



EU Green Agriculture Initiative in Armenia (EU GAIA) Project

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF EU-GAIA STAKEHOLDERS/INSTITUTIONS

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

Agriculture is the priority sector of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) for Armenia, as about half of the Armenian population is engaged in agriculture and it is also one of the most important sectors of the Armenian economy. Nevertheless, the agricultural potential in Armenia is highly underutilized and the production remains predominately at subsistence level. Insufficient capacities, lack of access to agricultural inputs, credits, markets and information hamper agricultural productivity and competitiveness. Since Armenia has good preconditions for the development of green agriculture – due to its unique geographic and natural conditions – the Ministry of Economy (Agricultural division) (MoEc) of the Republic of Armenia has prioritized its promotion through incorporation in appropriate governmental policies and regulatory legislative framework.

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the operational unit of the ADC, has been delegated by the European Union (EU) to implement a strategic project focusing on development of Green Agriculture in Armenia (EU-GAIA). The EU-GAIA Project worth is 11.7 Million Euros. The implementation period of the project is 42 months with the start date of 1 October 2019.

The EU GAIA project is funded by the European Union and co-funded and implemented by the Austrian Development Agency, and co-implemented by UNDP. EU-GAIA project is part of the EU's Annual Action Programme for 2018 – Regional Development. The overall objective and the specific objective of the Action are in line with the AAP 2018, approved by 28 member states of the EU. *Overall Objective* of EU GAIA is to contribute to the realization of shared and balanced inclusive growth in the northern regions of Armenia through boosting green agriculture and enhancing local value added. The *specific objective* of the EU-GAIA project is to facilitate the development of sustainable, innovative and market-driven agribusinesses in a green and inclusive manner, offering region-specific solutions and an improved enabling environment.

The Action foresees to achieve the following 4 objectives (SO):



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and widely promoted among all relevant stakeholders including governmental authorities, public and private actors, farmers as well as educational sector and Civil Society Organizations.

Result 1.2 Increased capacities of the public sector and non-state actors in green agriculture

Activities:

1.2.1. *Raise awareness and develop capacities of relevant stakeholders on the development of policies, legislation and regulations for green agriculture.*

The project will facilitate the development of individual and organizational capacities of the public sector (e.g. relevant ministries, local administration, public extension services) and non-state actors (such as associations, private extension services). This will be partly based on the outcomes and discussions of the policy dialogue forum and working groups on green agriculture (see activity 1.1.1), but will also relate to capacity gaps and requirements related to present policies. Other specific requirements for capacity development will emerge in relation to the selected value chains and specific support services.

1.2.2. *Enhance capacities of the educational sector in green agriculture*

The concept of green and sustainable agriculture will be introduced into the educational system. Areas may include integrated agricultural production systems (e.g. conservation agriculture, integrated pest management), and sustainable management of water and soils (soil-water interactions, water conservation measures, and erosion control). Based on the respective demands, activities could encompass curriculum development, teaching material development, training of teachers up to local and international institutional exchange.

1.2.3. *Promote linkages between education, science, extension services and agribusinesses (practice-oriented-learning)*

Linkages between education, science, extension services and agribusinesses will be promoted to support the dissemination of scientific research results, exchange of knowledge and the sustainable adaptation of technologies at the local level. Demonstration sites (activity 2.2.2) will serve as a “hub” for exchanges and joint learning connecting different stakeholders such as innovative agribusinesses, extension service providers and researchers. Students will be able to conduct part of their studies and research there, working closely with the agribusinesses and extension service providers on the promotion of green technologies and GAPs.

1.2.4. *Develop capacities of relevant farmers / agribusinesses associations through training and organizational support*

Relevant associations in the sector, like the Veterinary Association or the Armenian Organic Farmers Association, will be strengthened through appropriate training for individual members as well as institutional development, the development of their service portfolio for their members, and their capacity to represent the interests of their members.



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Based on results of stakeholders' capacity needs assessment including technical and knowledge gaps which is to be conducted during the first year of the project, GAIA project intends to provide various capacity development and awareness raising programs to relevant stakeholders including public and private actors, state bodies and their services as well to educational institutions.

2. Description of the Assignment

Capacity development of stakeholders at the different levels is an important aspect to be addressed in the scope of the GAIA project. To achieve higher efficiency of relevant public, private and educational institutions, the GAIA project envisages certain capacity development measures.

It is crucial that not only the needs, challenges and gaps of the respective institutions/organizations are assessed but also the interaction and interrelations amongst these targeted institutions/organizations. To this end, the ADA is looking for an external service provider¹ to:

- i) conduct a comprehensive capacity needs assessment revealing the existing capacity needs, challenges and knowledge gaps of relevant stakeholders in terms of green agriculture,
- ii) develop a capacity development strategy/plan, identifying both short and long-term requirements of relevant stakeholders.

The capacity development needs assessment of GAIA project will include public and educational sectors' institutions and private sector organizations, addressing the needs and demands of the various stakeholders and organizations.

2.1 Specific Objectives of the Assignment

The purpose of the assignment is to:

- Facilitate a comprehensive capacity needs assessment revealing the existing capacity development needs, challenges and gaps of relevant stakeholders in policy, legislation, regulation and procedures development, subject matter and Agricultural knowledge related to effective development of Green Agriculture in Armenia;
- Develop a capacity development strategy/plan to be used by EU GAIA team based on the assessment results and recommendations, indicating both short and long-term requirements of all stakeholders.

Specifically, capacity needs assessments are to be conducted at:

- Ministries of Economy/Agriculture, Nature Protection, including respective departments and services that are related to green/organic agriculture (e.g. National Food Safety Services, National Accreditation Body, Quality Infrastructure Department, or similar state bodies);

¹ It is envisaged that the service will be conducted with the participation of national and international experts, i.e. by a team of individual experts, a consulting company, or think-tank research organizations.



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- Educational institutions including State Agrarian University, ICARE, Vocational education training institutions and colleges based and operate in 3 targeted/beneficiary provinces (Shirak, Lori and Tavush);
- Public /state extension services (i.e. Department of Agricultural Extension at MoEc);
- Local organic (possible green or bio) certification providers;
- Local NGO's involved in promotion and development of Green Agriculture /Organic Agriculture; (the short list of the selected NGOs will be provided additionally by GAIA Project team)
- National unions, federations, alliances that advocate for farmer's rights and promote sustainable Agriculture in Armenia;

2.2 Requested Services and Tasks of the Contractor

Under the direct supervision of the Project Team Leader and with support from the GAIA Team, the successful contractor will be required to:

- Define methodologies to be applied during capacity development needs assessment process of different sectorial stakeholders (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, workshops, cognitive mapping, organisation performance development methodology, desk review of available capacity needs assessments.)
- Prepare tailor-made self-assessment questionnaires² for each of the above specified stakeholders in 2.1 based on the capacity development manual developed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)³, hereafter Contracting Authority.
- Identify appropriate stakeholders to be assessed for each of the above specified categories and agree the list with the Contracting Authority.
- Review similar and already existing capacity needs assessments (e.g. MoEc/MoA, High Educational Institutions in Agriculture field etc.) and complement on specific required capacity needs, challenges and gaps in terms of green /sustainable/organic agriculture.
- Collect the questionnaires and review the data in terms of consistency, lacking information etc. and verify this by means of personal/group interviews.
- Analyse, evaluate and process the collected data; group and categorize the revealed outcomes in terms of charts/tables/percentages.
- Suggest appropriate capacity development measures/recommendations for each stakeholder group in 2.1 based on the processed outcomes of the questionnaires.

² The draft tailor-made self-assessment questionnaires should be agreed with and approved by the GAIA project team and need to cover all relevant aspects of GA/OA (e.g. in terms of sustainable management of natural resources (e.g. Sustainable Land Management), green/conservative and organic cultivation methods, sustainable harvesting techniques, diseases and pest control, proper utilization of organic fertilizers/pesticides as well as Integrated Pest Management, processing and storing standards etc.) Also, organizational skills, business skills etc. should be addressed.

³ http://www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/Manual_Capacity_Development.pdf



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- Prepare a detailed capacity development plan, identifying and indicating short and long-term requirements and measures for the different stakeholder groups (e.g. on-the-job trainings, courses, coaching, exchange, learning or study visits etc.), required inputs (like financial and human resources), time planning and responsibilities and stakeholders.
- Ensure on time reporting of outputs/deliverables according to timeline indicated in Part 4 of the ToR.
- Present results/findings and recommendations during a validation workshop and participate in joint discussion around these findings/recommendations with the Contracting Authority, GAIA team experts and other relevant stakeholders of the project.
- Revise accordingly the final report (upon Contractor's request) and submit the final version of the report to Contracting Authority and GAIA Project team.

3. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

Based on the requested services and tasks of the contractor (2.2.), the following outputs must be delivered:

- A list of the identified stakeholders for each category agreed with Contracting Authority;
- A description of methodologies to be applied for the different stakeholders to be agreed with the Contracting Authority;
- A tailor made self-assessment questionnaires;
- Filled questionnaire originals and electronic Excel versions of collected questionnaire data;
- Result protocols of qualitative interviews conducted;
- Itemized and consolidated charts/tables/percentages for each of the assessed stakeholder categories;
- Recommended capacity development measures/actions (detailed description – type, scope, duration, etc.) for each of the stakeholders assessed;
- A detailed capacity development plan identifying and indicating short and long-term requirements, the foreseen capacity development measures/deliverables (e.g. on-the-job trainings, courses/curricula, coaching, exchange/study visits, technical assistance/laboratory or other appropriate equipment etc.), the required inputs/resources (e.g. financial, technical, human), the time planning (timeframe) for the different capacity development measures as well as the respective responsibilities of relevant stakeholders/focal persons to be involved in implementation and/or monitoring;
- As not all capacity requirements are likely to be addressed in the timeframe of this intervention, provide recommendations for the prioritization of the capacity development measures in close consultation with the Contracting Authority and stakeholders;
- Final assignment report.



4. Period of Assignment

The assignment is planned to commence in April 2020 with a kick-off workshop meeting in Armenia for detailed clarification on the tasks, work plan, deliverables etc.

The end of the assignment is planned by 05 August 2020 and all related outputs/deliverables must be submitted by that time.

During the assignment, the Contractor will be required to submit the above-mentioned deliverables/outputs based on the following indicative time schedule:

- Inception report - outlining the tailor-made self-assessment questionnaires, defining the formats of collected data for analyses, the methodologies/tools, the list of stakeholders, etc. – by 05 May, 2020.
- Interim report - collected/systematized data in predefined and agreed formats, recommended capacity development measures for each stakeholder based on the analyses of the collected data - by 30 June, 2020.
- Draft capacity development plan according to the terms described in Part 3 of the ToR. - by 20 July 2020
- Final report - by 05 August
- Validation workshop/presentation of findings – first half of August 2020

At each step the Contractor must closely cooperate with the GAIA Project team and Contracting Authority in terms of consultations and possible required revisions/adaptations.

5. Working Language

The assessment should be conducted in Armenian, while all required outputs (interim report, assessment results, capacity development plan and assignment report) must be both in Armenian and English.

6. Contracting Modalities

A service contract will be concluded between the Contracting Authority and the Service Provider (Contractor) supervised by EU GAIA Project Team Leader for delivering the above assignment/outputs, within the agreed time frame.

The GAIA project team shall provide necessary support particularly in consultation and confirmation of the proposed and selected by Contractor stakeholder groups under this assignment.



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The Contractor payment shall be based on the detailed financial proposal developed for this assignment and due to agreed payment schedule of tranches.

7. Intellectual Property

All information pertaining to the project (documentary, audio, digital, cyber, project documents, etc.) belonging to the Contracting Authority, which may be made available to the Contractor in the performance of his/her, duties under this consultancy shall remain the property of the Contracting Authority who shall have exclusive rights over their use. All information that was obtained and developed under this assignment shall not be disclosed to the public nor used in whatever without written permission of the Contracting Authority in line with the national and International Copyright Laws applicable.

8. Required Qualifications and Selection of the Contractor

The Contractor/research company key personnel will be required to have:

- A mixed team of national and international experts;
- 5 or more years of professional experience in:
 - production of research and assessment studies, mainly in the field of Agriculture and preferably with a focus on Green/Organic/Sustainable Agriculture,
 - implementation/facilitation of capacity development needs assessments and developing capacity development plans;
- Substantial experience in conducting interviews, focus group discussions and workshops;
- Excellent interpersonal/social and communication skills;
- Experience in working with international development organizations/projects;
- Key members of the team must be fluent in English; Armenian language capacities are required to conduct the assessment/interviews.

According to ADA's internal procurement guidelines the Contracting Authority will invite several service providers to submit an offer. The qualifications of the applicant/Contractor will be evaluated per the below-mentioned scoring and criteria. The Applicant/Contractor offering the best quality and value for money will be selected.

- Experience in working with EU projects and other international organizations
(*maximum 20 points*)



- Involves team members with expertise in similar reviews. Involves a team leader for this task with a proven high quality analytical and document drafting skills
(maximum 30 points).
- Involves team members with Master's degree (or equivalent) in Law, Agriculture/ Rural, Business, Sociology, Social Policy, Public Policy or Analysis, or related discipline(s)
(maximum 30 points).
- Financial criteria/value for money
(maximum 20 points);

Total maximum score: 100 points

9. Application Procedure

For the comparison of offers please provide the following information:

- A detailed Technical Proposal;
- Letter of Interest, stating why you consider being suitable for the assignment;
- Suggested methodology for the approach and implementation of the assignment; this should include comments or suggestions on the TOR, understanding of the objectives, purpose and expected results of the assignment, a work plan and time schedule illustrating the proposed work flow, milestones, deliverables etc.
- CVs of technical personnel proposed for this project highlighting qualifications and experience in similar projects;
- Registration certificate
- Work references (fact sheet) i.e. companies for whom you've produced similar assignments; as well as samples of work (available online if so).
- Financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of activity expenses and expert fees related to the assignment.
- The offer/proposal must be submitted not later than 10 April 2020.

10. Contact

Mr. Pascal Bokkers, EU GAIA Project Team Leader.

E-mail: Paschalis.Bokkers@ada.gv.at

Office for Technical Cooperation of the Austrian Embassy Yerevan

Erebuni Plaza – Business Centre, 26/1 V. Sargsyan St., 0001 Yerevan, Armenia

Rooms 712 – 716



+374 60 655 955
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The Project's Policy and Advocacy Expert, or who else is later delegated, acts as daily counterpart of the Contractor.

The Contractor is bound to maintain regular communications with the Project Team Leader and/or delegated ADA staff and to inform about any relevant issue concerning the project, as well as sending all documentary outputs of his/her assignment.

11. Publication

The Contractor agrees that the following information will be made public as required by the General Conditions to the European Union Pillar Assessed Grant Agreement signed by ADA:

- title and type of the contract,
- name and address of the contractor,
- amount of the contract.