



TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Development of the Programme Enhancement of Competitiveness Capacity of Women-Owned SMEs 2021-2025 in Viet Nam

I. BACKGROUND

UN Women

Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of substantive equality between women and men. The fundamental objective of UN Women is to enhance national capacity and ownership to enable national partners to formulate gender responsive laws, policies and upscale successful strategies to deliver on national and international commitments to gender equality.

UN Women Viet Nam Country Office has been one of the 7 countries (China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam) for the implementation of the UN Women Regional Programme “Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women at Work in Asia 4/2019-3/2022” (WeEmpower Asia). Its Overall Objective is that more women lead, participate and have access to enhanced business opportunities and leadership within the private sector to advance sustainable and inclusive growth. The programme is a part of UN Women’s Strategy Note for Viet Nam 2017-2021. The activity under this TOR is within the framework of Outcome 2.3: « More women lead, participate and have access to business opportunities to advance sustainable and inclusive growth ; Output 2.3.2: Women-owned businesses and women entrepreneurs have increased capacity to build their businesses for advancement of women economic empowerment».

SMEs legislations and women-owned enterprises in Viet Nam

The Law on Support for SMEs (2017) addresses 15 types of SMEs support: access to credit, credit guarantee funds for SMEs, tax and accounting regimes, production areas, technologies, assistance for incubators, technical establishments and coworking space, expansion into markets, access to information, consultancy legal issues, human resources development, conversion from household business to SMEs, startup, joining business clusters and value chains. It mentions the definition of women-owned SMEs.

The Decree No. 39/2018/ND-CP (2018) guiding the implementation of some articles of this Law regulates some preferences for women owned SMEs on human resources development. The new draft Decree

replacing the Decree 39/2018/NĐ-CP to be submitted to the Government Office for adoption in early 2021 adds some regulations on policies and principles to support women-owned SMEs.

In Viet Nam, women-owned enterprises account for 26.5 percent of the total active enterprises, making a significant contribution to the economy. These enterprises are mainly small and micro-sized (93.2 percent) and mostly operate in the service sector (79.2 percent)¹. Women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are facing many obstacles in engaging in business activities, including limited access to resources, low human capital, inadequate knowledge and skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and confront gender stereotypes related to family and business. These obstacles impact on the optimization of the development potential of women-owned SMEs.

Women-owned SMEs face difficulties to access the support policies addressed in SMEs legislations, such as : (i) ongoing support is too small and too complicated to access, hence there is little incentive for them to apply; (ii) The incentives for employers to obtain the training support for their employees are equally insufficient; and (iii) The existing gender specific difficulties and attributes, such as business and family life balance, the lack of successors, physical and biological activities of women (giving birth, their duty of family, support of less able and elderly family members etc.)².

The new Decree replacing the Decree 39/2018/NĐ-CP is adding some regulations on supporting women-owned SMEs on consultation and human resource development.

To support the practical implementation of policies targeting women-owned SMEs under the Law on Support for SMEs (2018) and the new Decree replacing the Decree 39/2018/NĐ-CP and to promote the development of women-owned SMEs in Viet Nam, the Ministry of Planning and Investment proposed to develop the Programme Enhancement of Competitiveness Capacity³ of Women-owned SMEs 2021-2025 in Viet Nam.

II. SCOPE OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

UN Women will support the Agency for Enterprise Development (AED) of the Ministry of Planning and Investment to develop the Programme Enhancement of Competitiveness Capacity of Women-owned SMEs 2021-2025 in Viet Nam. The overall objective of the Programme is to promote the development of women-owned SMEs in Viet Nam and to support the practical implementation of policies targeting women-owned SMEs under the Law on Support for SMEs (2018) and the new Decree replacing the Decree 39/2018/NĐ-CP.

¹ Data are consolidated from General Statistic Office's Enterprise Survey 2017.

² A review of the implementation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) support legislation, UN Women WeEmpowerAsia 2020

³ OECD defines "Competitiveness capacity is the possibility of enterprises, sectors and countries in creating employment and higher income in the international competitive conditions".

Michael Porter defines "Competitiveness capacity of enterprises is the possibility to maintain, extend market share and obtain high profit"

The selected supplier (an entity) will be recruited to work closely with the officials of the Agency of Enterprise Development (AED) of the Ministry of Planning and Investment and UN Women Programme Manager of WeEmpower Asia to carry out the following activities 10 Mar 2021 – 10 Dec 2021:

Activities	Expected outputs	Timing
<p>Activity 1: Carry out a Study with following key questions (i) What are the competitiveness of women-owned SMEs in line with some of Viet Nam's major export sectors; (ii) What are the barriers and needs to be addressed to be competitive (iii) What are lessons learned with regard to regional and international policies and intervention models to enhance competitiveness and to support women-owned SMEs^{4 5 6 7}. Key stakeholders to engage for the study are at least the MPI, relevant ministries, Women-owned SMEs Associations, etc.</p>	<p>Study Report (in English and Vietnamese) on priority sectors, issues, selected appropriate intervention tools/solutions⁸ in an effort to enhance competitiveness for women-owned SMEs in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors in the period of 2021-2025 including</p> <p>Proposal of projects on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-Owned Small and Medium Enterprises for the period 2021-2025 in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts, Objectives, expected outputs • Target groups or Beneficiaries • Proposed intervention tools/solutions • Activities • Funding and funding sources • Implementation • M&E Framework 	<p>Quarter 2 - 2021.</p>
<p>Activity 2: Organize seminars/group discussions/field trips to identify the priority sectors, issues and discover appropriate initiatives/ project concept/ solutions to be addressed to enhance competitiveness for women-owned SMEs in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors in the period of 2021-2025. This is for the development of the Programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts, Objectives, expected outputs • Target groups or Beneficiaries • Proposed intervention tools/solutions • Activities • Funding and funding sources • Implementation • M&E Framework 	<p>Quarter 2&3 2021</p>
<p>Activity 3: Consolidate ideas, formulate a draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam</p>	<p>Draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam that follows the requirements of the Government (in English and Vietnamese)</p>	<p>Q3&4 - 2021</p>

⁴ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335909810_Enhancing_the_Competitiveness_of_Women-led_MSMEs_in_the_Garments_and_Textile_Sector_through_Innovation_and_Entrepreneurship

⁵ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/itete20051_en.pdf

⁶ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Strengthening%20competitiveness%20of%20SMEs_final_English%20version_Savia.pdf

⁷ <https://apecsmemmarketplace.com/resources/smewg-resources?page=1>

⁸ Tools/ solutions that have been applied in various countries in an effort to enhance competitiveness of women-owned SMEs, according to rapid statistical work, include: Innovation& Entrepreneurship; Productive Capacity, Greening Innovation and Technology, Export program; capacity building program aims to provide technical training to five economies' trade promotion agency officials, who are responsible for fostering greater export of goods and services; Business Matching ; IT application; Global SME Cross-border Matchmaking Service; Financing innovation ...

Activity 4: Technical consultation workshop to seek for comments and feedback on the draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam.	The Report of the technical consultation workshop (in English)	
Activity 5: Finalize the Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam in English and Vietnamese.	The final draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam (in English and Vietnamese)	Q4 - 2021

III. FINAL PRODUCTS

1. The Study Report (in English and Vietnamese) on priority sectors, issues, selected appropriate intervention tools/solutions⁹ in an effort to enhance competitiveness for women-owned SMEs in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors including Proposal of projects on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-Owned Small and Medium Enterprises for the period 2021-2025 in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors.
2. The Report of the stakeholder technical consultation workshop (in English)
3. The final draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam (in English and Vietnamese)

IV. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

The Vietnamese supplier (an entity) will arrange sufficient number of professional staff (At least a team as mentioned in the section VI & VII) to work with the Agency for Enterprise Development of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, UN Women Programme Manager of WeEmpower Asia during contract time to ensure high- quality technical products.

UN Women will provide technical guidance where possible during whole working process. The Supplier (company) shall be required to bear all the related costs and work independently to successfully achieve the final results.

The supplier (business entity) will report to the UN Women Programme Manager in Viet Nam.

V. PAYMENT

⁹ Tools/ solutions that have been applied in various countries in an effort to enhance competitiveness of women-owned SMEs, according to rapid statistical work, include: Innovation& Entrepreneurship; Productive Capacity, Greening Innovation and Technology, Export program; capacity building program aims to provide technical training to five economies' trade promotion agency officials, who are responsible for fostering greater export of goods and services; Business Matching ; IT application; Global SME Cross-border Matchmaking Service; Financing innovation ...

¹⁰ Tools/ solutions that have been applied in various countries in an effort to enhance competitiveness of women-owned SMEs, according to rapid statistical work, include: Innovation& Entrepreneurship; Productive Capacity, Greening Innovation and Technology, Export program; capacity building program aims to provide technical training to five economies' trade promotion agency officials, who are responsible for fostering greater export of goods and services; Business Matching ; IT application; Global SME Cross-border Matchmaking Service; Financing innovation ...

The payment will be provided in four instalments as below:

Time	Expected deliverables	Amount
15 days after signing contract	Detailed implementation workplan of the Supplier that is agreed by UN Women and AED, MPI (in Vietnamese)	20%
Target by 30 Jun 2021	Draft Report on priority sectors, issues, selected appropriate intervention tools/solutions ¹⁰ in an effort to enhance competitiveness for women-owned SMEs in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors including Proposal of projects on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-Owned Small and Medium Enterprises for the period 2021-2025 in some of Viet Nam's major export sectors (in Vietnamese)	40%
Target by 10 Sep 2021	Draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam that follows the requirements of the Government (in Vietnamese)	20%
Target by 10 Dec 2021	Final draft Program on Enhancing Competitiveness for Women-owned SMEs for the period 2021-2025 in Viet Nam (in English and Vietnamese)	20%

VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- The suppliers will be evaluated based on technical capacities (70%) and financial proposal (30%). Suppliers need to get at least 490 points to be considered technically qualified.

VII. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The company profile includes:

- The Vietnamese entity's valid registration (Document in Vietnamese is accepted)
- Business result of the current 2 years in which mention company's compliance with Vietnamese legal regulations (Document in Vietnamese is acceptable)
- Related experience on similar work (Document in English);

1. The technical proposal includes:

- Description on key content of activities, outputs and working approach; (Document in English)

¹⁰ Tools/ solutions that have been applied in various countries in an effort to enhance competitiveness of women-owned SMEs, according to rapid statistical work, include: Innovation & Entrepreneurship; Productive Capacity, Greening Innovation and Technology, Export program; capacity building program aims to provide technical training to five economies' trade promotion agency officials, who are responsible for fostering greater export of goods and services; Business Matching ; IT application; Global SME Cross-border Matchmaking Service; Financing innovation ...

- Proposal on timeline and deliverables which are mentioned in the section II. SCOPE OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES and Section V. PAYMENT in the TOR. (Document is in English)

2. **The CV of the assigned team** (Document is in English). The team is expected to include a team leader and several team members.

The team leader should have:

- PhD's degree in international economics, and international trade or related field.
- Minimum of 10 years relevant experience in policy research, policy dialogue, social entrepreneurship ecosystem, Women-owned business support

The team members should have:

- Master's degree in economics, business administration
- Minimum of 5 years relevant experience in policy research, policy dialogue, social entrepreneurship ecosystem, women-owned business support.

At least one team member must be a gender specialist:

- PhD's in gender and women's studies
- Master's degree in public policy and management, women gender and development
- Minimum of 5 years relevant experience in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in economic area.

3. **The financial proposal** with cost estimation for key items of work that lead to the good completion of the required final products as mentioned in section III. (Document in English)