



Agency for Economic Development & Empowerment

UKUMBA PLAZA
19TH STREET & RUSSELL AVENUE – SINKOR
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

TRINITY AGRO CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

***SELECTION OF TECHNICAL PARTNER AND EQUITY INVESTOR
TO JOINTLY MANAGE TRINITY AGRO CORPORATION***

RFP No: ECL/CU/TAC-003-INV

Client: Trinity Agro Corporation (TAC)

Country: LIBERIA

Issued on: May 26, 2022

Section 1: Request for Proposal Letter

TECHNICAL AND EQUITY INVESTOR PARTNERS FOR TRINITY AGRO CORPORATION

Name of Assignment: Technical Partners and Equity Investment

RFP Reference No.: ECL/CU/TAC-003-INV

Country: Liberia

Date: May 26, 2022

Dear Sir/Madam:

1. The Episcopal Church of Liberia (ECL) and Cuttington University (CU) have created a standalone agribusiness company called Trinity Agro Corporation (TAC). The plan is for TAC to enter a Joint Venture (J/V) arrangement with an experienced agribusiness management entity to implement a business development plan prepared by AED. The J/V will engage in well-organized, climate-smart agribusiness, producing highly profitable short-cycle crops on land owned by both ECL and CU in Liberia to enhance their financial self-sufficiency.
2. The Client now invites interested parties to submit Technical and Financial Proposals on their intended J/V arrangement with TAC, in line with details provided in the attached Terms of Reference (Section 3) below.
3. The RFP includes the following documents:
 - Section 1 – Request for Proposals Letter
 - Section 2 - Instructions to Strategic Partners/ Investors
 - Section 3 - Terms of Reference
4. Please inform us by E-mail address below:
 - (a) that you have received this Request for Proposals; and
 - (b) whether you intend to submit a proposal.
5. The proposal submission date is **June 30, 2022 at 5:00 pm GMT.**

Yours sincerely,



Samuel W. Thompson

Executive Director

Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment

Ukumba Plaza

19th Street & Russell Avenue – Sinkor

Monrovia, Liberia

For The Trinity Agro Corporation

Email: info@episcopalchurchliberia.org

Section 2: Instructions to Technical Partner and Investor

ÆDE on behalf of Trinity Agro Corporation invites all interested potential Technical/Investors partners to submit Technical and Financial Proposals in response to the below Terms of Reference, which shall include the following:

1. The Technical Proposal

- A. Managing entity Organization and Experience in farm operation
- B. Description of historical Agribusiness Management, Approach and Methodology
- C. Comments and Suggestions on the Terms of Reference
- D. Team Composition, Key Experts Inputs and attached Curriculum Vitae (CV)

2. Financial Proposal

- A. Indicate Amount and Breakdown of Financial Contribution
- B. Any Additional Information you may wish to provide

3. Evaluation Criteria

- A. Technical Partner's Organization and Experience - 25%
- B. Approach and Methodology - 20%
- C. Team Composition, Key Experts and CVs of expertise - 20%
- D. Financial Proposal - 25%
- E. Shared Vision and Integrity - 10%

- 4. Kindly submit your Proposals via email with subject: "Proposal for Management and Equity Investment " to the address given below, no later than June 30, 2022 @ 5:00 pm GMT.

Samuel W. Thompson
Executive Director
Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment
Ukumba Plaza
19th Street & Russell Avenue – Sinkor
Monrovia, Liberia
For Trinity Agro Corporation
c/o
Email: info@episcopalchurchliberia.org

Section 3: Terms of Reference

SELECTION OF TECHNICAL AND EQUITY INVESTOR PARTNER FOR TRINITY AGRO CORPORATION

1. BACKGROUND

In January 2021, ADE completed a Business Plan and Feasibility Study for the Episcopal Church (ECL) to enhance the Church and Cuttington University's (CU) financial self-sufficiency by creating an agribusiness company in partnership with investors and/or an experienced management company, to produce highly profitable short-cycle crops like exotic vegetables, pepper, maize (corn) and soybean through mechanized organic farming. The plan also provides for producing manure-based fertilizer for organic farming activity through poultry breeding. As corn and soybean constitute 60% and 22% respectively of poultry feed ingredients,¹ these ingredients were deemed very essential for lower-cost local poultry feed supply.

The ECL/CU have engaged the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) in a Memorandum of Understanding with Cuttington University to collaborate with human resources development to support a sustainable Food Science program with Preplanning and Postharvest education/training in support of this project and Liberia's national agriculture policies. The universities will provide scientific research certifications and standardization labs to verify organic farming branding within the food production ecosystem.

The business goals of TAC for establishing and implementing a well-organized, sustainable, climate-smart, and profitable agribusiness enterprise were as follows:

- **Goal 1:** Maximize financial returns from commercial farming by utilizing the initial 455 acres of CU's land endowment and other identified institutional land grants.
- **Goal 2:** Revitalize the Cuttington's College of Agriculture for a major role in academic and field work to train agricultural extension agents and agripreneurs in various commodity value chains, in support of Liberia's agricultural development agenda.
- **Goal 3:** Position the project as the nuclear farm for the provision of agricultural extension services to outgrower farms along the Monrovia-Ganta Development Corridor, as off taker/market outlet for targeted crops, and to provide employment opportunities to several residents.
- **Goal 4:** Develop partnerships with local, regional, and international investors, financiers, and service providers to enhance access to agribusiness capital, expertise, technology and markets.

¹ Thompson, S. W. (2016) *"Situational Overview – Livestock & Poultry Sector"*, for Liberia Agricultural Transformation Agenda, Ministry of Agriculture

These Goals are being achieved by creating TAC, an effective standalone business operation and management entity which is using the administrative and academic structures for proper focus and accountability. This decision was based on feedback from several stakeholders about their willingness to support financing of these activities provided the TAC presents a solid business case involving a strong business organization separate from CU teaching staff and administration, and having the right skill sets to effectively manage the business.²

Therefore, a new separate corporate entity established by ECL and CU named Trinity Agro Corporation is inviting partners with operating experiences in farming and successful agricultural business management track record.

2. GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

TAC will be governed by a seven-member Board of Directors comprising the following:

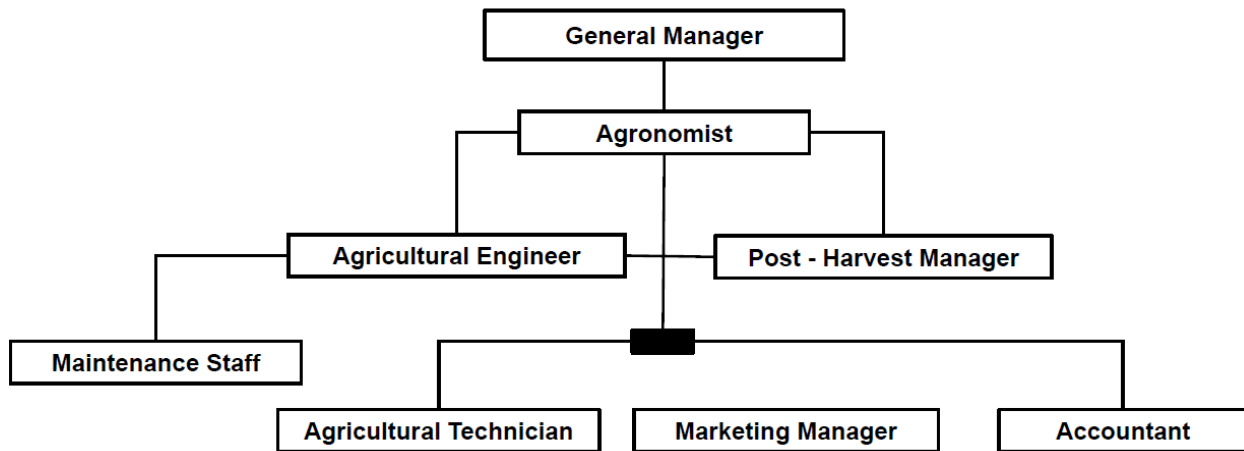
- ECL Board of Trustees - Chairman
- Cuttington University - Vice Chairman
- Chairman of Technical Partner/Investor Company - Member
- Episcopal Development Society - Member
- Designee from the community - Member
- Member of Board of Trustees Cuttington - Member
- General Manager of TAC - Secretary

The Executive management staff for the agribusiness company would be recruited by the Board of Trinity Agro Corporation and, according to criteria listed in detailed Job Descriptions presented in the Feasibility Study, will be appointed by the Board.

The tentative organogram of TAC is presented in Figure 1 below, to be fine-tuned based on the evolving circumstances of the business. These include the eligibility criteria for access to grant funding from potential sources like the Ministry of Agriculture and World Bank STAR-P's, African Development Bank, or other organizations including recently established Liberia Agricultural Commercialization Fund. The management Team in the Organogram will be accountable to the Board of Directors through the General Manager.

² Interview with Hon. Augustus K. Flomo, Deputy Minister for Economic Management, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, and Representative of the Government of Liberia on the Steering Committee of STAR-P (also Alumnus of CU), October 16, 2020. Similar view also expressed by Mr. Samuel Beamon, Credit Manager of Afriland First Bank.

Figure 1: Tentative Organogram - Trinity Agro Corporation



3. SHAREHOLDERS AND EQUITY DISTRIBUTION

Based on recent discussions, the minimum starting capital of TAC would be US\$ 400,000 excluding the value of CU's land endowment. The shareholder distribution of the Trinity Agro JV company is tentatively broken down as follows:

SHAREHOLDER	% EQUITY	INVESTMENT MADE
ECL Development Society	30%	
Cuttington University	30%	
Technical and Investor Partners	30%	
Other Private Investors	10%	
TOTAL	100	

4. MANDATE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Trinity Agro Corporation would be tasked with the following deliverables:

- 1) Maintain a core group of highly qualified and experienced staff, with the requisite track record to operate a profitable agribusiness company producing high quality short-cycle crops like exotic vegetables (e.g., green beans, tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, cabbage, bell peppers), hot pepper, corn and soybean, plus essential oil plants, poultry feed, poultry, eggs, and manure-based organic fertilizer.
- 2) Provide efficient oversight and on job skills transfer in mechanized organic farming, water management, organic pest control, and post-harvest techniques for maximum-yield year-round production at competitive production costs for easy access to local and export markets.
- 3) Maintain adequate supplies of agricultural inputs, organic fertilizers, improved seeds, and organic pesticides for internal needs plus the needs of smallholders and farmer-based organizations (FBO).

- 4) Effectively manage the provision of harvesting and post-harvest services.
- 5) Manage the provision of extension services via trained agricultural extension workers plus farmer field school training for FBO members including women and youth, plus CU students in organic farming of target crops above plus rice, cassava and selected tree crops like oil palm and avocado.
- 6) Form partnerships with FBOs and other agribusinesses to engage in value-added processing of selected crops (e.g., (a) producing poultry feed from corn and soybean, (b) processing of cassava and palm oil into various derivatives, and (c) extraction of essential oils).
- 7) Maintain and effectively operate a pool of farming equipment for internal use and services to FBOs on a phased cost-recovery basis. Train FBO members plus CU students in the operation, maintenance, and repairs of such equipment.

5. CONCLUSION

The various aspects of this TOR document closely mirror the above-mentioned Business Plan and Feasibility Study. The Mandate and Terms of Reference also closely conform to the original Goals 1 to 4 above. Attention is drawn to Goals 2 to 4 in the context of the ongoing application process to the Liberia Agricultural Commercialization Fund (LACF) created to administer funding provided for the financing of agricultural value chains under the US\$ 48 M World Bank/International Fund for Agricultural Development STAR-P project soft loan to the Government of Liberia.³ These goals are highly congruent with the eligibility requirements of the LACF which is encouraging applications from value chain actors who:

- ❖ Facilitate the expansion or development of out-grower models in the Rice, Oil Palm and Horticulture value chains,
- ❖ Facilitate off-taker arrangements with FBOs,
- ❖ Are willing to innovate improved technology with smallholder farmer groups,
- ❖ Transfer improved technologies in any of LACF priority value chains,
- ❖ Seek to improve access to agricultural inputs and farm implements,
- ❖ Agri-SMEs that demonstrate a track record of improvement in competitiveness of prioritized value chains,
- ❖ Concept notes and business plans realistically create additional jobs for youth and women along the LACF value chains.

These criteria and program objectives will be carried forward to guide access to additional funding in the pipeline from the World Bank's US\$55 M RETRAP⁴ program for the Vegetables, Cassava, Poultry, Piggery, and Rubber sectors. USAID's recently launched US\$25 M

³ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/700061596576562374/pdf/Disclosable-Restructuring-Paper-Smallholder-Agriculture-Transformation-and-Agribusiness-Revitalization-Project-STAR-P-P160945.pdf>

⁴ <https://mpw.gov.lr/media/press-releases/big-boost-liberias-road-sector-government-liberia-and-world-bank-signed-three#:~:text=In%20what%20is%20deemed%20a%20watershed%20moment%20in,the%20Second%20Inclusive%20OGrowth%20Development%20Policy%20Operation%20%28IGDPO-2%29.>

Agricultural Activity program⁵ also has similar objectives, including the training of youth and women farmers at educational institutions. ECL/CU and TAC would be very well positioned to tap into these long-term funding and agribusiness development opportunities.

⁵ <https://smartnewsliberia.com/liberia-usaid-launched-new-agriculture-activity-improve-productivity/>