



Sierra Leone Regional Rice Value Chain Development Project (SLRRVDP)



Ministry Of Agriculture & Forestry

135 Dambala Road, Bo City.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTANT SERVICES – SELECTION OF FIRMS)

COUNTRY: Sierra Leone

NAME OF PROJECT: Sierra Leone Regional Rice Value Chain Development Project.

SECTOR: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)

CONSULTING SERVICES: Market Studies

Mode of Financing: Installment sale

Financing No: SLE 1013

Issue: 28th September, 2021.

The Government of Sierra Leone has received an Installment sale, from the Islamic Development Bank, toward the cost of the Sierra Leone Regional Rice Value Chain Project (SLRRVCP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services.

The services include conducting a detail market research of the 3 identified commodities of the project in addition to targeted assessment of rice processing units and also include an analysis of the current demand and supply situation and provide recommendations to increase sales and market share of the selected locally produced commodities through direct and indirect sales; the project will be implemented for a period of 5 years. The assignment is expected to commence November, 2021.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be obtained at the address given below:

The Sierra Leone Regional Rice Value Chain Project (SLRRVCP), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide specific information which demonstrates that they are fully qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).

The shortlisting criteria are:

Having confirmed experience in the field of Market studies with detailed market research background of the 3 identified commodities of the project in addition to targeted assessment of rice processing units in Sierra Leone. The researcher should include an analysis of the current

demand and supply situation and provide recommendations to increase sales and market share of the selected locally produced commodities.

The firm must have a general experience of 10 Years with sound knowledge of donor financed projects more particularly in the above area.

The firm is also required to provide a minimum of two similar contracts in the above mentioned areas within the last Four years.

Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Paragraphs, 1.23, and 1.24 of the Guidelines for Procurement of Consultant Services under Islamic Development Bank Project Financing (the "Procurement Guidelines"), setting forth IsDB's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost Base Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Guidelines April, 2019.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 9:00GMT to 17:00GMT, Mondays - Fridays.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e- mail, on or before **12th October, 2021.**

Regional Rice Value Chain Project- Sierra Leone

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Attention: Procurement Unit

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MARKET STUDIES

Introduction

Rice is the most important food crop in Sierra Leone and is produced by about 90% of farmer population across the country. The national demand for milled rice stands at about 1.5million metric tons annually. Of this, only 40% is being produced locally and the deficit is being satisfied through importation at very high cost. The need to understand why Sierra Leone cannot produce sufficient rice to meet its national requirement cannot be overemphasized. In the past, Agricultural development policy has focused on the achievement of rice self-sufficiency among other objectives. Major interventions in the sector have included both direct government participation (mechanical rice cultivation in the riverain grasslands around Gbundapi and Torma Bum, and the bolilands in the Bombali and Tonkolili Districts) and indirectly, through the donor-funded integrated agricultural/rural development projects, which covered over 80% of the country in the 1970s and 1980s. All of these interventions targeted small-holder farmers, who constitute approximately 90% of the farming population. The performances of the various interventions were generally disappointing and during the last two decades, the overall performance of the agricultural sector has been poor. There are major challenges to overcome, if Sierra Leone has to eradicate extreme hunger and rural poverty. These include: Food insecurity which remains a threat especially in rural areas of Sierra Leone, because of the low productivity, low income, poor rural infrastructure (road networks), transportation and access to markets, among others. There is evidence that agricultural output has even decreased in recent years, due to an out-migration of youth from rural areas as traditional agriculture offers low incomes, with the older population having access to welfare transfers to buy food rather than produce it themselves.

The Regional Rice Value Chain Project for Sierra Leone is another attempt by the new government of Sierra Leone to address the huge cost of rice importation. The project aims at building and strengthening national capacity of institutions to drive policy implementation, encourage the participation of private sector and smallholder farmers to achieve self-sufficiency in the rice market. This USD34 million project is jointly funded by the Islamic Development Bank, BADEA and Government of Sierra Leone. The 5 year project will target 7000 smallholder farmers to cultivate 35,000ha of rice farms in three chiefdoms in two districts in the southern and northern regions of Sierra Leone.

Objectives of the Assignment

This market study for the rice value chain is a major activity of the RRVCP project that lies within the approved work plan and budget as well as the project procurement plan for the year 2021.

The specific objectives of the market research are:

- 1: Reaching an accurate estimate of size of supply and sales of each of the 3 commodities of the project (rice seed, paddy rice and polished rice).
- 2: Recognizing most important producers within Sierra Leone and market share structure of each of the 3 commodities as well as most prevalent marketing channels.
- 3: Identifying and mapping the existence of any imported products that compete with the 3 locally produced commodities, and providing full account of their characteristics.

4: Size of the demand (including the seasonal calendar), factors affecting demand and full specifications of the 3 commodities and their variations including factors such as quality, specifications and design of packaging material, and other conformity factors.

5: Performing assessment of production capacities of rice processing units in Sierra Leone both in terms of supply capacities and ability to meet market demand as per consumer preferences and desired quality specifications

6. Analyze market systems and, identify constraints and root causes of underperformance of the rice value chain in Sierra Leone.

SCOPE OF WORK

The RRVCP-Sierra Leone is seeking highly qualified consulting firm to conduct market research of the 3 identified commodities of the project in addition to targeted assessment of rice processing units in Sierra Leone. The research should include analyses of the current demand and supply situation and provide recommendations to increase sales and market share of the selected locally produced commodities through direct and indirect sales in particular market. The market research must be both supply and demand oriented, while addressing the above six objectives, this research must be able to identify the following:

1. Current and potential supply of the 3 identified commodities at the local market level
2. Current and potential demand for the 3 identified commodities at the local market level all over the country.
3. Highlight any gender specific indicators and actors within the supply and demand markets.
4. Specifications and detailed description of the 3 commodities (rice seed, paddy rice and polished rice) in the local markets (in particular commodities with highest market shares) taking in consideration discrepancies and variations related to other factors such as geographical area, price range, consumer preferences, etc.
5. Recommendations to increase direct and indirect sale of the six identified commodities at the local market, in particular for small scale producers working with the project
6. Recommend business opportunities for women and youth and plausible intervention areas along the rice value chain based on the priority constraints identified.

DELIVERABLES

1. Detailed action plan
2. Detailed research and assessment tools
3. Biweekly progress report of the assignment
4. Complete analysis results of all gathered data
5. First and final drafts of the study

SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Conduct desk research to review related literature, reports and studies
- Identify the key stakeholders of the project; in this regard, RRVCP PMU will support in providing the consultant with available related documents.
- Conduct a sufficient number of one-to-one meetings with the key stakeholders, and target group including market players, producers, processors, consumers, and other relevant institution and bodies including NGO's and private sector representative bodies.
- Facilitate at least five focus group meetings (FGM), with a sufficient and representative number of participants each.
- Utilize any other necessary primary research tools - Draft the structure of the research study according to consultations with PMU for approval.
- Draft and finalize the research study-The consultant is required to incorporate all comments received from the PMU after the submission of the preliminary drafts.
- Suggested solutions and substantiated recommendations to address challenges and root causes to achieve desirable change of increased market share of the 3 locally produced commodities.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The Consultant/s must have the resources, ability and technical expertise to develop the market research/assessment report Minimum requirements are:
- Strong background in market research, business assessment, rice and vegetable production, and processing technologies and/ or any related field, and very good knowledge of the local market and food industries.
- Very Good background on the market research.
- Very Good knowledge of obstacles and main challenges facing the 3 locally produced commodities in market penetration and increasing market share in Sierra Leone.
- Proven experience in conducting market research.
- Good public relations network with private and public sector institutions operating in Sierra Leone in general and the West Africa sub region generally and in particular in the field of cooperative and contract farming model.
- Language: Fluency in writing skills in English is a must.