the agricultural regions of the Middle East, thereby increasing the resilience of households and communities in the targeted area.

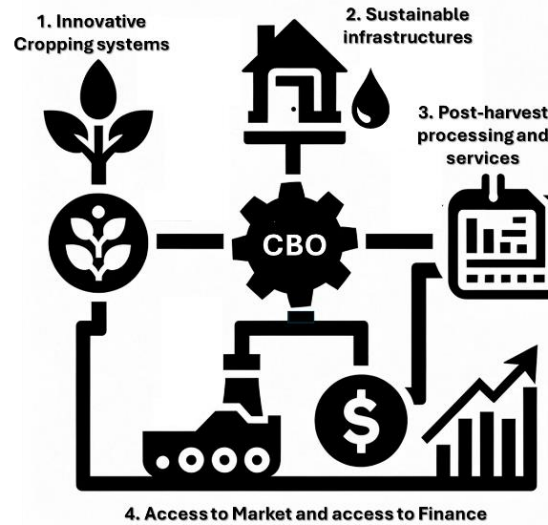
## II. Pilot Technical Concept and Plan – Social Component

- 1. Introduction** – The RNBWS initiative is specifically aimed at improving agroecological practices within smallholder farms and gender categories (women and youth) located in Izbat Al-Hamra, Abu Al-Matamir District, Egypt. This initiative adopts a comprehensive approach that encompasses sustainable crop diversification and intensification practices, all tailored to local soil and water salinity conditions. Furthermore, the initiative actively promotes women-led value chains for AOC-certified artichokes, facilitates local Community-based Organizations (CBOs) access to loans, and introduces advanced water conservation and efficiency systems and crop management practices.

Key components that emphasize resilience and sustainability and are designed to support the existing Community-Based Organizations led by women and youth include:

- Innovative cropping systems that feature a diverse range of salt-tolerant crops.
- Sustainable infrastructure development to enhance agricultural practices.
- A strengthened value chain that focuses on post-harvest processing and packaging.
- Improvement in access to agriculture inputs/ end users' markets and financial resources.

The diagram presented in [Figure 1](#) visually illustrates the RNBWS framework for Egypt, highlighting the interconnectedness between these key components.



**Figure 1.** The RNBWS definition in Egypt: pilot integrated components.

### III. Social Aspects of the Pilot Components

#### 1.1. *Post-harvest processing and services component*

Within this project, **the women-led value chain for post-harvest processing** takes center stage, where women are the driving force behind the meticulous handling and transformation of artichokes and other crops after they are harvested. Their role encompasses various critical stages, including:

- **Sorting, cleaning, packaging, and preparing products for market distribution.** These women not only bring traditional knowledge but also adapt to modern techniques to meet quality standards and ensure that the produce reaches consumers in optimal condition.
- This component aims at fostering women-led value chains for AOC-certified artichokes (and other crops like cabbage). This component supports women in establishing and managing value chains, facilitating access to markets and ensuring quality production standards.

In parallel, a group of energetic and forward-thinking **young individuals' takes charge of vital service activities** that complement the value chain. Their focus is on:

- The effective **preparation, packaging, and marketing of seeds of alternative drought/salt-tolerant crops and needed agriculture inputs such as organic fertilizers and bio-pesticides**, employing semi-mechanized processes that enhance efficiency and accuracy. Their involvement is a guarantee for the availability of high-quality seeds for multiple-year plantings, further contributing to agricultural sustainability.
- Moreover, this young CBO is also deeply involved in the **valorization of crop by-products**. They harness innovative semi-mechanized processes to extract additional value from agricultural waste, turning it into resources such as silage, biochar, and compost. This sustainable approach not only reduces waste but also generates valuable inputs that can be reinvested in farming operations.
- Services could also include retailing agricultural inputs through local representation of wholesale agricultural inputs companies.

In essence, the collaboration between women-led value chains for post-harvest processing and youth-led services and retail activities represents a harmonious blend of traditional expertise and modern innovation. This synergy creates a sustainable agricultural ecosystem that not only ensures food security but also offers

economic opportunities to women and youth, paving the way for a prosperous and resilient agricultural sector.

### **1.2. Access to market and access to finance:**

This access to market and access to finance component targets empowering local CBOs or formalized groups of women for economic sustainability. In this critical component of the Technical Pilot, the focus is on providing essential support for local CBOs led by women in post-processing activities and by youth in service-oriented endeavors. The overarching objective is to enhance economic sustainability and foster self-reliance among these groups.

The access to market should be facilitated through:

- **Crop Contracting and Market Linkages:** The subcomponent facilitates partnerships between local CBOs or formalized groups of women and organizations like Mozar3Egypt (and/or other private sector companies). These collaborations enable crop contracting, ensuring that the produce meets market demands and quality standards. By securing contracts and market linkages, CBOs can sell their processed products at fair prices, thereby increasing their income and contributing to the economic growth of the community. Mozar3 (and/or other private sector companies) could also share the cost of the hydroponic demonstration setup for the women CBO/ formalized groups of women with a design of a dedicated end-users financial scheme.
- **Capacity Building and Awareness:** Capacity-building programs are implemented to enhance the skills and knowledge of CBO members and formalized groups. Training covers various aspects, including crop processing techniques, market dynamics, and financial literacy. Additionally, awareness campaigns educate CBOs/ members of formalized groups about market trends and consumer preferences, enabling them to make informed decisions and adapt to changing market conditions.
- **Support for Women-Led CBOs:** The project places a special emphasis on supporting women-led CBOs/ women formalized groups, recognizing the crucial role women play in agriculture and post-harvest processing.
  - Central to the success of the Access to Market and Access to Finance component is its focus on empowering women-led CBOs/women-formalized groups within the agricultural value chain. These organizations are at the forefront of post-harvest processing, including the packaging of high-value crops such as artichokes and cabbages. Through the provision of machinery and financial support, women-led CBOs and women formalized groups become key players in ensuring the quality and marketability of agricultural products.
  - A notable initiative is the cost-sharing arrangement for the establishment of a hydroponic demonstration unit. Hydroponics, as a modern and water-efficient agricultural technique, not only increases crop yields but also conserves valuable water resources. Furthermore, the partnership with Mozar3 (and/or other private sector companies) extends to the potential design and implementation of customized end-user financial schemes. These schemes are specifically tailored to the needs of women-led CBOs/women-formalized groups, enabling them to access essential capital for investing in hydroponic systems. This financial support not only empowers women but also promotes their financial sustainability, ensuring their active participation in the project's activities.

## **IV. Pilot technical plan Terms of Reference**

The design phase serves as the blueprint for the entire project, ensuring that each component is meticulously planned and structured to achieve its objectives. This phase will provide the detailed guidelines and specifications necessary for the successful implementation of the project during subsequent phases.

The key components (the deliverables) and their associated design objectives are outlined below:

### **Key Pillars/ Activities**

- Conduct desk review on available collected literature, including Egypt Baseline report and workshop reports

- Conduct 5 FGDs with Women and Youth in Abu Al Matamir (logistics shall be arranged by CEDARE)
- Conduct 4 KIIs with community leaders (Head of Agriculture cooperative at the district level - Head of Agriculture cooperative at the Village level- 2 lead farmers)
- Design support programs tailored to women-led Community-Based Organizations (CBOs/ women formalized groups) and associated needed capacity building activities for them that can be implemented in the community space (newly established space in the agriculture cooperative).
- Develop the design and cost-sharing model for the hydroponic unit for women-led CBOs/women-formalized groups.
- Recommendation on the provision of revolving loans to existing agriculture cooperatives.
- Design general aspects of the support programs for youth-led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- Provide recommendations on strategies for generating employment and fostering entrepreneurship.

## **Deliverables**

- Inception report highlighting workplan to achieve this assignment
- Draft report highlighting key findings and recommended technical design
- Final Report highlighting key findings and recommended technical design

## **V. Timeline for the consultancy**

- The consultancy duration is three months.

## **VI. How to Apply**

Interested applicants should submit their technical and financial proposals, as well as any supporting documents, to [gmohamed@cedare.int](mailto:gmohamed@cedare.int) before 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 with the following subject line “Al-Murunah Project: Pilot Technical and Financial Proposal”.