



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI) FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT OF THE TREE CROP EXTENSION PROJECT (TCEP)

Reference Number:

Country	Liberia
Project	Tree Crop Extension Project (TCEP)
Assignment Title	Environmental Audit

1.0 Context

1.1 Background

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.

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 warehouses 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 has adopted 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).

1.2 The Environmental Issue

In view of the targeting of existing plantations and rehabilitation of existing roads, the safeguards against indirect deforestation, the measures against environmental risks of the application of agrochemicals, and the careful monitoring of negative social impacts, the project is classified as posing moderate socio-environmental risks (IFAD Category B). A Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) note has been prepared. In terms of climate risks, a preliminary classification of a moderate climate risk has been proposed.

Against this backdrop, the MOA through the TCEP intends to conduct an Environmental Audit on all TCEP interventions in Nimba County. The TCEP has received resources from IFAD budgeted in the AWPB and wish to used part of the proceed for the payment for services under this assignment.

This will be achieved through: (i) a compliance Audit of at least eight (8) beneficiaries' districts and (ii) collection and analysis of samples of various environmental indicators (land/soil, water, air, etc.), in addition to site inspection and documentation review.

2.0 Objective of the Assignment

The objective of the audit is to assess compliance of MOA and IFAD/SECAP in Nimba County to national environmental legislations and standards, to enforce compliance and to ensure environmental sustainability and protection of human health.

3.0 Scope of Services Required

The Consultant/auditor will be responsible to carry out an audit in two phases in at least the eight (8) key projects districts listed below:

1. Boe & Quilla District
2. Buu-Yao District
3. Gbehlay-Geh District

4. Kparblee District
5. Saclepea-Mahn District
6. Twah River District
7. Yarwein Mensonnoh District
8. Zoe-Gbo District

Phase I: Compliance Audit of Project Activities

- a) Review Environmental Management Reports for the TCEP, other project documents related to mitigation of environmental impacts, deforestation monitoring, hygiene, and health and safety.
- b) Collect and review all relevant environmental laws and regulatory frameworks on health and safety, as well as sustainable use of natural resources.
- c) Verify the level and conditions of “Environmental Management Compliance”;
- d) Evaluate knowledge and awareness of, and responsibility for application of, relevant legislations.
- e) Examine records of incidents and accidents and the likelihood of future occurrence.
- f) Examine the performance on health and safety issues through interviews with farmers, project staff, local and other potentially affected communities.
- g) Prepare a prioritized list of health and environmental concerns of past and on-going activities.

Phase II: Audit of Environmental Indicators

- a) The Project will provide the specific scope of environmental indicator data analysis required to be performed by auditor for each activity assessed with respect to:
 - Inputs, products, and waste streams.
 - Process efficiency.
 - Materials handling and storage.
 - Waste disposal.
 - Management of hazardous materials
 - General housekeeping.
 - Current environmental monitoring activities.
 - Status of compliance, and
 - Expenditures on environmental management.
- b) Investigate possible pollution of air, water, and soil through on-site observation.
- c) Collect and analyze representative samples of environmental indicators (soil, water, air, etc.)

4.0 Audit Report

At the end of Phase 1, the Consultant will submit an electronic draft report IFAD/MOA with copies to the PIU. PIU will receive and consolidate all reviews and comments on the draft Phase I report. The Consultant shall allow two weeks for receiving the client’s comments and approval to proceed to the second phase of the assignment.

A draft final electronic report incorporating findings of Phase 1 and Phase 2 will be submitted by the Consultant on completion of Phase II. PIU will receive and consolidate all reviews and comments on the draft consolidated Phase I and II report.

5.0 Qualification & Experience

The Individual Consultant is required to possess:

- a. Master’s degree in environmental sciences, natural resource management or a related field;

- b. A minimum of five (5) years post-qualification experience in environmental auditing on similar audit assignments, with emphases on deforestation monitoring, soil, water and air pollution.
- c. Demonstrated ability to write high quality, methodologically sound, analytical papers in English.

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 for Environmental Audit.**

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**