



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI) FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES FOR YOUTH INCLUSIVITY IN THE COCOA VALUE CHAIN STUDY

Reference Number:

Country	Liberia
Project	Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP) & Tree Crop Extension Project II (TCEP-II)
Assignment Title	Request for Expression of Interest Youth Inclusion in Cocoa value Chain Study (REOI)

1.0 Context

1.1 Background

Context

The Gender and Development Act, 2001 establishes and defines the institutional Mandate of the Ministry of Gender and Development, which is the national machinery for promoting gender equality, women's advancement and children's welfare in Liberia. The Liberia National Gender Policy and its accompanying policy objectives and strategies highlight Agriculture as one of the key areas for enhancing the status of women and promoting gender in Liberia. Moreover, the National Youth Policy and Action Plan for Liberia (2019-2023) reveals that the youth population of Liberia is not a homogeneous group with each category having particular concerns. This policy highlights the issue of joblessness among the youths and as one of its strategies it will promote youth in agriculture.

The Tree Crop Extension Project II (TCEP-II) is designed to build on the achievements and capitalize on lessons learned from the IFAD co-financed Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP) implemented in Lofa County over five years and ended in September 2017. TCEP-II is part of a programmatic intervention combining attributes from the Tree Crops Extension Project (TCEP) ratified on 24 May 2017 and is being implemented in Nimba County. Together they are being seen as part and parcel of a larger programme for the area. TCEP and TCEP-II is mainstreaming a comprehensive social inclusion strategy.

Specific elements of the strategy include: i) training of all TCEP and TCEP II staff, FMOs/ implementing agencies and relevant stakeholders on social analysis and youth and gender sensitive programming; ii) provision of implementation support towards effective social inclusion in project activities, as required; iii) development of gender and youth sensitive human resource policies and procedures for TCEP and TCEP-II management; iv) establishment of targeting quotas to reach the poor, youth and women; and v) integrating programme measures to address prevailing gaps constraining women and youth equitable engagement in cocoa farming.

The involvement of youth in undertaking farm rehabilitation was good for short-term job creation but had limited long term prospects. The traditional Kuu system seems to be a better and more sustainable solution for generating youth employment and meeting the labour requirements for cocoa/coffee farmers. However, poorer households with limited labour capacity who are unable to participate in Kuu labour groups may not be able to regularly maintain their farms and, as such, would have to settle for sub-optimal yields. Tailored packages are proposed by the project; and that will be the case with the TCEP II.

Anecdotal evidence collected among different stakeholders consistently indicates that youth in Lofa County did not own cocoa or coffee farms requiring rehabilitation at the start of STCRSP. In fact, while evidence points to Liberian youth not being interested in agriculture as it is associated with poverty and mere subsistence, the successful emergence of cocoa as a profitable cash crop in Lofa County has seemingly sparked high levels of interest among youth. For widespread engagement of youth in cocoa farming, supporting them in the establishment of new cocoa farms with special consideration for securing land deeds is required.

The consulting services will require a national consultant with extensive experience in mainstreaming youth in the agriculture sector, youth participation and social inclusion, and youth safeguard policy and gap analysis.

Objective of the Individual Consulting Services

The objective of this individual consulting service is to conduct a qualitative and quantitative study to generate information on youth gaps as well as needs, constraints and opportunities in the cocoa subsector of the agriculture sector in the project target areas as evidence-based data to develop a strategy for youth inclusion and full participation both within the project and the cocoa value chain.

Scope of Work

The study will identify gaps in the agriculture sector in Nimba and Lofa Counties particularly for youth in the cocoa subsector; will identify practices in the agriculture sector, particularly in the cocoa subsector in Nimba and Lofa Counties that inhibit and/or promote youth involvement as cocoa farmers specifically and as farmers in general. It will also determine current percentages of youth in producer groups, and having access to farmland; and develop a strategy that the project will implement to increase involvement of youth fully.

Detailed Tasks of Individual Consultant

A Youth and Social Inclusion Specialist (Consultant) contracted for up to 30 days to conduct a youth gap analysis in the project targeted areas in Nimba and Lofa Counties, report and present findings to the PMUs and IFAD staff, and develop a strategy for youth inclusion in the TCEP & TCEP II. The aim of this youth analysis is: i) To promote youth inclusivity in agriculture, particularly the cocoa subsector. ii) To identify problems that the youth face including accessing assets for agriculture production, iii) Recommend measures for the inclusion of youths, and iv) Develop a strategy for youth full inclusion in cocoa farming to be implemented by the TCEP & TCEP II.

The consultant will:

1. Conduct in-depth assessments of the situation confronting youth in the agriculture sector particularly in the cocoa subsector in the project areas
2. Conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis and needs assessment of youth in the project target districts

3. Identify youth-based constraints and recommend key elements of a strategy for ensuring that youth benefit from the projects' activities.
4. Identify the role of youth in agriculture activities in the project districts
5. Determine percentage of youth in agriculture who have access and control of productive resources such as: land, labor, capital and credit, and education.
6. Propose recommendations on key findings to be implemented by the project to improve inclusion of youth
7. Produce a strategy informed by the recommendations to be implemented by the TCEPs
8. Present the findings of the study and the youth inclusion strategy to relevant staff from the PMUs and IFAD.
9. Coordinate with the Gender Officer to plan activities within TCEP and TCEP II to implement the proposed youth inclusion strategy.

Qualification and Experience:

The consultant is required to possess:

- a) Master's Degree or equivalent in Gender, Social Work, Anthropology, Economics or related field such as Regional Planning, Project Management.
- b) Minimum five years of research experience in developing youth inclusion strategies for projects.
- c) At least 5 years of experience collecting primary data and field work. Experience in livelihood development in rural areas would be an asset.
- d) Have a good working knowledge of the quantitative and qualitative performance evaluation methods and programming strategies commonly used in agricultural development projects
- e) Demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English.
- f) Familiarity with the problems experienced by rural youth as well as initiatives promoting their social inclusion.
- g) Solid communication skills and sensitivity to the target group.
- h) Strong motivation and commitment to value and principles of human rights as well as sensitivity to gender and youth, disadvantaged groups and diversity.

Key competencies:

1. Good communication skill in English (oral and written).
2. Experience in preparing power point presentation.
3. Experience in international best practices in agriculture sector.
4. Experience in conducting focused group discussion and participatory qualitative interviews.
5. Ability to present information in a clear, precise, and well-articulated manner.

Applications:

Please send a copy of your Expression of Interest by email, as an attachment to:

The subject line should read:

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Academic qualification
2. Minimum experience in research
3. Technical/functional competence
4. Presentation of technical proposal

Deadline for Submission: recruit@moa.gov.lr, and Cc: alincoln@moa.gov.lr on or before **September 12, 2022 by 4PM GMT.**