

Expression of Interest from Women Owned Business “Gender Responsive Procurement, to supply goods and Services to UN / UN Women in South Sudan

Background

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security.

Gender-responsive procurement is a sustainable selection of services, goods or civil works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment. UN Women strives to ensure that all operations, including procurement processes, support its mandate for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women, and the achievement of equality between women and men. UN Women’s focus on gender responsive procurement is thus in line with the strategic aim of the organization to empower women globally. Gender-responsive procurement provides an opportunity for the procuring entity to expand its global markets, diversifies its supply chains while simultaneously growing the economy and improving the lives of women and girls around the globe.

In 2019, the United Nations (UN) spent almost **USD 19.9 billion** on purchase of services, goods and civil works to fulfil its functions. Together with governments, companies and other non-governmental organization, the procured value amounts to trillion of dollars globally. Yet, less than **1%** of women-owned businesses access the procurement market and are awarded the contracts.

Starting from the “*Buy from Women-Owned Business*” approach, which seeks to offer equal opportunities for women’s enterprises to access markets, the brief then takes a step forward to consider the potential to leverage gender-responsive procurement for expanded benefits to all women in value chains as a means to address gender inequality. This culminates in an expanded approach to gender-responsive procurement that favours gender-responsive enterprises regardless of ownership, thereby potentially allowing all women and men to benefit from decent business and employment opportunities.

What is a Woman-Owned Business?

Defining and classifying *Women-Owned Businesses* helps determining which companies are entitled to preferential treatment. Classification of *Women-Owned Businesses* will also enable the collection of data, which facilitates the measurement of progress and the effects of gender-responsive policies. An important aspect of a solid definition is that it helps reducing the risk of tokenism and fraud, where women are placed in key position without granting them any managerial power only to obtain preferential status as a Woman-Owned Business.

A Woman-Owned Business/vendor should at a minimum include:

- a) At least 51 per cent independent ownership by one or more women (or woman sole proprietorship),
- b) Unconditional control by one or more women over both long-term decision-making and the day-to-day management and administration of the business operations, and
- c) Independence from non-women-owned businesses.

Goals:

- Increased cooperation and expanded opportunities between women-led businesses;
- Increased sustainable private sector engagement to the achievement of the SDGs;
- Increased support and financial investment in women-led innovation and business ventures.
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Most commonly procured items at UN / UN Women in South Sudan:

UN Women will examine the outcome of this request for Expression of Interest (EOI) and will consider those respondents that qualify against the parameter of Gender Responsive Procurement / Women Empowerment Principles.

The selected Women Owned Businesses will be contacted for Invitation for Bid, Request for Quotations and Request for Proposal for the supply of goods and services on the following areas but not limited to:

- Conferencing and meeting hospitality services (event management);
- Printing, editing and design;
- Communication materials and branding;
- Stationaries/office supplies;
- Transportation/travel services;
- Professional/Consultancy Services;
- ICT/Security Equipment.

EOI Submission details:

- Interested business should request the EOI Form from sonny.jesca@unwomen.org
- EOIs should be submitted by email to the southsudan.procurement@unwomen.org
- The interested Women Owned Business must provide information indicating that they are qualified to fall under Women Owned Business;
- This EOI does not entail any commitment on the part of UN/UN-Women, either financial or otherwise;
- UN-Women reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOI without incurring any obligation to inform the affected applicant/s of the grounds;
- The EOI and required documents must be received via e-mail southsudan.procurement@unwomen.org no later than midnight **15 June 2023** clearly written on the Subject Line “**EOI Women Owned Business**”. EOIs received after the deadline will not be considered.