



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI) FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES FOR CHILD LABOR STUDY

Reference Number:

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| Country | Liberia |
| Project | Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP) & Tree Crop Extension Project II (TCEP-II) |
| Assignment Title | Child Labor in Cocoa Study |

1.0 Context

1.1 Background

Currently, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) portfolio in Liberia includes four (4) ongoing projects: (i) The Rural Community Finance Project (RCFP); (ii) The Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP); (iii) The Tree Crop Extension Project II (TCEP-II); and (iv) The Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) Project.

The Rural Community Finance Project (RCFP). The objective of RCFP is to improve access by rural people to formal financial services on a sustainable basis, enabling the development of the rural sector. The project is designed to reach 24,000 shareholders and depositors (approximately 96,000 household members) – smallholder farmers, petty traders, food processors, local transporters, craftsmen and artisans. It incorporates lessons-learned on financial inclusion from Sierra Leone, where the IFAD-financed RFCIP helped establish a large network of Rural Financial Institutions, including both Financial Services Associations and Community Banks.

The Tree Crops Extension Project (TCEP). TCEP 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 objective of the project is to improve incomes and climate change resilience of smallholder cocoa producers, particularly women-headed households, youths and Farmers Based Organizations (FBOs). 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 Tree Crops Extension Project II (TCEP-II). TCEP-II is designed to benefit about 15,000 households of which 10,000 households will be smallholder cocoa farmers and the remaining 5,000 rural households will benefit from improved roads, input supplies, market linkages and spillover effects along the value chain. The development objective is to improve the incomes and climate change resilience of smallholder cocoa producers in Lofa county. The project financing is being implemented in seven (7) districts in Lofa County over a period of six (6) years with the possibility to include areas in other counties with comparable socio-economic and agronomic conditions. The project will also adopt a value chain approach to link cocoa farmers, organized at grassroots level in traditional community-based labor

groups and Farmers Field Schools (FFS), to markets and services through cooperatives and Private Sector Partners (PSPs) building on the achievements and lessons learnt from the IFAD co-financed Smallholder Tree Crops Rehabilitation Support Project (STCRSP).

The Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) Project. RPSF project is a part of a programmatic intervention combining attributes from TCEP and TCEP-II to finance the procurement of additional inputs in line with what will be procured under TCEP and TCEP-II for Liberia's COVID-19 Response. The overall objective is to improve food crops production and nutritional status of farming households in Nimba and Lofa Counties. The RPSF project will intervene in at least 15 statutory districts in the two counties, where the livelihoods of most smallholders traditionally depend on tree crops (rubber, cocoa, coffee and oil palm) and food crops (rice, cassava and vegetables).

1.2 Issue of Child Labor

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO),¹ child labor refers to work that (i) is mentally, physically, socially, and morally dangerous and harmful to children; and (ii) interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, by obliging them to leave school prematurely, or by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. The worst forms of child labor (WFCL) is defined (by ILO Convention 182) to include all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery (the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, forced or compulsory labor including recruitment for use in armed conflict); the use or offering of a child for prostitution and/or pornography, illicit activities including the production and trafficking of drugs; as well as work which when performed is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child (as determined by national authorities).

It is essential to stress while considering child labor issues within the African context, that not all work by children is child labor. The ILO elaborates and clarifies that child labor **is not** the participation of a child in work that does not affect his/her health and personal development or interferes with his/her schooling. Such work “includes activities such as helping their parents care for the home and the family, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays”. It includes also work that “contributes to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; provides them with skills, attitudes and experience, and helps to prepare them to be useful and productive members of society during their adult life” (ILO, 2002).

The ILO estimated 218 million child laborers from 5-17 years old globally, of which an estimated 70% are working in agriculture. These children work on small family farms or large plantations, caring for domestic animals, weeding, harvesting, etc. A countless number of these children are missing out on school, and many are regularly exposed to serious hazards and exploitation. The extent to which agricultural work is harmful to children depends on a number of factors, including the type of work they do, the hours they work, their age and their access to education. It also depends on whether or not they are separated from their families for long periods and the degree to which they are exposed to specific hazards. Children who work on family farms – which characterize most child agricultural workers – are by no means immune to the many hazards associated with agriculture. The problems related to agricultural child labor are particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa, where nearly 30% of all children under the age of 15 are working. International media attention at the beginning of the decade on the use of child labor in cocoa farming in West Africa under appalling conditions placed a glaring spotlight on just how harmful and hazardous agricultural work can be for children, particularly in areas of extreme rural poverty (ILO, 2000).

In Liberia approximately 16.6% of children are employed. Of this 16.6%, 78.4% work in the agricultural field. Work in agriculture includes work in rubber and charcoal production,

¹ International Labor Organization (ILO) (2002). Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labor: A Practical Guide to ILO Convention No. 182. Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 3, 2002. ILO, Geneva

and farming including the cocoa, rice, cassava, and coffee production. Some work in all these industries is deemed hazardous (U.S. Department of Labor).

Convention No. 182 of the ILO requires countries to take immediate, effective, and time-bound measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labor as a matter of urgency. Recommendation No. 190 of June 1999 also recommends that any definition of “hazardous work” should include: work which exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse; work underground, underwater, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces; work with dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools or carrying heavy loads; exposure to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels or vibrations damaging to health; work for long hours, night work, and unreasonable confinement to the premises of the employer.

Consistent with the International Labor Organization (ILO) standards related to child labor, the project will integrate measures to avoid child labor use by project beneficiaries in cocoa farming. Measures will include community sensitization as well as integration into the project’s social mentoring package.

2.0 Objective of the Individual Consulting Services

The objective of this individual consulting service is to conduct a quantitative and qualitative study on child labor in the project areas in Lofa and Nimba Counties in cocoa production, (to comply with ILO concerns and upholding best practice in meeting international standards of labor use).

3.0 Scope of Work

The study will identify practices in the cocoa sector in Nimba and Lofa Counties that comply with ILO concerns and those that do not. It will also **determine the extent** (if it is observed to be the case) of child labor practice in the workforce in areas where they are identified; identify positive practices that help prevent child labor; establish push and pull factors driving child labor in the areas and propose recommendations for project implementation.

4.0 Detailed Tasks of Individual Consultant

The Child Labor Expert (National Consultant) will conduct a quantitative and qualitative study of child labor in the project targeted areas in Nimba and Lofa Counties and report findings. The aim of this study is to:

1. Identify factors that are giving rise to, or driving child labor in the cocoa value chain.
2. Identify best practices that comply with ILO concerns.
3. Collect quantitative data on child labor in cocoa farming through an appropriate household survey of representative household heads
4. Collect qualitative data using Focus Group and key informant Interviews in representative cocoa farming communities.
5. Position the TCEP and TCEP-II to prevent child labor in the agriculture sector, particularly in the cocoa subsector.
6. Recommend measures for the protection of children from child labor and other form of abuses in the project targeted areas.

5.0 Qualification and Experience:

The consultant is required to possess:

1. MS or higher degree in gender, social work, anthropology, economics, or a related field.
2. Minimum five years of research experience in designing and conducting household level studies in agriculture, including collection of primary data and field work.
3. Good working knowledge of qualitative performance evaluation methods and programming tools.
4. Experience in child protection and child development issues would be an asset.

5. Solid communication skills and demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English.

6. 6.0 Applications:

Please send a copy of your Expression of Interest by email , as an attachment to: recruit@moa.gov.lr
The subject line should read: **Expression of Interest for Individual Consulting Services in Child Labor in Cocoa.**

Only shortlisted consultants will be contacted.

Deadline for Submission is August 31, 2021 @ 5:00PM GMT

Females Candidates are highly encourage to apply

For More Information Visit the Ministry of Agriculture website: www.moa.gov.lr