

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION ON INTEREST

Terms of Reference (TOR) TCEP Exit and Sustainability Strategy Development

1. **Client:** The client for this assignment is: **Tree crop Extension Project**
2. **Country background:** The Government of Liberia received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the recruitment of consulting services provided by an individual consultant for the TCEP Exit and Sustainability Strategy Development

The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD's approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD's rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP).

3. **Background on project:**

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is implementing the Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP) with funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project is designed to reach 11,000 beneficiaries including 8,000 smallholder cocoa producers who are members of kuu groups and Farmer Field Schools (FFS); 2,400 farmers who will benefit from access to roads, input supply and market linkages and 600 farmers who will benefit as a result of job creation along the value chain. The development objective is to improve the incomes and climate change resilience of smallholder cocoa producers in Nimba County.

The project objective will be accomplished through the following four components:

Component 1: Revitalization of Cocoa Plantation - This component is aimed at increasing quantity and quality of cocoa sold and higher price received by smallholders. Under this component the project will rehabilitate 8,000 ha of cocoa plantation following value chain model; establish and operate a national seed station to guaranteed availability of improved climate resilience planting materials to farmers; mobilize and organize 320 kuu groups of 25 persons and FFS to reach 8,000 farmers; establish 320 village nurseries and supply improved hybrid seeds/seedlings, equipment, tools and solar driers to smallholder farmers; train 8,000 farmers in crop husbandry techniques, disease control, harvesting, post-harvesting handling, grafting and identification of suitable cocoa germplasm using the FFS approach; and diversification of cocoa farms following their revitalization with valuable trees and food crops, specifically banana/plantain, will be pursued for food security, climate resilience and smoothening of cash flow, while simultaneously increasing the role of women in the farming economy.

The project supports the establishment of the National Cocoa Seed Garden (NCSG) in Beeplay, Nimba County, which is situated on 30.4 ha (primary forest = 5.5 ha; wet-land area = 4 ha; cultivated area = 19.5 ha & valley area 1.4 ha). The National Cocoa Seed Garden is surrounded by seven towns (Beeplay, Kartoplay, Mahnplay, Nyarlay, Youtuo, Groltuo and Tiaplay). The seven towns in consultation with

the elders, county authorities and the entire citizenry unanimously donated the parcel of land for the establishment of the NCSG. As part of the arrangement, the citizens are benefiting from rotational temporary employment while at the same time benefiting from training in agronomic practices thereby improving their social-economic livelihood. Upon maturity, the NCSG will address the constraint faced by smallholder cocoa farmers in obtaining improved cocoa hybrid seed locally for planting. The NCSG will serve as Liberia's first cocoa seed garden station. The importation of improved cocoa planting materials from Ghana and Ivory Coast will reduce drastically if not eliminated. With the enormous economic potential of cocoa on the global market, farmers will benefit by improving their livelihood for growth and development by farm yield increase due to the supply of hybrid cocoa seed for planting from the NCSG. For many years, Liberia has relied on the importation of hybrid seeds from the neighboring countries of Ghana and Ivory Coast with constraints in knowing the 'trueness of type' of the planting material and agronomic and breeding information of such hybrid seed. Since the commencement of worked at the NCSG, significant progress has been made by the project.

Component 2: Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Existing Farm-to-Market Roads - This Component is aimed at improving access to markets and reduced transportation costs. Under this component the project will rehabilitate 200 km of existing farm-to-market roads and establish a viable road maintenance program. Regarding maintenance, TCEP will have a three-pronged approach that includes: (i) capacity building in road maintenance targeting youth brigades; (ii) improvement of the roads maintenance strategy, including development of a financing mechanism; (iii) transition financing of maintenance on a cash-for-work basis.

Component 3: Service Provision for Value Chain Development - This component is aimed at improving service provision to cocoa farmers for Value Chain Development. Under this component the project will strengthen and/or build institutional capacity of eight (8) farmers' cooperatives, LACRA, CDA, CARI, LNFCS and MOA at county and district levels; support CAC and DAOs to carry out their activities; construct and/or refurbish eight (8) offices and ware houses of cooperatives; and provide working capital on basis of business plan. This component will also ensure that climate change adaptation will be mainstreamed in the technical support systems for cocoa value chain development, policy dialogue; and monitoring of deforestation in the cocoa sector.

Component 4: Project Management and Coordination - This Component is aimed at ensuring an effective and efficient strategic and operational planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as knowledge management. Under this component the project will recruit professional and support staff to form the Project Implementation Unit (PIU); ensure effective administrative, financial and technical planning and implementation of the project including audit and reporting; ensure an efficient coordination amongst the components of the project and between partners within and outside MOA; conduct supervision mission, baseline survey, mid-term review and end line survey; and technical and financial progress reporting (monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.).

The project is being implemented in eight (8) districts in Nimba County over a period of six (6) years. The project will adopt a value chain approach to link cocoa farmers, organized at grassroots level in traditional community-based labor groups and FFS, to markets and services through cooperatives and Private Sector Partners (PSPs).

The project implementation come to an end in June 2024 and will officially close by December 2024, and which time all spending ends. Against this backdrop, the MOA through the TCEP intends to develop an Exit and Sustainability Strategy that will provide a clear roadmap on how the project positive impacts, including the National Cocoa Seed Garden will be sustained through appropriate mechanisms.

The Government of Liberia, through the MOA has received funding from IFAD for the implementation of the TCEP, and wish to apply part of the fund for the payment for services under this assignment within the 2023 Annual Work Plan and Budget.

4. **Background of the assignment:** The project implementation the TCEP project will come to an end in June 2024 and will officially close by December 2024, at which time all spending will end. Against this backdrop, the MOA through the TCEP intends to develop an Exit and Sustainability Strategy that will provide a clear roadmap on how the project positive impacts, including the National Cocoa Seed Garden will be sustained through appropriate mechanisms.

The Government of Liberia, through the MOA has received funding from IFAD for the implementation of the TCEP, and wish to apply part of the fund for the payment for services under this assignment within the 2023 Annual Work Plan and Budget.

5. **Overall objectives:** The objective of the TCEP Exit and Sustainability Strategy Development is to provide a technical guidance on the clear road map or approach/plan for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the project positive results after completion. The implication period of this assignment is for 25 working days.
6. **Scope of work:** The project will prioritize conducting consultative dialogues with various stakeholders, at different levels, including community, county and national levels, to identify appropriate exit and sustainability pathways of the project, covering all components and sub-components-National Cocoa Seed Garden, Cooperatives, Farm-to-market roads, development of cocoa plantations, vertical infrastructures, etc. The Exit and Sustainability Strategy will outline how the TCEP will phase-out its intervention while ensuring that project achievements are sustained and the project development goals continues beyond completion date. The Development of the Exit Strategy will cover stakeholders' engagements in the 8 project districts in Nimba, and other relevant government institutions including IFAD-PIU, MOA, LACRA, CDA, MPW, MFDP, CARI, LNFCS, County Authority, etc.
7. **Specific tasks to be carried out (International Consultant):** The International consultant shall work with a National Consultant to perform the following tasks:
 - a) Hold engagement meeting with various stakeholders (government institutions, none-governmental organization, private sector actors, farmers, etc.) to discuss and develop and clear project exit and sustainability plan/approach of TCEP;
 - b) In consultation with various stakeholders, layout the following sections:
 - **Programmatic phase-out:** this will highlight key project results/outputs the project achieved and expects to transfer to key stakeholders, and the processes by which they will be sustained;
 - **Administrative and financial phase-out-**this will highlight the administrative and financial systems/processes that will be in place to continue the project after completion;

- c) Identify key stakeholders who will continue to play critical role in sustaining TCEP results/outputs beyond project implementation date (i.e., including their roles/responsibilities and support/resources required to perform those tasks.
- d) Develop a business plan or Public-Private Partnership (PPP) proposal for self-financing the National Cocoa Seed Garden, which is nerve to the Liberian cocoa sub-sector.
- e) Examine local/national capacity and design strategies on how these capacities can be harnessed to sustain the project's results/outputs.
- f) Lead the preparation and submission of final report of Exit and Sustainability Strategy.

8. **Specific tasks to be carried out (National Consultant):** The National consultant shall work with the International Consultant to perform the following tasks:

- g) Hold engagement meeting with various stakeholders (government institutions, none-governmental organization, private sector actors, farmers, etc.) to discuss and develop and clear project exit and sustainability plan/approach of TCEP;
- h) In consultation with various stakeholders, layout the following sections:
 - **Programmatic phase-out**: this will highlight key project results/outputs the project achieved and expects to transfer to key stakeholders, and the processes by which they will be sustained;
 - **Administrative and financial phase-out**-this will highlight the administrative and financial systems/processes that will be in place to continue the project after completion;
- i) Identify key stakeholders who will continue to play critical role in sustaining TCEP results/outputs beyond project implementation date (i.e., including their roles/responsibilities and support/resources required to perform those tasks.
- j) Develop a business plan or Public-Private Partnership (PPP) proposal for self-financing the National Cocoa Seed Garden, which is nerve to the Liberian cocoa sub-sector.
- k) Examine local/national capacity and design strategies on how these capacities can be harnessed to sustain the project's results/outputs.
- l) Support International Consultant to prepare and submit final report of Exit and Sustainability Strategy to MOA and IFAD.

9. **Reports and schedule of deliverables**

A. **Deliverables:** The Consultant is expected to meet the following deliverables:

- i. Prepare and submit for PIU approval a comprehensive timetable for the Exit and Sustainability Strategy Development exercises within two weeks of awarding contract;
- ii. Complete stakeholders engagement in eight (8) districts in Nimba County one (1) month after awarding of contact;
- iii. Prepare and submit a final report of the Exit Strategy and Sustainability Plan to the IFAD-PIU for approval.

B. **Reporting Requirement**

- i. All reports will be submitted to the IFAD/MOA with copies to the PIU. The consultant shall submit three reports to IFAD/MOA. The first is the inception report that outlines the methodology that will be adopted for the development of the Exit Strategy, one week after signing of contract. The second report will be the first major draft of the Exit and Sustainability Strategy for comments/inputs by IFAD/MOA. The incorporation of comments/inputs shall take the maximum of two (2) weeks after submission. The third and final report shall be submitted to IFAD/MOA for acceptance and approval upon receiving comments/inputs. Six (6) sets of documents (four hard copies and two electronic copies) shall be prepared and submitted as follow: Two (2) sets of hard copies and one (1) soft copy for IFAD/MOA and two (2) sets hard copies and one (1) soft copy for the PIU.

10. Work and Time Schedules

The Consultant will carry out the development of the Exit and Sustainability Strategy (Consulting services) for the period of 25 days at the various districts or project landscape in Nimba County, and at national level with various government and none-government institutions. The assignment will be completed within four weeks (5) weeks. The National Consultant will work for 25 days and the International Consultant 10 days.

Task breakdown/description	Weeks				
	1	2	3	4	5
Inception Report: Prepare and submit for PIU and IFAD's approval comprehensive timetable and methodology for the development of the Exit and Sustainability Strategy					
Stakeholders engagement through visit to project districts in Nimba, and with other relevant government institutions including IFAD-PIU, MOA, LACRA, CDA, MPW, MFDP, CARI, LNFCS, NC3P County Authority, etc.					
Develop a business plan or Public-Private Partnership (PPP) proposal for self-financing the National Cocoa Seed Garden, which is nerve to the Liberian cocoa sub-sector.					
Prepare and submit first major draft of the Exit and Sustainability Strategy to IFAD/MOA for comments/inputs					
Prepare and submit final report for IFAD/MOA acceptance and approval					

11. Facilities and Information to be provided by the client.

The IFAD-PIU is expected to provide the Consultant with the relevant information / documents to assist him/her carry out his duties and responsibilities.

- Project design report (PDR) of TCEP
- Project implementation report (PIM) of the TCEP
- General technical specification for TCEP
- The TCEP Project baseline report.
- The TCEP Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP)
- TCEP Implementation Reports, Aide Memoires, etc.

The consultant is expected to provide: their own office space, laptops, own vehicle, etc. while carrying out the assignment.

12. Consultant's qualifications and experience

Key expert 1: Lead Consultant (International)

Qualifications and skills

Academic qualification: At least Master's degree in any of the following disciplines; Public Policy, Agricultural Economic, Agronomy, International Development, Project Management, Rural Development, Finance and Business Management, Marketing, Environmental Sciences/Natural Resource management or a related field;

General professional experience: A minimum of ten (10) years post-qualification experience in consultancy in the agriculture sector or work of similar nature for Government, UN entities, etc.

Specific professional experience: Previous experience working in the agriculture sector or cocoa sub-sector in Liberia or the in African with focus on policy issues, value chain, agri-business, marketing, Business management, etc.

Previous demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English, with evidence of previous work carried out.

Key expert 2: Associate Consultant (National)

Qualifications and skills

Academic qualification: At least Bachelor's degree in any of the following disciplines; Public Policy, Agricultural Economic, Agronomy, International Development, Project Management, Rural Development, Finance and Business Management, Marketing, Environmental Sciences/Natural Resource management or a related field;

General professional experience: A minimum of four (4) years post-qualification experience in consultancy in the agriculture sector or work of similar nature for Government, UN entities, etc.

Specific professional experience: Previous experience working in the agriculture sector or cocoa sub-sector in Liberia or the in African with focus on policy issues, value chain, agri-business, marketing, Business management, etc.

Previous demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English, with evidence of previous work carried out.

13. **Location and period of execution:** The location of the task for the development of TCEP Exit and Sustainability Strategy shall be within the project areas (8 districts in Nimba), and at the Ministry of Agriculture. While in the in these locations, the Consultant will work with different stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Central Agricultural Research Institute, LACRA, CDA, Private sector actor, and other key stakeholders.

Submission Procedure: EOIs shall be submitted to the address below no later than August 4, 2023 at 16.00h GMT to the address below:

recruit@moa.gov.lr , Cc: **rcole@moa.gov.lr** and [**evah@moa.gov.lr**](mailto:evah@moa.gov.lr)

Yours sincerely

**IFAD PIU/PMU/MOA Ministry of Agriculture Annex, Libsuco Compound Somalia Drive,
Gardnerville, Montserrado County Telephone: 0775901977**