

HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION FUND
Exploring new collaborations to address Gender-based Violence
HIF GBV Seed Funding - Narrative template

- Please try not to exceed 6 pages (Arial, 12pts)-

Organisation Name	Mensch Innovation GmbH
Project Title	Fostering Entrepreneurship among Somali Survivor and At-Risk Women
Partner(s)	IIDA Women's Development Organisation, International Rescue Committee, Benadiir University, Iftiin Foundation
Problem addressed / Theme	Gender-based Violence perpetrated against IDP women
Location	Somalia
Start Date	1 May 2016
End Date	31 July 2016
Total Funding	11,215 GBP (9,990 GBP supported by HIF)
Total Spent	11,215 GBP (9,990 GBP supported by HIF)

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

1. Describe all the activities carried out. Please attach a workplan or log frame, if these were used. In the three months during which the project was be undertaken, the following activities were carried out:

- a two-day deep dive and partnership building with Ms Ali (Benadiir University) and Mr Ali (Iftiin Foundation) to better understand the Somali contexts associated with GBV and build relationships of trust;
- a three-day ideation workshop with IIDA, Benadiir University, Iftiin Foundation and the International Rescue Committee in Nairobi, resulting in two concepts for an entrepreneurship training programme for Somali women and men that would effectively act as a prevention intervention against GBV;
- ongoing calls between IIDA, Benadiir University, Iftiin Foundation and Mensch to continue the development of concepts and explore possibilities for implementation;

2. If you have made changes or amendments to the planned activities and objectives that have not been detailed in an *Agreement Amendment Form*, please list them here.

With the planned publication of a blog post about the project on the HIF blog, the proposed article to be written and disseminated on the project became duplicate and obsolete.

ACHIEVEMENTS

3. Has the project demonstrated the success of the idea?

By 'success' we mean that the idea has proven effective.

- ☐ XXX Completely successful
- ☐ Significantly successful
- ☐ Partially successful
- ☐ Completely unsuccessful

Please explain further:

We were able to implement all activities as planned and the deliberations with the partner organisations was fruitful beyond our hopes.

4. Please describe how the project achieved the planned objectives, and describe all of the results achieved through the activities indicated in Question 1.

The original objective to explore entrepreneurship trainings for GBV survivors and at-risk women was achieved and became evident through the following results:

- Strong consensus among project partners that one of the most effective strategies for social norms change and thus countering GBV was economic empowerment.
- Validation that poverty and social norms had a direct and disproportionate impact on GBV in Somalia and outweighed other causes.
- A deepened personal and trust relationship between partner organisations, in particular between Mensch (a foreign entity) and the three local Somali organisations (IIDA, Benadiir, Iftiin).
- A more profound understanding of the causes, realities, and effects of GBV in the lives of survivors in IDP communities.
- Mapping of key players, including their failures and successes, in the prevention and response efforts in Somalia
- Ideation of 50 potential ideas to respond to the root causes of GBV
- Concept development of two high potential impact ideas to tackle the root causes of GBV, both related to the development of enterprises and training for women: (1) vertical farming and (2) production of sanitary pads — both enterprises in which women could be trained, were context-sensitive, exploited a market gap, and could provide a welcome avenue for women to build, grow, and scale women-run enterprises in IDP communities, while men would necessarily also be engaged to develop a broader consensus and support and build capacity across genders. Both ideas also demanded extensive discussions about the social

stigma associated with women working in certain professions, but were concluded to be low-risk and appropriate.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CONSORTIUM

5. Describe the impact of the cross-sector collaboration on the project in general and in which ways the fresh skillset has allowed to address the problem differently.

Our partners in Somalia are highly capable, are very well informed of the local context, and have shown grit in tackling challenges. Following our ideation workshop, they each voiced how refreshing it was to take a new and different look at the same topic they have been working on for decades. They told us that they had not expected to be able to develop such innovative, yet profound, concepts within just a few days — a testament to the potential impact that lies in rigorous innovation processes and facilitation.

Some of our key lessons include:

- Local partners are understand the work on the ground better than anyone else and need to be guided to clarify their insights and translate them into concepts. In fact, the work of almost all international organisations is perceived to be doing damage. Local partners have an intimate connections with communities across Somalia, rigorous understanding of the complexity of local contexts, excel in assessing project feasibility, and experienced in raising entrepreneurial capacity. They have an in-depth understanding of field operations on GBV in Somalia and an extensive knowledge of the GBV landscape, GBV and broader gender issues.
 - Thorough subject matter preparation is absolutely essential if innovation experts want to collaborate effectively, contribute to the discussions, and build trust with partners.
 - Innovation experts must take a very humble approach with a posture of learning and listening.
 - Our partners were chosen because they were experts on GBV, but were also engaged in work done outside of the GBV space, which allowed for relationships/synergies between different spaces to be exploited.
 - The role of innovation experts and designers is preeminently one of a facilitator who guides groups to creative and profound outcomes, but never determines outcomes.
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METHODOLOGY

6. Describe how the methodology used was or was not appropriate to carry out the planned activities or achieve the planned objectives.

The deep dive with Benadiir University and Iftiin Foundation staff was conducted as casual, friendly and personal encounters (over tea and coffee). We very consciously avoided rigorous meeting settings that would create a formal and cold relationship in favour of casual meetings that allowed us to become familiar with each other, exchange experiences, discuss project intentions and build trust. Given this foundation for conversation, we were able to have insightful conversations about the Somali context and GBV challenges, including very personal and insightful views and perspectives of partners.

The ideation workshop was carried out using innovation methods, going through phases of deeper discovery of the subject matter, ideation, and concept development. It used interactive and creative

methods to engage participants and translate insights into actionable ideas. Participants responded very positively, feeling “freed creatively” in pursuit of solutions for the challenge of GBV.

MAJOR OBSTACLES

7. Please list the three most significant obstacles faced during the implementation of the project and describe how they affected the planned activities and results.

Obstacle	Impact of Obstacle
1. Introducing additional project partners following a request from HIF’s GBV Board. Original project partners were unhappy with the introduction of an international organisation (IRC) as almost all international agencies in Somalia are negatively regarded by local organisations, due to their ineffectiveness and agendas.	The project was close to collapsing as local partners threatened to pull out of the project if international partners were forcedly introduced by the donor (HIF).
2. While the project was required by HIF to start on 1 May, there were delays in receiving the funding into our account. This delay was caused primarily by a budget change required to bring on additional partners and delays in communication. Due diligence was completed 3 May and the final agreement signed 23 May. Funding was received in June.	Given the short timeline of the project, a delay in funding caused difficulties in scheduling a meeting with multiple local partners and organising logistical aspects of the project.
3.	

8. Please indicate what steps were taken to address these obstacles and whether the solutions were effective.

Solution	Effective?
1. We conducted many long phone calls, wrote extensive emails and chatted with local project partners to understand and discuss their worries and the ways that we would mitigate risks arising from the introduction of the international partner. This was particularly important as trust was not yet inherent in this new relationship between us.	Yes
2. We paid cost of flights and hotel reservations out of pocket before the funding from HIF had arrived. This was the only way to ensure that we could stick to the schedule agreed with the project partners.	Yes
3.	

OPTIONAL: BENEFICIARIES/HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS IMPACTED

If your project was intended to impact upon beneficiaries, please answer question 9.

9. Indicate the affected population as well as the humanitarian interventions that have benefited from the project.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

10. Did the consortium composition change during the course of the project and why?

The consortium composition did not change during the course of the project. It changed after the original proposal, but before the final agreement of the project, as the HIF review board requested two partners be added: one as expert on entrepreneurship in Somalia and one as an international partner agency. The former was a useful addition, while the latter caused concern among our local partners (as international organizations generally have a problematic role in Somalia and often impose their own agendas without care for the expertise of local organizations).

11. Are there plans to continue your partnership, either while continuing this project or working on other ones?

- ☐ XXX Yes, with this innovation
- ☐ XXX Yes, with another project
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Please describe further:

Yes, there are plans both to continue the work on this project and to build other projects in the future. It is likely that we would not want to continue engaging the international partner (International Rescue Committee). Their contributions to the workshop were lacking in an understanding of the local context, as they possessed little experience in Somalia and were not particularly useful in terms of contributing international best practice, beyond what was already commonly known.

DISSEMINATION

12. Please describe any steps taken to disseminate the outcomes of the project.

Please include all completed and forthcoming, as well as all planned and unplanned products (for example, research and policy reports, journal articles, video blogs, evaluations).

N/A (apart from blog post to be published).

NEXT STEPS

13. Will the project be replicated, carried forward or scaled up?

- ☐ XXX Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe

Please describe further:

With additional funding from the HIF, we would like to carry this project forward with the further developments of the initial concepts borne from the ideation workshop and partner consultations. Both concepts show high potential for impact (agreed by all project partners), but require some initial research into their feasibility and viability, in terms of their sustainability, technical feasibility for the local context, and desirability by the IDP communities.

In order to move forward, we need to understand whether this approach (entrepreneurship to tackle the root causes of GBV) is interesting for the HIF. We would then begin a design process of our two concepts, beginning with a thorough assessment of the technical feasibility of the projects, testing assumptions we hold and moving forward with one of the concepts.

14. If the project could be carried forward, replicated or scaled up, please list the three most important issues or actions that will need to be considered (*where 1 = most important and 3 = least important*)

Suggestion/issue	1	2	3
1 To develop appropriate programming that effectively integrates the entrepreneurial aspect of this project with social norms change. It requires deeper discussions on the nature of the project, the mode of engagement with communities, the explicitness or non-explicitness with which GBV should be addressed in the project and the objectives that must be achieved to offer an effective prevention of GBV broadly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
2 To assess the broader desirability of the project among local IDP communities. While we used an initially broad definition of IDPs for the purposes of ideation, we must define clearer lines and set criteria for which communities would qualify and could be mobilized. We must understand which of the two concepts resonates more with communities, and in particular women and men who would undertake first steps in this initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 To assess the technical feasibility and financial viability of both concepts, i.e. the development of vertical farms in Somalia and the manufacturing of sanitary pads, with the help of subject matter experts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X