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# ANNEX A – RFQ 2200202392 TERMS OF REFERENCE

## Sierra Leone: Training and Coaching services on Voluntary Standards/Internal Management Systems for Cashew

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### I. Background

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization based in Geneva. ITC's mission is to enable small business export success in developing and transition-economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions and policymakers.

ITC is currently implementing the SheTrades West Africa (ST WA) project which is financed by the Korea International Cooperative Agency (KOICA) and is being implemented in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The project's goal is to improve the livelihoods of 10,000 women in selected agricultural value chains by 2023. The focus in Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire is cashew, in Liberia cassava and in Guinea shea. The project will be working with the governments (ministries of trade, agriculture and gender/women), Business Support Organisations, value chain operators, SMEs and women as part of the farming household to develop the competitiveness and inclusiveness of these sectors, create local value addition, establish new market linkages and increase the benefits for women in these value chains.

### II. Purpose of service contract

One element of improving competitiveness for cashew SMEs is their ability to manage and implement private voluntary certifications. These can be a significant as a requirement to access and maintain particular markets as well as potentially increasing export value capture. These certifications (such as Organic, Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade etc.) extend from the SME exporter or processor level through to the smallholder farmer level and as such require a complex management and technical structure to build, implement and oversee. The project will support SMEs in the concepts and implementation of an Internal Management System (IMS) for certifications. An IMS is a mandatory requirement for SMEs seeking certification for many of the certifications such as Utz/Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade, organic and others. An IMS is a system of documented procedures, regulations and records that form the basis of evidence for certification - it can include preventive or corrective measures to eliminate any weaknesses or shortcomings, before an external audit. Other benefits of an IMS can be that the SME is more organised, can better manage processes and provide better benefits to farmers. Additionally, the SME can provide buyers with improved information such as related to productivity, availability, and traceability.

### III. Description of duties and responsibilities

The ITC seeks to contract a vendor with expertise in Private Voluntary Standards (PVS) and a solid knowledge of the cashew sector in Sierra Leone to develop and implement a 3-phase coaching and training programme on PVS management in Sierra Leone for the cashew sector.

This will consist of but will not be limited only to:

1. Preparing and planning the implementation of the theory and field training programme
2. Delivering a theory and practical training session on an introduction to an IMS system with field trips to cashew buying/processing centres and farms for field application of IMS theory topics
3. Coaching of up to 3 SMEs selected by ITC:
  - A. Gap assessments and agreement on the IMS review and adaption process
  - B. Adaptation of IMS to individual SMEs
4. Delivering guidance to individual SMEs on application of IMS for improvement of current systems or preparation for certification.

#### **Articulation of the programme:**

The programme should be developed and implemented according to the following phases:

#### **Phase 1. Prepare and deliver a 3-day training PVS certification IMS to SMEs and Business Sector Organisations Staff (BSOS): 15 to 20 participants selected by ITC with logistics covered by ITC**

This comprises of a theory workshop and field visits. The programme will follow this approach:

1. One day Workshop – general outline: -training material provided by ITC and to be adapted to Sierra Leone context.
  - a. Introduction - Explain that intention of this training is to assist SMEs in setting up the structures processes and protocols for private voluntary standard PVS management
  - b. IMS explanation - what is an IMS and how it applies or is required across multiple standards. Why having one common IMS can save on resources rather than having separate IMS for each standard
  - c. Pointing out the IMS commonality across standards - using ITC Standards Map as a tool to compare various standards
  - d. What are the constituents of an IMS – the central documents but also the satellite protocols and procedures to be applied in a practical sense (e.g., signage, machine guards, farmer ID cards etc.)
  - e. IMS Model explanation - Presentation and overview of the IMS model and how it will be adjusted under the coaching programme to fit an SMEs' situation
  - f. Guest speaker from an SME that has implemented one or more private voluntary standards - challenges and successes.
2. Field Visits
  - a. One day to visit an SME that has successfully implemented a certification
  - b. One day to visit an SME that has yet to implement a certification

Note: Training and field visits can be organised in cashew production area in Northwest region or in Kenema/cocoa producing region as there is no certified cashew exporters and in Kenema various exporters are certified to be presented as example.

The intention is to compare and contrast the two sites to visualize concepts covered in the workshop and to encourage group discussion and sharing of experiences.

#### **Phase 2. Gap assessment for a maximum of 3 SMEs identified.**

Subsequent to the theory and field visits programme, selected SMEs/cooperatives will be coached individually on IMS implementation. The selected SMEs may already be certified but will benefit from improved IMS documentation. Alternatively the selected SMEs may not yet have attempted certifications

and therefore IMS documentation will be created for them. Gap assessment will be undertaken, and report provided for the company management to integrate the modification(s) for the IMS to be certified.

**Phase 3: Coaching for an average of 5 days per SME as per the coaching plan developed with gap assessment report.**

The coaching programme will also (depending on further considerations by project management) lead SMES towards certification in any of the standards. The coaching will be done by the consultant. The coaching will be preceded with the implementation of a GAPS/needs assessment.

#### IV. Expected Outputs and Timelines

TASK	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Training preparation	Deliverable 1: IMS management document and PTT updated and adapted to Sierra Leone cashew context delivered & training implementation plan developed	From Mid-November 2021
On-site Training	Deliverable 2: 3 days Training <u>delivered</u> to SMEs and BSOs staff	From Mid-December 2021
Gap assessment	Deliverable 3: gap assessment tool developed and implemented to up to 3 SMEs. Gap assessment report with coaching plan delivered	From Mid-January 2022
Individual coaching	Deliverable 4: coaching implementation to up to 3 SMEs coaching report delivered and up to 3 SME ready to be audited and certified	From February to April 2022

#### V. Qualifications, competencies and experience required

##### A. Qualification of the experts for this assignment

1. Excellent understanding of the requirements of private voluntary standards such as Organic, Fairtrade and others;
2. Strong experience in direct management and implementation of various private voluntary standards programmes within a company or cooperative, or strong experience in the auditing and verification of private voluntary standards.
3. Experience in delivering training and coaching on management, implementation and audit preparation for private voluntary standards particularly useful;
4. Good knowledge of the characteristics of a typical SME in Sierra Leone operating in the sector of cashew such as managerial capabilities, resource and staffing skill capacities and others;
5. Excellent report writing and presentation skills;

##### B. Experience

6. Min 10 years in the Sierra Leone or the West African region, in a field management and operations role
7. Min 1 year in cashew sector
8. Min 7 years in voluntary standards

### **C. Language**

Fluent in English and good level of local language

### **D. Travel**

Must be able to travel within Sierra Leone

## **VI. Requirement for proposals**

### **A. Technical Proposal**

The technical proposal should include but not be limited to the following :

- a. Acceptance of ITC's General Terms and conditions (Annex B - signed (mandatory))
- b. Necessary information and cross reference to additional documentation (e.g. certificates, CVs) to support technical evaluation of the proposals as per the requirements expressed in this TOR
- c. Company description (e.g. size, number of employees)
- d. Legal form and incorporation (copy of the registration certificate)
- e. The company/organisation's United Nations Global Market (UNGM) identification number obtained following registration in the UNGM platform (refer to guidelines provided Annex D)
- f. Organisational setup, partner, and expert network
- g. Description of the company's expertise and technical knowledge in PVS management (see
- h. Description of the company's experience and expertise in providing technical support an PVS)
- i. Evidence (such as an MOU) of partnerships or relationships about PVS certification capacity building
- j. Proposed experts' profile working on the project with short description of experience and qualifications
- k. Approach / work plan of activities to achieve the deliverables
- l. Assignment of tasks or activities to the team members

### **B. Financial Proposal**

- Service providers are requested to submit their financial offer by filling in, dating, and signing the Annex C \_ Price offer template provided.
- The prices quoted should reflect the overall total costs, be fixed prices and all inclusive
- The price break is by deliverable as the payments will be made against receipt and acceptance by ITC of each deliverable

## **VII. Payment terms and schedule**

As per ITC and UN standardized terms of payment, payment is at 30 days (net) following the satisfactory delivery of the services and the receipt of invoice. ITC shall only make payment based on satisfactory achievement of specific deliverables. Payment will be split in four instalments, where the first payment is made following the acknowledged receipt of Deliverable 1, the second following the acknowledged receipt of Deliverable 2, the third following acknowledged receipt of Deliverable 3 and the fourth against the acknowledged receipt of the last Deliverable (Deliverable 4).

Please note that ITC will not make any advance payments and is exempted from paying VAT and any other form of taxes.

Service fees are subject to the national income taxes, where applicable. If the contract is to be issued in a currency other than USD, the UN exchange rate on the deadline for submission of the offers will be applicable.

## **VIII. Evaluation of proposals**

The proposals received will first be evaluated technically. The technical offer must cover all aspects and tasks required in the description of main tasks described above and provide all the necessary supporting documentation. Offers not fulfilling the requirements or deviating from them may be rejected from the selection process.

Among all the technically acceptable proposals, ITC will award the lowest cost proposal.

## **IX. Procurement timeline**

The tentative timeline for the procurement procedure is as following:

<b>Publication of the Tender documents</b>	21 October 2021
<b>Clarification on TOR deadline</b>	28 October 2021 (questions) – 29 October 2021 (answers by ITC)
<b>Submission of proposals deadline</b>	4 November 2021
<b>Opening of the proposals</b>	5 November 2021
<b>ITC evaluation of the proposals</b>	11 November 2021
<b>Notification of award</b>	12-15 November 2021
<b>Signing of contract (i.e. purchase order)</b>	15-18 November 2021