Al-Murunah –

National Implementing Partner in Palestine

Request for Applications (RFA)- IWMI/LKA/RFA01/2022

**Issued by**: International Water Management Institute (IWMI)- member of the CGIAR

**Funded by:** Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), UK

**Date of issue**: 15th August 2022

**Deadline for questions regarding the call**: 21st August 2022. Questions should be addressed to: Surani Liyanaarachchi (s.liyanaarachchi@cgiar.org) (Subject line: Questions regarding Al-Murunah-Palestine)

**Response to questions**: 25th August 2022

**Deadline for submissions**: 11th September 2022

**Submissions to be made to**: Gamini Halvitige (g.halvitige@cgiar.org ) (Subject line: Submissions to Al-Murunah-Palestine)

**Final decision communicated to successful grantees**: 16th September 2022

**Projects to start from**: 1st October 2022

**Project period**: 01st October 2022 till 31st March 2026 (dependant on funds from FCDO

**Geographic Scope**: Occupied Palestinian Territories

**Technical Proposal:** Request is for proposals to undertake work for the period 01st October 2022 to March 31st 2023 with the intention that future contributions will be negotiated annually depending on both specific future requirements and future funding levels, but without further tendering.

**Total funding volume**: Maximum of GBP 45,000 for the period 01st October 2022 to 31st March 2023 and with the expectation that subsequent funding (up to a total of an additional GBP 195,000), subject to a contract extension and availability of funding from FCDO will be available throughout the rest of the project to 31st March 2026

# Background

**Context** The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is the most water-scarce region in the world. Throughout the MENA region both surface and groundwater resources, two-thirds of which are transboundary, are under pressure and over exploited because of increasing demand. This context manifests in a complex political economy for building water security. Agriculture is by far the largest user of water and is a major cause of depleted aquifers, rivers, and reservoirs. Across the region, agriculture comprises around 65% or more of total water demand and competes for water with other sectors (industry, services, residential). Unsustainable land management practices, including mechanized mono-agriculture and overgrazing, have severely degraded large areas of land, reducing rainwater retention and infiltration and increasing surface runoff and erosion. Climate change will escalate the challenges of future water resource management by, amongst other things, increasing water demand and increasing the frequency and severity of droughts and floods.

**Project Overview:** In response to these challenges, the Government of the United Kingdom has funded the five-year “Al Murunah” Project, with the objective to increase water security and enhance climate resilience in the MENA region through the implementation of Resilient Nature Based Water Solutions (RNBWS). RNBWS combine Nature Based Solutions for Water (NBSW) and Agricultural Water Management (AWM). While identifying and demonstrating pragmatic approaches to investing in RNBWS in the region, the initiative will focus on four countries - Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and Egypt. The project, implemented by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in partnership with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), aims to strengthen and catalyze national capacities for the implementation and upscaling of RNBWS. The project will develop action-oriented field demonstrations and recommendations that overcome technical and non-technical barriers to uptake and long-term sustainability of RNBWS.

**Background and Purpose**. The central premise of the Al Murunah Project is that appropriately designed low-cost RNBSW interventions can enhance water security in the agricultural regions of the Middle East, including their rangelands. The RNBWS concept involves various activities and interventions with strong engagement of local communities including, but not limited to, watershed management, improving irrigation and drainage systems, restoration programs for wetlands and wadi systems, water source protection, water-harvesting using sand dams as an example, replenishing groundwater through reforestation and afforestation, and improving water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment run-off from agricultural land into water bodies. In broad terms RNBWS are intended to both enhance water availability whilst simultaneously reducing water demand, thereby enhancing water security and the resilience of communities.

**Engagement and Learning.** The Al Murunah Project will generate evidence and understanding of the contribution that RNBWS can make to sustainably improve water security. The project is working in partnership with Ministries and local stakeholders in the four countries to identify, design and implement model RNBWS interventions in demonstration sites. Women, youth, and vulnerable people are specifically targeted, with their engagement and input contributing to the delivery of co-developed solutions across the various activities. The RNBWS demonstrations will generate practical examples in each of the four country contexts, which will then be exchanged via regional knowledge and learning activities, and proposed for further up-scaling in similar ecosystems.

# Country Implementing Partners

The Al Murunah project is seeking to collaborate with a “country implementing partner” in Palestine. Reporting to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and IWMI, the role of the country implementing partner is implementation of on-the-ground activities and interventions, and day-to-day management to ensure successful delivery of the demonstration project in Palestine.

**Implementing the activities and interventions of the project in Palestine**

1. Plan, design and facilitate the in-country stakeholder workshops
2. Facilitate dialogue and consultations with local and national stakeholders, including communities, national and local government and where appropriate private sector
3. Conduct stakeholder analysis in the demonstration project site (with local and national stakeholders)
4. Work with stakeholders in a participatory way to identify and plan RNBWS interventions in the demonstration project site
5. Identify and work with local stakeholders (communities and local government) as well as contractors to implement RNBWS in the demonstration project site
6. Provide oversight of and technical support to the implementation of selected RNBWS interventions
7. Implement the baseline, and end of project local ownership analysis (of local community groups)
8. Contribute to the coordination of studies and research with national and international consultants
9. Implement the field elements of the project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan
10. Ensure documentation of participatory stakeholder processes and implementation of RNBWS
11. Provide advice on mechanisms and tools for upscaling of demonstration project RNBWS interventions
12. Ensure regular high-level communication with the PMU, IWMI and National Project Advisory Committee (NPAC)

**Day to day management of the country project of Al Murunah**

1. Undertake all administrative tasks required for the successful implementation of demonstration project to meets project goals and deadlines with quality and consistency
2. Ensure the proper and effective use of financial resources allocated
3. Ensure proper use of any equipment
4. Ensure quarterly and annual (including financial) reporting to the PMU
5. Organize necessary local travel and workshops of project staff and stakeholders
6. Assume responsibility and work to ensure project targets are achieved, overcoming obstacles, and uncertainties

# **Criteria for selection**

The Country Implementing Partner will be selected through a competitive process, open to all eligible NGOs, Universities, technical institutes, research institutes and private sector enterprises (including consultants) registered and working in the MENA Region. Applicants and their staff must already have work experience in Palestine. Past collaboration with international organization is encouraged, though not mandatory.

Shortlisted proposals will be judged on the following criteria:

* Experience in working with stakeholders, in particular, rural communities, local and national government
* Experience in policy dialogue and influencing
* Capacity and experience in designing, leading and facilitating participatory processes for sustainable development at the community level, using established stakeholder dialogue and participatory planning tools
* Demonstrated technical capacity in the fields of agriculture and water resource management; and notably in the selected demonstration site
* Experience in on the ground implementation of Nature Based Solutions, ideally for water and agriculture
* Value for money and cost-effectiveness
* Expertise and qualifications of the project team
* Background and experience in handling similar projects

Teams that have adequate representation of women and youth, will be given priority.

# **How to apply?**

To be considered for the role of country implementing partner, interested candidates must submit the following documents:

* A Letter with Expression of Interest before the deadline for questions regarding the RFA (on receipt of the letter, access to background documents useful for submitting the technical proposal will be provided by IWMI)
* A completed technical proposal in the prescribed format (Annex 1) along with a detailed budget in the prescribed format (Annex 3).
* Short half page bio of each of the proposed team members in an annex to the technical proposal.
* Proposals should be limited to 10 pages (excluding annexes) (11 font, Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, standard margins) excluding maps, photographs and references that are considered essential for a complete appraisal of the project.
* Please submit proposals in the given format to email: g.halvitige@cgiar.org
* The decision of the selection committee reviewing the applications will be final.

**Table 1: Important deadlines**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Application Submission - Start Date | Deadline for Expression of Interest and questions regarding the RFA | Application Submission - End date | Announcement of result |
| 2022 | 15th August  | 21st August | 11th September  | 16th September |

5. Selection process (timeline)

All applications will be considered for funding on an open competitive merit basis. A selection committee comprising experts from IWMI, IUCN and a consultant with in-depth experience of both the Al-Murunah project and the Palestinian context will evaluate the selection of the partner based on the aforementioned criteria to ensure compatibility with the Al Murunah project and the projects desired outcomes.

The timeline for the selection process is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2: Selection process**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl. No** | **Step** | **Description** | **Deadline** |
| Step 1 | Announcement of the country implementing partner call and deadline for questions regarding the RFA | The CIP call for Palestine will be announced, on the website of IWMI and IUCN, and on various professional networks, social media etc.  | 15th August 2022 |
| Step 2 | Deadline for Expression of Interest and Questions regarding the RFA | On submitting the Expression of Interest, access will be given to necessary background documents  | 21st  August, 2022 |
| Step 3 | Submission of proposals |  | 11th September 2022 |
| Step 4 | Screening of applications | Selection Committee – Matthew McCartney (IWMI), Vidhisha Samaraskara (IWMI), Sandra Ruckstuhl (IWM), Youssef Brouziyne (IWM), Ali Hayajneh (IUCN), Peter Laban (IWMI-IUCN senior advisor,consultant)  | 12th to 16th September 2022 |
| Step 5 | Selection of successful applicant | Final applicant chosen and notified.  | 16th September 2022 |
| Step 6 | IWMI signs contracts with selected country implementing partner after satisfactory assessment of financial due diligence  | IWMI will draw-up contract with the country implementing partner to ensure agreement on the work expectations (milestones and deliverables) and the associated financial support, after satisfactory assessment of financial due diligence  | 16th September to 10th October 2022  |
| Step 7 | Release of first payment instalment and commencement of collaboration  | IWMI will disburse the funds as agreed upon regarding the deliverables and milestones. The Al-Murunah PMU will monitor the progress of the implementation  | Initially: 10th October for 1st October to March 31st 2023 period In future (depending on funding): April 01st 2023 to March 31st 2026  |

# Funding

Funding for the Al Murunah project is provided by FCDO on an annual basis – based on the UK financial year (April – March). Consequently, funds (not exceeding GBP 45,000) will initially be provided to the successful applicant for the period October 01st 2022 to March 31st 2023 with the expectation that subsequent funding (up to a total of GBP 195,000), subject to a contract extension and availability of funding from FCDO will be available throughout the entire project to March 31st 2026.

For the period October 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023 payments (not exceeding GBP 45,000) will be made in a phased manner - 30% on acceptance, 35% on a successful mid-term review and 35% on approval of satisfactory completion of the agreed end of year objectives and a final report submitted to the Project Management Unit. The final report should also include a full financial report on expenditures made as part of the project. Acknowledgement of support provided by the FCDO and IWMI/IUCN to the implemented Al Murunah project should be mentioned on related publications and communications.

# Annex 1: Format for submission of technical proposal

Technical application form: All sections must be completed in technical proposal. Maximum 10 pages (11 font, Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, standard margins), excluding annexes.

The period from October 01st 2022 to March 31st 2023 is predominantly a planning period, during which it is envisaged the selected country implementing partner will, under the guidance and in close consultation with IWMI, work closely with local communities, local government and other stakeholders to determine where and what RNBWS (i.e. combinations of NBWS and AWM) interventions will be implemented in the demonstration project site in Palestine. Beyond March 31st 2023 the expectation is that the selected country implementing partner will oversee the implementation of on-the-ground activities in the demonstration project site, again in close consultation with IWMI and working closely with local communities.

The following describes the format of the expression of interest. We ask that you comply with this format to facilitate comparison between proposals. To assist with the development of the proposal, we provide the following documents to provide background information on the project:

* + - * Inception workshop report for Palestine
* Al-Murunah Project Inception Report

**Section 1: Introduction (2 pages)**

Provide a brief description of what you understand by Nature Based Solutions and their potential role for building Water Security and Climate Resilience in the MENA region as well as your understanding of the project and what is required. A key aspect is working with stakeholders including local communities. Please briefly describe why this is important.

**Section 2: Organisational, management and technical capacity: (4 pages)**

* Provide a brief description of the organisation, and its activities
* Describe the organisations experience in undertaking the proposed activities in similar contexts, including: i) experience in working with stakeholders, in particular, rural communities, local and national government and the private sector; ii) experience in policy dialogue and influencing; iii) capacity and experience in designing, leading and facilitating participatory processes for sustainable development at the community level; iv) experience is using established stakeholder dialogue and participatory planning tools and processes; v) experience of working in the water and agriculture sectors; v) experience in on-the-ground implementation of Nature Based Solutions, ideally for water and agriculture.
* Explain relevant technical and management experience of key staff. Name all staff and describe their roles and responsibilities. Provide half page bio of all staff as an annex to the main proposal[[1]](#footnote-1). Teams led by women, and/or teams with diverse composition (women, youth etc.) will be given extra points while evaluation.
* Describe any anticipated capacity gaps, and your plans in covering those gaps – through hiring, consultancy contracts etc.

**Section 3: Approach and work plan to be implemented (3 pages)**

* Outline your proposed approach and workplan for the period October 01st 2022 to March 31st 2023 (i.e. the planning period). Include a description of steps to be implemented and include a time-line and staff inputs

**Section 4: Budget narrative (1 page)**

* Provide detailed budget narrative, including a statement on value for money and cost-effectiveness.
* Provide a statement of financial capability in an annex (see annex 4)
* Detailed budget to be appended (in a given format – see annex 3) as an annex to the main proposal.

**Annexures to the project proposal:**

1. A risk mitigation plan/matrix in a prescribed format (see annex 2).
2. Short biography (maximum half a page per member) of team members.
3. Detailed budget in prescribed format (see annex 3)
4. Statement of Financial Capability (see annex 4)
5. Two professional reference letters from sponsors/funders/patrons/companies with whom the applicant has completed projects earlier.

# Annex 2: Risk Mitigation Matrix Format

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Likelihood/Impact** | High | Medium | Low |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risk | Likelihood of occurrence (colour code) | Impact (colour code) | Planned measures for mitigation |
| **COVID19 Related Risks** |
|  |  |  |  |
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| **Contextual Risks** |
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| **Programmatic Risks** |
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| **Institutional Risks** |
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| **Fiduciary/Financial Risks** |
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# Annex 3: Budget format

For the period: October 01st 2022 to March 31st 2023

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line Items** | **Total Days/ Qty** | **Rate Per Day/ Unit cost in GBP** | **Total Amount in GBP** |
| **Personnel** | (A) | (B) | C= A x B |
| Personnel 01 |  |  |  |
| Personnel 02 |  |  |  |
| Personnel 03 |  |  |  |
| Personnel 04 |  |  |  |
|  **Total Personnel (A)** |  |  |  |
| **Travel** |  |  |  |
| Travel |  |  |  |
| Per diem |  |  |  |
| Accommodation |  |  |  |
| **Total Travel (B)** |  |  |  |
| **Operations** | **Unit** | **Rate** |  |
| Fieldwork/Field Implementation/data collection |  |  |  |
| Communications |  |  |  |
| Consultancy |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |
| **Total Operation Expenses (C )** |  |  |  |
| **Equipment and Supplies** | **Unit** | **Rate** |  |
| Equipment |  |  |  |
| Supplies |  |  |  |
| **Total Equipment and Supplies (D)** |  |  |  |
| **Total Direct cost (A+B+C+D)** |  |  |  |
| **Indirect costs ( E )** |  |  |  |
| **Total Budget (A+B+C+D+E)** |  |  |  |

# Annex 4: Statement of Financial Capability

1. Legal framework and governance
2. Project Management
3. Financial management
4. Procurement management
5. Asset management
6. Human resources management
7. Independent audits
8. Risk assessment and anti-corruption
1. Note the annexes will not be included in the page count [↑](#footnote-ref-1)