Terms of Reference for
Conducting Rapid Assessment for the Sesame Sector.

1. GENERAL INFORMAION

Services/Work Description:	Rapid assessment for the Sesame sector in the targeted districts and identify the economic growth opportunity for the targeted sector and districts as well as the added value and new businesses' opportunities.
Post Title:	Request For Proposals For conducting Rapid Assessment
Consultant Level:	Expert
Expected Places of Travel:	Marib (Marib city and Marib districts).
Duration:	**48 days**
Expected Start Date:	Immediately after Concluding Contract Agreement
Language required	Arabic and English
Application deadline	May 23, 2024

2. BACKGROUND / PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Sesame is one of the high value crops that promise great potential for growth and market demand. Valued for its oil, but also as a highly nutritious food, either raw or roasted, as well as in bakery products and other food preparations, sesame has a high commercial value. As oil, sesame has a relatively long shelf life, and is a good source of vitamins E and B, as well as magnesium, copper, calcium, iron, and zinc, and reputedly has antioxidant and anti-depressant properties. Sesame oil carries a premium relative to other cooking oils due to its high antioxidants content. After the oil is extracted from the seed, the remaining meal is a high protein material suitable for livestock feed. The stalks, which remain after the seed is removed, is often mixed with other products, and fed to livestock. After harvest, the stubble is also often grazed by sheep and goats. Additionally, sesame is a relatively low-cost crop to produce that can be grown in dry arid regions. With its high tolerance to heat, drought, disease, and insects, it is an ideal crop to grow in Yemen's semi-arid zones. Despite local production in Yemen, most sesame seed consumed locally especially in urban centers comes from other countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, leaving high potential to meet local demand, if proper marketing strategies are applied. It is often the case that the

local sesame is more expensive than imported varieties, because of high production costs and poor marketing.

RRD is seeking experts to conduct a comprehensive rapid assessment of the Sesame sector in Marib Governorate to inform strategic interventions for economic growth and job creation. The assessment will provide valuable insights into the sector's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The rapid assessment aims to analyze the current state of the Sesame sector in the targeted districts within Marib Governorate, Yemen. The assessment will focus on identifying economic growth opportunities, added value potential, and new business opportunities to enhance the sector's development and sustainability. It also aims to identify the business-enabling environment that the sector needs, mostly from the local government, including infrastructure, investment-encouraging policies, farming support, etc.

3. Objective of the assignment

Overall, the objective of conducting a rapid assessment for the Sesame sector is to gather evidence-based information that can guide stakeholders in formulating strategies, policies, investment opportunities and interventions to promote the growth and development of the Sesame industry in the targeted districts.

Specific objectives of the rapid assessment may include:
- Assessing the Current State: Gathering data and information about the production levels and quantities, products quality verities and categories, prices by local currency for each quality verities and categories, farming practices, processing infrastructure, market linkages, vertical and horizontal business linkages among the value chain players,and overall value chain of the Sesame sector in the targeted districts. This objective aims to provide a baseline understanding of the existing conditions and practices within the industry.
- Identifying Key Stakeholders: Identifying and engaging with key stakeholders involved in the Sesame sector within the three value chain levels (macro, micro and meso levels) including farmers, producers, processors, traders, and relevant government agencies or organizations. This objective aims to understand their perspectives, challenges, and needs related to Sesame production, processing, and market access.
- Evaluating Challenges and Constraints: Identifying the challenges and constraints faced by stakeholders in the Sesame sector, such as limited access to inputs, inadequate processing facilities, market barriers, quality control issues, or policy and regulatory constraints. This objective helps in identifying the areas that need improvement and intervention.
- Assessing Market Opportunities: Analysing market trends, demand-supply dynamics, pricing, and export potential for Sesame products. This objective aims to identify domestic and international market opportunities and potential buyers for Sesame products from the targeted districts.

- Identifying Growth Potential: Assessing the growth potential of the Sesame sector in terms of value addition, product diversification, market expansion, and innovation. This objective seeks to identify areas where the Sesame sector can grow and create economic opportunities, such as introducing new processing techniques, improving product quality, or exploring new product lines.
- Recommending Interventions: Based on the assessment findings, providing recommendations and strategic interventions to address the identified challenges, exploit market opportunities, and promote the sustainable growth of the Sesame sector in the targeted districts. This objective aims to guide policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders in making informed decisions and implementing effective interventions.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The technical expert is expected to conduct a full analysis of the entire Sesame value chain that maps out the different linkages and identifies bottlenecks and opportunities for targeted support throughout the project. The study will help inform and refine the technical interventions at all phases from inputs, production, processing, trade and to the end market. Special attention will be given to understanding the constraints that impede the growth of the sesame subsector, especially regarding marketing at the domestic level, while identifying possible expansion to regional markets in neighboring countries. Findings from the study will be shared with a variety of stakeholders across the value chain at a validation workshop. From this study, RRD will be able to determine which market opportunities at the domestic and regional level are available for sesame and its by-products.

The rapid assessment will include quantitative and qualitative data collection for the value chain players of the sector's business activities. The study will be conducted at the sector level to identify the most promising potential products in both urban and rural areas.

The study is expected to cover at a minimum the following chapters:

- **Sector Overview:** Identify the value chain players (SMEs and smallholders) and scoping of ongoing interventions and support.
- **Study Analysis**: including regulatory and policy framework, market Infrastructure assessment, mapping the players (who, role, geographical distribution, horizontal and vertical business relations, key players, and investment opportunities) and Local Authorities and governance structures.
- **Value Chain Analysis:** map the value chain, analyze the governance mechanisms, upgrade strategies, and sustainability of the chain.
- **SWOT Analysis:** of the sector, subsectors, products, each phase, and market opportunities.
- **Conclusions and Recommendations:** including mapping of economic growth opportunities and potential areas of intervention. The assessment will engage relevant governance actors and business enablers such as local government authorities and community leaders, also Business Membership Organizations (BMOs) such as chamber

of commerce and business associations to ensure their perspectives are incorporated into the findings and recommendations. Their involvement will also facilitate ownership and support for subsequent project activities cantered on sesame sector development.

5. METHODOLOGY:

Utilize a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Engage with key stakeholders through interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys. The methodology for conducting a rapid assessment for the Sesame sector involves a structured approach to efficiently gather essential information. The methodology process includes:

Desk Review: Conduct a comprehensive review of existing data, reports, and literature related to the Sesame sector. Gather information on input supplies, production levels, trade levels (wholesale, retail, export and import) market trends, value chain actors, policies, regulations, and challenges.

Stakeholder Identification: Identify and engage with key stakeholders involved in the Sesame sector, including farmers, producers, processors, traders, government agencies, and relevant BMO organizations. Seek their input and perspectives on the sector's status and challenges.

Data Collection Tools: Develop appropriate data collection tools, such as surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, to gather primary data from stakeholders. Develop tailored survey questionnaires and interview guides to capture relevant information on Sesame production practices, market dynamics, challenges, and opportunities.

Primary Data Collection: Administer surveys, conduct interviews, and facilitate focus group discussions with stakeholders to collect primary data. Gather information on production practices, market dynamics, challenges faced, and opportunities identified.

Data Analysis: Analyze the collected data using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Apply statistical tools to analyze quantitative data and employ thematic analysis for qualitative data. Identify patterns, trends, and key findings to inform the assessment outcomes and recommendations.

Report Writing: Prepare a comprehensive report documenting the methodology, data collection process, analysis, findings, and recommendations to inform stakeholders and guide decision-making for future interventions in the Sesame sector.

6. Sampling:

The following table summarize the targeted sampling taken in account 30% should be women

Data Collection	SMEs	Smallholder	Consumers	Ministry of Trade and Industry Office	Chamber of Commerce office	Ministry of Agriculture office	Private sector	MFIs	Business/agriculture associations	Key Actors	Total
Survey	175	325	40	■	■	■	■	■	■		540
FGD	4	4	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		8
KII	■	■	■	1	1	2	2	3	4	7	20

7. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Upon commissioning, the Consultant(s) is required to deliver the following outputs:
- An inception report with details of methodologies, tools, and analysis framework.
- Enumerator training material.
- A cleaned complete quantitative dataset.
- Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant interviews transcripts.
- Presentation of key findings.
- Comprehensive English and Arabic final reports outlining findings, recommendations, and action plan.
- Raw data sets.

8. STAGE, TASKS AND TIMEFRAME FOR THE STUDY

Stage	Tasks	Timeframe (Working days)
Preparation	Prepare and present inception report outlines the proposed approach, methodology, data collection tools, work plan, and key activities to be undertaken	6 days
	Pre-test questionnaire in field	2 days
Data Collection	Deliver training to enumerators and their supervisors	2 days
	Field data collection	15 days
	Field data collection supervision	
	Data cleaning (during data collection)	
	Data cleaning (after data collection)	4 days
	Data analysis	5 days
	Submit the draft Report	10 days
	Submit the final report	4 days
Total		48 Days

9. CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE BEST OFFER

The consultants must have a proven track record of conducting similar assessments in the agricultural sector, particularly in value chain analysis and market research. Experience working in Yemen or similar contexts is desirable. The team should include experts in agriculture, economics, and market analysis. Also, the consultant will be responsible for issuing the required permits to conduct the assessment and follow-up coordination with relevant authorities on his own.

Required documents for submission:

1. A valid business registration document.
2. A company profile with a detailed explanation of the firm's areas of specialization and examples of recent studies in socio-economic analyses, market accessibility assessment, and agriculture value-added options.
3. Provide at least two references from similar experiences, including the name of the organization, the name of the person in charge, an explanation of his role, and contact details, along with two final assessment reports.
4. The composition of the proposed team, which shall include the curriculum Vitae of the team members and an explanation of the rationale for the team composition to fulfill the requirements described and within the timeline stated herein.
5. A detailed methodology and work plan on how the bidder proposes to approach and conduct the work.
6. All costs shall be incorporated into the proposed amount.

The firms will be evaluated based on Cumulative Analysis as per the following scenario:
1. Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
2. Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation. In this regard, the respective weight of the proposals is:
   - Technical Criteria weight is 70 points.
   - The Financial Criteria weight is 30 points.

Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Obtainable Score
Technical Competence		
1	Section.1: Bidder's qualification, capacity, and experience.	10
2	Section. 2: Proposed Methodology, Approach and Work Plan	40
3	Section. 3: Management Structure and Key Personnel	20

Total for Technical Competencies		**70**
Breakdown of Technical Competencies Evaluation		
Section 1. Bidder's qualification, capacity, and experience		
1.1	Reputation of Organization, Reliability, and ability to take on assignment.	10
Total Section 1		10
Section 2. Proposed Methodology, Approach, and Implementation Plan		
2.1	Understanding of the requirement: Have the important aspects of the task been addressed in sufficient detail? Are the tasks of the assignment adequately weighted relative to one another?	10
2.2	Description of the approach and methodology for meeting or exceeding the requirements of the Terms of Reference.	15
2.3	Details on how the tasks shall be organized, controlled, and delivered, Work plan proposed including whether the activities are properly sequenced and if these are logical and realistic.	10
2.4	Description of available quality assurance mechanisms to track the task	5
Total Section 2		40
Section. 3: Management Structure and Key Personnel		
3.1	Composition and structure of the team proposed. The firm will be expected to propose a team that have extensive experience and detailed knowledge in socio-economic analysis and market survey of agriculture added value options, in addition to experience in women's financial inclusion. The team members should be fluent in written and spoken English and Arabic. CVs of the team should be provided.	10
3.2	Qualifications of key personnel proposed. - The team leader must have a minimum master's degree in agricultural economics or agribusiness, economy, development studies, business administration of any related field. 5 points. - The team leader assigned to the project must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in socio-economic and market assessment for agricultural value add options. 5 points.	10
Total Section 3		20

Financial offer	
Marks Obtained = Lowest Priced Offer (Amount) / Offer being considered (Amount) X 30 (Full Marks)	30
Total Financial offer	30

10. PAYMENT

Fee payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by RRD planned deliverables, based on the following payment schedule:

Milestone for Payment	Percentage of Payment
Inception report	30%
Final study report	70%

11. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPRIETARY INTERESTS

The consulting firm shall not either during the term or after termination of the assignment, disclose any proprietary or confidential information related to the consultancy service without prior written consent. Proprietary interests on all materials and documents prepared by the firm under the assignment shall become and remain properties of RRD.

12. PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSAL

We urge eligible candidates to promptly submit their applications without waiting until the deadline, as RRD intends to begin the consultant selection process before the announcement's expiration date.

Applications must be sent to tenders@rrdf.org with a copy to fariqi@rrdf.org no later than 5pm Yemen time on May 23, 2024. Any technical and contractual inquiries related to this assignment should be directed to malnahari@rrdf.org