



Terms of Reference: **Assessing the Socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on women and men in informal in cross border trade**

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Cross-border trade (CBT) is trade in legitimately produced goods and services between neighbouring countries. Most often CBT refers to trade that takes place close to the borders. For Rwanda, CBT refers to trade with Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania and Uganda. It is estimated that between 70% and 80% of cross border traders are women, and 90% of these women traders rely on CBT as their sole source of income.

Recognizing the importance of cross-border trade as a major component of business in the country and a particularly important avenue for poverty alleviation with a strong gender impact, Rwanda developed a National Cross Border Trade Strategy (NCBTS 2012-2017) that was updated in 2020. This Strategy sought to align this cluster of trade with trade-related policies and other existing Government policies focusing on a market-led approach to expand CB.

Women's sources of income are in sectors that are hard hit by restrictions on movement and lowered consumer demand in export markets. The majority of the employed Rwandan population is employed in the informal sector. Findings from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), indicate that over the past three years, more females were informally employed with 92.5% in 2017 to 91.2 % in 2019. In addition, prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the LFS states that unemployment had declined among females from 22.7% in 2016 to 17% in 2019, while the employment-to-population ratio and labour force participation rate were also increasing. However, the sudden mobility restriction is expected to have a critical impact on these trends.

Prior to the lockdown, the majority of the employed population was employed on daily wage jobs for the past three years, and women were overly represented in that category. The findings from the LFS show that the proportion of females on daily wage had slightly reduced from 64.1% in 2017 to 60.9% in 2019 but remained high compared to men. The results also show that only 23.9%

of females had a permanent contract in 2017 and 27.5% in 2019¹. This data underscores the magnitude of the problems affecting women in the informal sector who run a greater risk of termination of employment and losing their livelihoods.

Today many countries in the world are implementing preventive measures on COVID-19 pandemic which has been a Public Health Emergency of International concern. Many countries including Rwanda took several measures to contain the spread of the virus and protect lives of citizens. These comprise “lockdown strategies such as closure of borders, enforcing social distancing, restricting the movement of people and quarantining affected and exposed persons. The lockdown measures and closure of borders have affected women in informal cross border trade both economically and socially.

During the previous GMO monitoring on cross border initiatives especially in Rubavu District, it was evident that women in informal cross border trade face a number of challenges including but not limited to small capital that limits their business growth, violence and limited facilities to cater for their children. Looking at these issues, it is clear that COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted their business and their families.

In response to the aspirations of GMO’s strategic plan 2017-2022 and considering that women in CBT was mostly hit by the pandemic, the Gender Monitoring Office in collaboration with UN WOMEN through funding from the Government of Japan, intends to hire a consultancy firm with two senior consultants that will conduct an assessment on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on women in informal cross border trade.

2. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the assessment are the following:

- To assess how the livelihoods and circumstances of women and men are affected by COVID-19 and its associated restrictions on movement. This includes specifically the economic impact including income, burden of care work, access to finance, ownership of businesses, use of mobile money, remittances, etc.
- Assess the impact of Covid 19 lockdown measures on GBV and GBV Service delivery especially for informal women in cross border trade.
- Make policy and programmatic recommendations in response to address COVID-19 impact on women and men in informal cross border trade.

¹ <http://statistics.gov.rw/publication/labour-force-survey-annual-report-2019>

3. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assessment will mainly focus on gender dimensions on the impact of Covid-19 on women and men in informal cross border trade in Rusizi, Rubavu and Nyamasheke districts.

4. DESCRIPTION OF REQUIRED SERVICES/RESULTS:

GMO in collaboration with UN Women seeks to commission an experienced consultancy firm to undertake a Gender Assessment to understand the gendered effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls in informal cross border trade in three selected districts of Rwanda (namely Rusizi, Nyamasheke and Rubavu). The selected firm would be expected to collaborate with GMO, UN Women, and other key partners.

In line with the specific objectives above, the expected deliverable is a report highlighting the following issues:

Outputs/Deliverables	Activities	Timing
Desk Review of the pre-Covid-19 situation and Inception Report	Brief meeting with concerned institutions, prepare and present a comprehensive inception report which includes among others the methodology and preliminary sampling frame that will be adapted after the desk review. Key partners to be consulted should be consulted to design and finalize the assessment tools especially the questionnaire in English and its translation in Kinyarwanda, etc...) at this stage. Tabulation plan/analysis plan should be included in the inception report	10 days
Primary data collection	Programming of questionnaire using Survey CTO and undertake face-to-face interviews for the selected women and men in informal cross border trade in the three identified districts	40 days
First draft on the Gender Assessment	i) Gender dimensions and implications of COVID-19 on women and men in informal cross border trade. This includes effects on women's economic activities, women's rights issues and basic services in informal cross border trade markets and gender-based violence. ii) Recommendations to strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and interventions specifically in informal cross border trade.	30 days

Presentation of the assessment	PowerPoint presentations to be used in all validation workshops (virtual or face to face if allowed by then). Consultants will facilitate all workshops. In addition, consultants will prepare Presentations to be used during a workshop to all stakeholders	3 days
Final Gender assessment Report	Consultants will after incorporation of given comments and guidance, finalize the report and submit the final report to be nationally validated	7 days

5. METHODOLOGY

The assessment will apply a human rights-based approach to data collection and analysis and will adhere to principle of leaving no one behind, making special effort to identify women and girls who are at high risk of being left behind to ensure that their voices and concerns are represented in the assessment. Due to the nature of information and category of cross border traders the assessment is targeting, a face to face interview model will be used for the data collection exercise. Partnerships will be established with ADEPE and the cooperatives of women in cross border trade to easy the data collection. A representative sample of women in cross border trade within each of the three selected districts has to be set and interviewed. A questionnaire has to be designed taking stock of changes experienced at individual and household level as a result of COVID-19 on the cross-border trade. The assessment questionnaire has to cover the direct/or indirect impact that the pandemic has on the respondent’s economic activities, household incomes, time use and Gender Based violence.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTITUTIONS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CBT ASSESSMENT

- Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) to lead and overseeing on a daily basis the consultancy work in partnership with UN Women and facilitate the operationalization of the assignment.
- UN Women to lead the recruitment of the consultancy firm in close collaboration with GMO
- UN Women to contribute financial resources for the informal cross-border trade assessment and related dialogues
- GMO to lead and facilitate, in partnership with UN women, the technical task force that will oversee the work of the consultancy firm daily to achieve the objectives of the assessment especially data collection and analysis;
- GMO and UN Women to ensure timely delivery of feedback/comments/inputs on the deliverables shared by the service provider.
- GMO to convene a dialogue to discuss on the assessment findings.

7. ASSIGNMENT DURATION

The assignment will be conducted for a period not exceeding 3 months from the date of contract signature. Interested parties are called to submit their technical proposals to UN WOMEN **not later than 11th December 2020**

8. REQUIRED EDUCATION BACKGROUD AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

- Advanced degree in Economics and other related social sciences;
- The consultancy firm should have a team with a strong track record on producing high quality research and analytical studies at international standard;
- Should have at least 5 years of experience to conduct analytical studies, research, surveys, with peer-reviewed publications, and experience working with government institutions in Rwanda;
- Experience on quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
- Previous collaboration and/or partnerships with development partners and Government Institutions.
- Ability to produce high quality reports under a tight deadline;
- Excellent report writing abilities;
- Prior experience analysing data collected through electronic methods, such as mobile phone surveys are an asset.