

Solidaridad



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TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Type of task:	Partnership for the implementation of LICSIP
TA type:	Independent sub-contractor
TA Task:	Development and management of a National Cocoa Public-Private Partnership (NC3P) Platform
Eligible applicants:	Local or international development organizations

Introduction

Cocoa is an important cash crop in Liberia whose export potential remains under-developed. Cocoa export stood at nearly 15,000 tons per year during the pre-war era, but dropped to zero during the conflict and now stands at an annual production average of 9,500 metric tons over the past five years (FAOSTAT Crop production 2012). There is no functional input market and a regulated output market, thus cocoa farmers are left to bear the high cost of inputs that may be inferior and output that is unregulated. The cocoa tree stock is old and of poor genetic material quality, whilst farmers lack access to improved planting material and skills in good agronomic and business management practices. The combined effect of these challenges is seen in the low yields. The average yield is estimated as 150-200kg/ha, compared with 550kg/ha and 700kg/ha in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire respectively in the sub-region. The unprofitable sector has resulted in several farmers abandoning their farms or changing land use. There is virtually non-existent robust regulatory and enforced policy framework to support the sector. The Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC) is defunct and efforts to revitalize it by transforming it into the Liberia Agriculture Commodity Regulatory Authority (LACRA) has been slow and lacks adequate funding and technical assistance support. In summary, despite the better climatic and environmental conditions suitable for cocoa production coupled with the important role the sector can play in employment creation, national revenue generation and development, it remains uncompetitive and unattractive.

It is against this background that the Liberia Cocoa Improvement Programme (LICSIP) was formed to reverse and address the challenges. The LICSIP therefore seeks to create a vibrant, competitive and profitable cocoa economy driven by farmer groups/associations and private

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sector supply chain actors, within a robust national regulatory and institutional framework. Primarily the European Union (EU) funds LICSIP with co-funding from Solidaridad West Africa (SWA) and anticipated co-funding private companies. It is a 4-year programme with an approved total funding of 5 million euros. The programme falls under the EU-Liberia Agriculture Programme, which is part of the 2014-2020 National Indicative Program (NIP) for the 11th European Development Fund. The programme has been developed and agreed with the Liberia Government and allocates €279m of EU funding to support good governance, energy, education and agriculture.

The core implementation strategy of LICSIP is to promote farmers' access to a bouquet of production support services that leads to farm intensification, rehabilitation of moribund farms, new plantings on fallow lands and general extension services through the set up and operation of Centres for Cocoa Development (CCDs). Cocoa companies, farmer organisations and other supply chain actors will operate the CCDs in the cocoa regions as small medium enterprises (SMEs) to provide sustained services. LICSIP working with sector stakeholders will address and promote an improved institutional, policy and regulatory framework and a national cocoa platform to contribute to an improved sector governance, and access to employment (with focus on youth and other vulnerable groups) as improved access to global markets.

Solidaridad West Africa is the prime organization contracted by the EU in Liberia to manage the implementation of LICSIP. Solidaridad is a civil society organization that seeks to promote sustainable and inclusive supply chains. Solidaridad recognizes that other institutions in Liberia and the sub-region can play specified roles to support the implementation of specific activities under the planned result areas of LICSIP. One of the areas identified, for which this ToR is prepared to elicit technical assistance and support is the need to provide technical direction to the setup and operation of a national cocoa public-private partnership (NC3P) platform to support sector policy and regulations developments.

Objective of the assignment

The overall objective of the ToR is to seek a technical assistance partner to contribute to the implementation of selected activities under Result Area 3 of LICSIP Programme Design - *Capacity of Sector Governance Structures Enhanced*. The specific activity under the Result Area would be to facilitate and manage over an initial two-year period a NC3P platform with the view to providing guidance on a long term embedding of the platform, its management and operations into a national institution. It must be emphasized that prior, to LICSIP, Liberia cocoa sector actors had created the Cocoa Sector Working Group (CSWG) that met periodically to discuss sector issues and engage with the appropriate sector regulatory institutions whilst ensuring internal harmonization of different cocoa sector intervention projects by NGOs and development agencies in the country. This was primarily to ensure efficiency through avoidance of programme duplication in the cocoa communities of Liberia.

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The successful partner organization would be required to specifically address and deliver on the following:

- Identify and profile all public-private actors active in the cocoa sector of the country;
- Consult with the CWSG of the need for the bigger NC3P and engage them with the view of integrating them into the NC3P;
- Consult with the identified and profiled stakeholders to reach a consensus on the need for the NC3P, its operational charter and terms of references;
- Engage with Solidaridad as lead implementer of LICSIP in engagement that seeks to get national buy-in of NC3P with government;
- Build a consensus agreement around a new vision of the cocoa sector in Liberia in line with the spirit and intent of LICSIP and related goals and objectives of the new vision. This effort must lead to a defined long-term inclusive cocoa direction for Liberia;
- Ensure alignment of NC3P with efforts by Solidaridad and MoA/LACRA in developing a regulatory policy framework for the sector with the support of policy and institutional experts implanted by Solidaridad within the MoA/LACRA. Recognizing that Solidaridad had prior to LICSIP initiated a policy engagement process by developing and financing a comprehensive term of reference for LACRA to seek technical assistance support for the development of a draft regulatory and inclusive framework;
- Lead the launch of NC3P within the framework of LICSIP;
- Develop the first annual plan of activities for the NC3P and its corresponding budget for approval by Solidaridad;
- Ensure to create a secretariat for managing the NC3P within the framework of LICSIP for initial two years and lead the review of the functioning of the Secretariat at the end of two years towards embedding the secretariat and its operations in a national institution through consensus by the NC3P;
- Provide a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework for annual plans and activities of the NC3P.

Application process

Interested organizations must apply by submitting a comprehensive step-wise process technical proposal on how to address the element of the ToR objectives above. The technical proposal must indicate what deliverables are expected or must be expected for each defined step in realizing the objectives of the ToR. The methodologies or approaches to be used and a justified analysis of why the methods proposed are the best for each of the defined tasks. The technical proposal may have the room to appraise the ToR in line with best practices in the convening of similar platforms and its operational management. Such specific examples must be mentioned.

Secondly, the technical proposal must have a corresponding two-year (initial) budget for the proposed sub-activity.

Both the technical and financial proposals must be sent by email to macarthur@solidariadnetwork.org with isaacg@solidaridanetwork.org in copy. The subject line must read “**LICSIP – NC3P Liberia**”. Deadline for submission of proposal is **June 01, 2018 by 16:00 GMT**.

Only the organization(s) whose application is (are) selected would be contacted before mid-June 2018 for the assessment. If one is not contacted by mid-June 2018, then one can conclude that the application was unsuccessful. Solidaridad would not provide unsuccessful applicants with any assessment results.

Eligibility requirements

The successful partner must be either a local or international development organization with legal presence in Liberia. It must be able to provide verifiable evidence of experience in convening cocoa stakeholders or similar commodity stakeholders in Liberia or other West African countries and is best placed to use and adapt its experiences in support of this activity under LICSIP.

Assessment of technical and financial proposal

The proposal will be assessed in two stages:

Stage 1 – Solidaridad will assess the technical soundness of the technical proposal based the following: Clarity of problem that each step of the process seeks to address, Clarity and feasibility of proposed intervention/activities and approach based on the reality of the cocoa sector of Liberia at the moment, technical competence and experience in convening multi-stakeholder platforms for supply chains. Solidaridad may choose to invite the applicant to discuss for a better understanding, its proposed approach and ask the applicant to go back and review sections of the technical proposal for resubmission. This is to ensure that the applicant is fully aligned with the spirit and intent of LICSIP and on-going development with MoA/LACRA in order not to ensure a totally new proposition that may be un-aligned with the purpose of LICSIP.

Stage 2 – The applicant would have the room to review its original budget after stage 1 is completed or may stick to the original budget. Solidaridad would analyze the budget basically ensuring that the time allotted, human resources required and time frame for activities assures value for money within the broader budgetary allocation for the Result Area within LICSIP. Appropriate negotiation of the budget would be done between Solidaridad and the applicant whose technical proposal has been accepted. The applicant as basis for contracting by Solidaridad would then submit a final budget.

Monitoring & evaluation of the activity

The Programme Lead for LICSIP would have the primary responsibility to monitor the implementation of the selected partner's work. This would be done through periodic meetings and constant consultation between the parties as would be enshrined in the contract agreement between Solidaridad and the partner.

Reporting and communication on the activity

Details on reporting and communication around the activity would be provided in the contract that would regulate the engagement of the partner (successful applicant)

Duration of implementation of the activity

This activity shall have an initial two-year contract from the date of signature of the contract. Apart from the periodic review of activities in line with objectives of the ToR, Solidaridad would do a participatory review of the activity two months before end of the two-year term contract to see whether there is the need to continue the activity in the same format or changed format towards the long term embedding of the NC3P in a national institution. The joint results of the assessment would be shared with the stakeholders in the NC3P