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# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## Partner country

Republic of Serbia

## Contracting authority

City of Sombor

## Country background

Rural development and empowerment of vulnerable groups, including women in rural areas, have become more prominent in the past period. This project relates directly with those efforts.

At the moment, poverty and material deprivation are highly represented in rural Serbia with financial poverty facing 38,4% of the population, and with material deprivation 35%. Half of the employees in rural areas are labor engaged in agricultural activities in the context of family farms. Introduction of lavender which has a life span of 12-15 years and is suitable for farming on smaller patches of land, rural women will be given skills and means to overcome the financial and especially social isolation they find themselves in.

Women in rural communities are the backbone of rural society. Their position is burdened by general lack of social recognition and empowering opportunities. Existing disparities between men and women in terms of access to resources, employment and profitable activities, education and participation in public life, make their status severely vulnerable. Also, their status is aggravated by general transformations, rural impoverishment, migration and privatisation. Project target groups belong to the most vulnerable population, encompassing women living in rural areas of WBR and Bács-Kiskun region. On the territory of the City of Sombor (CoS) live 85,903 inhabitants, out of which 41,500 live in the town and 43,500 in 15 surrounding villages. The average income per capita is 20% lower than the average of the Republic of Serbia.

Regarding natural resources as a precondition for the success of the project: prevailing land in the cross border region (including West Backa District) has composition and specifics that are fully suitable for growing lavender. According to relevant data 96% of the territory is suitable for lavender growing.

Bac Kiskun county is by area the largest county in Hungary with half a million populations. Majority of land is rural with one urban agglomeration of Kecskemet, several small town communities (Baja, Kalocsa, Kiskunhalas) and around 120 villages. Around 10% of population lives in suburban areas. Commercially most developed area is northern part of the county with Mercedes-Benz factory in Kecskemet. Industry is diverse with food production companies such as Knorr, Mogyi and Fornetti. Southern part of the county has rich gas and oil deposits.

## Current situation in the sector

Poverty and material deprivation are highly represented in rural Serbia. With financial poverty facing 38,4% of the population, and with material deprivation 35%. Half of the employees in rural areas are labor engaged in agricultural activities in the context of family farms.

In Serbia little attention has been paid to the position of rural women. If those women could be educated, motivated and helped to organize themselves into Lavender growing cluster, they could achieve greater social equality and economic independence both for themselves and for their families. According to the data of Sombor Centre for social work, total number of rural women who use social assistance is 2,213 (out of 43,500 inhabitants) and activities of this project will focus on them. Special attention will be paid to 601 single-mother families living in Sombor rural area plus 387 families who use child allowance. All together 988 families who receive some social assistance in rural settlements, is project target group.

Prevailing land within the CBR has composition and specifics that are fully suitable for growing lavender. ESS has done an analysis of land in the entire West Bačka region (WBR), and concluded that 96% of the territory is suitable for lavender growing. Characteristics of the land will be matched with the needs of 186 varieties of lavender. City of Sombor already has experience in projects dealing with female entrepreneurship in agricultural production on its territory, which makes it well-qualified partner for this project.

Social entrepreneurship is a form of economic activity, through a voluntarily organized group of citizens, aimed at achieving a social goal, and where profit is reinvested in solving a specific social problem or further developing a social enterprise. Social enterprises are guided by the general social values ​​and goals that are social, ecological, and cultural. Social Entrepreneurship is an innovative concept that offers non-standard solutions to societal problems and shows great potential in hiring hard-to-employ categories of people who come mostly from the most vulnerable groups. The most vulnerable groups in Serbia are: persons with disabilities, refugees and internally displaced persons, single parents, Roma, ex-prisoners, ex-addicts, people with disabilities, people without primary education and recipients of financial social assistance. Among the most vulnerable, of course, are different categories of women's population: primarily women who are victims of violence, women from rural areas (especially over 50 years of age), single-parent women, women over 45 who have lost their jobs as a technological surplus, and women who victims of human trafficking. Social entrepreneurship, according to the data from the study Economic impact of social enterprises from 2012, states that slightly more than 10,000 people worked in the social enterprise sector, which is 0.6% of the total number of employees in the Republic of Serbia. Although more than 60% of men employed in social enterprises are employed in social enterprises, the number of women employed in social enterprises when cooperatives are excluded (of which the largest number is agricultural cooperatives) is around 50%, although in some forms and sectors more women than men are employed. As for engaged volunteers in social enterprises, there are more women in all types of social enterprises. This is a clear indication that social entrepreneurship offers greater chances for women's employment, as well as for larger female entrepreneurship, namely the number of social entrepreneurs (although there are no exact data even at European / world level) is much higher than the number of classical women entrepreneurs among the total the number of entrepreneurs (which is around 29%). This also applies to Serbia where some of the leading and renowned social enterprises are guided by women.

In Hungary in Bac Kiskun county agriculture is predominant commercial activity. Beginning with 19. century Bac Kiskun county is center of fruit, vegetable and winery production. Agriculture is based mostly on corn and barley, vegetable production on paprika nad cabbage, fruit production on apple, cherry and plum. In 2011, 12% of the GDP derived from agriculture which is 2.5 times the national average. Nine percent of agricultural GDP came from Bac Kiskun county. This is closely followed by food production industry. In 2010 there were 54000 individual agricultural households which tilled close to two thirds of the arable land. Small and middle-sized households are dominant with tendencies of reduction of number of households and increase of area which every household is treating. Close to 20% of population in involved in agriculture.

## Related programmes and other donor activities

Not applicable.

# OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

## Overall objective

The overall objective of the project of which this contract will be a part is as follows:

The main objective of the project is: “Creating an environment conducive to harmonized development of the region through sustainable use of natural resources, via development of social entrepreneurship and raising capacities for social enterprise among women in rural areas using innovative models of knowledge and skills transfer.”

This objective contributes to the specific objective of the 2nd call of the Interreg IPA CBC Hungary-Serbia programme: “Enforcing the growth capabilities and employment potential of SMEs through the development and adaptation of new technologies, processes, products or services“.

## Purpose

The purpose of this contract is as follows:

* creating the precondition to economically and socially empower women from rural areas through lavender growing and processing by distributing and planting of 60 thousand lavender seedlings in the specified area, targeted at vulnerable women

## Results to be achieved by the contractor

**Result 1:** Planting of 60 thousand lavender seedlings in the specified area, on lots designated by the Contracting Authority

**Result 2**: Development of a practical guide for growing and care of lavender seedling

**Result 3**: Training on planting of lavender seedlings and care of lavender during the planting process.

# ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

## Assumptions underlying the project

Not applicable.

## Risks

* Drop-out rate of target group.
* Weather conditions for planting lavender seedling.

# SCOPE OF THE WORK

## General

### Description of the assignment

Lavender will be introduced as a new and environmentally friendly crop. Along with sustainable lavender farming, a social enterprise will be formed through the project. It will consist of women from rural areas who represent a severely disadvantaged group and who suffer from social isolation.

### Geographical area to be covered

Rural areas witnih Bacs Kiskun County in Hungary and the City of Sombor in Serbia.

### Target groups

Vulnerable women from rural areas, who are identified and chosen as project beneficiaries through a public open call for applications, whose land is suitable for planting according to the soil analyses.

## Specific work

The contractor is tasked with:

1. **Provision and planting of a total of 60,000 lavender seedlings in the programme area: 30,000 in Bacs Kiskun and 30,000 in rural areas on the territory of City of Sombor.**   
   Lavender seedlings are to be planted on lots designated by the contracting authority. The Contracting Authority will provide the contractor with exact locations (incl. GPS coordinates) and details on the lots, at least 7 days after the contract is signed by both parties).

Specifications for the lavender seedlings:

* Species: Lavandula Angustifolia. Seedlings need to be resistant to cold, and produce purple flowers, that will flower twice a year.
* Lavender seedlings should not be smaller than 6 cm
* Managing the risk of weather condition damage to lavender seedlings by using a thin fibbers type cover.
* Mode of propagation: vegetative only

The Contractor will be solely responsible for handling all customs procedures related to the execution of services within the contract and shall in no capacity rely on the Contracting Authority for this matter.

1. **Field control and replacement of lavender seedlings destroyed by elements and/or other causes.**
2. **Development of a practical guide for growing and care of lavender seedling.**The practical guide, aimed at assisting the recipients of lavender seedlings in achieving long-time sustainability of their crops, is to be made available in both Serbian and Hungarian.
3. **Conducting training on planting of lavender seedlings and care of lavender crops during the planting process.**

Planting needs to be conducted with the presence of plot owners, with first watering and education on location delivered

1. **Maintaining records on the services rendered within the contract.**The contractor is expected to maintain records and material evidence on the services provided (esp. photographic evidences of completed plantings and trainings), and hand them over to the Contracting Authority prior to the termination of the contract.

## Project management

### Responsible body

City of Sombor, Trg cara Urosa 1, 25101 Sombor, Serbia; Mr. Branislav Svorcan as Project Manager.

### Management structure

City of Sombor is a unit of local self government and is governed by public law of the Republic of Serbia. Through a decision of the city council no. 06-20/2017-III from 30 January 2017, the City takes part in this project as the Lead Beneficiary.

Project team consists of five members: Project Manager, Financial manager, PR manager, Field officer and Project Assistant. All team members are employed in the city administration.

Project Manager manages the daily implementation of project activities. However, only the Mayor of Sombor has the authority to enter contracts on behalf of the City and as such will also sign the contract resulting from this procurement procedure.

### Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties

Not applicable.

# LOGISTICS AND TIMING

## Location

West Backa district (Serbia) and Bacs Kiskun country (Hungary)

## Start date & period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 15 October 2019 and the period of implementation of the contract will be 60 days from this date. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the special conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

# REQUIREMENTS

## Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

### Key experts

Key experts are not required.

### Other experts, support staff & backstopping

CVs for experts other than the key experts should not be submitted in the tender but the tenderer will have to demonstrate in their offer that they have access to experts with the required profiles. The contractor shall select and hire other experts as required according to the needs. The selection procedures used by the contractor to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience.

The costs for backstopping and support staff, as needed, are considered to be included in the tenderer's financial offer.

## Office accommodation

Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the contractor.

## Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

## Equipment

**No** equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority / partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority / partner country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

# REPORTS

## Reporting requirements

The contractor will submit the following reports in English in one original and one copy:

* **Draft final report** of maximum 10 pages (main text, excluding annexes). This report shall be submitted no later than 10 days before the end of the period of implementation of tasks.
* **Final report** with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 3 working days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The final report must be provided along with the corresponding invoice.

## Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the project manager identified in the contract. The project manager is responsible for approving the reports.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

## Definition of indicators

Success indicators for services under this contract are:

* 60,000 lavender seedlings planted in a quality and timely manner
* Developed practical guide for growing and care of lavender seedling
* Conducted training on planting of lavender seedlings and care of lavender crops
* Final report submitted and accepted by the Contracting Authority

## Special requirements

Not applicable.