



TECHNOSERVE

Title: Cashew Agronomist

Reports to: Chief of Party, BeninCajù

Location: Remote and Benin (with extensive travel to remote areas)

Anticipated start date: April 2019

Estimated Total Level of Effort: 215 working days (through March 2020)

I. TechnoServe Background

TechnoServe works with enterprising people in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses and industries. We are a nonprofit organization that develops business solutions to poverty by linking people to information, capital, and markets. Our work is rooted in the idea that given the opportunity, hardworking men and women in even the poorest places can generate income, jobs and wealth for their families and communities. With more than four decades of proven results, we believe in the power of private enterprise to transform lives.

II. Context

Responding to high demand in the global cashew market and the superior quality of their raw product, Benin's cashew cultivation has expanded more than tenfold in the past two decades. Yet processing capacity and other value chain inefficiencies have kept the sector from reaching its potential, and Benin still exports 90% of its cashew as unprocessed raw nut.

Started in September 2015, the BeninCajù project, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and implemented in partnership with Catholic Relief Services, is strengthening and expanding the cashew sector into a more productive, competitive, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth engine for the people of Benin. BeninCajù seeks to create nearly 4,000 jobs in the cashew processing industry – 70 percent of which are for women – and improve the income of almost 50,000 producers, which represents a quarter of all cashew farmers in Benin. The program will serve twelve of the country's cashew producing municipalities and support at least 10 processing plants.

Recognizing the importance of the cashew industry to the local rural economy, the Government of Benin has included cashew as a key sector in its Action Plan to promote agricultural diversification. To this end, the government has set a goal to increase production by 60,000 hectares by 2021, an effort that will require 6,000,000 grafted seedlings. Existing genetic material and nursery infrastructure is currently insufficient to meet these objectives, and producers require additional training to implement good agricultural practices in order to maximize production of new and existing plantations. As a technical partner to the government, TechnoServe, through BeninCajù, will work with relevant government agencies and other industry stakeholders to implement its ambitious plan to dramatically increase production in the coming years.

TechnoServe is also providing capacity building to select and train at least 40 nurseries, increase the number of elite mother trees and seed farms, and improve the quality of genetic material through the identification and propagation of highly-productive varieties suitable to Benin's climate and soil conditions.

III. Purpose

TechnoServe is seeking an expert cashew agronomist to support BeninCajù to assist, advise, and train the government and relevant industry stakeholders as they move forward to implement their action plan to increase cashew production.

IV. Scope

The consultant will be expected to provide expert advice and training to identified Beninese cashew production stakeholders as needed and directed by the BeninCajù Chief of Party or his delegated representative. The consultant will need to focus simultaneously on direct support to project beneficiaries as well as on building capacity of relevant BeninCajù staff, in order to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the consultation. This should be accomplished using a team approach, wherein BeninCajù staff are fully engaged and leveraged in all activities carried out under this consultancy. Support is expected to focus primarily on, but is not limited to, the following areas:

1. Cashew inputs strategy (mother trees identification and mapping, connecting to nurseries)
 - a. Review existing documentation on Beninese cashew genetic material, including a review of KOR mapping
 - b. Conduct a field-level diagnostic of existing genetic material, including conducting interviews with processors and traders to identify potential needs for improvement and spot areas of good quality material
 - c. Support definition and alignment of vision and target goals for national production
 - d. Support definition of intervention strategy and approach, including:
 - i. Refine parameters for mother tree selection, ensuring alignment with national research and development targets
 - ii. Support selection of geographic areas to source mother trees and where to locate nurseries
 - e. Launch and oversee identification and mapping of existing mother trees, including inspecting identified trees for their quality and characteristics
 - f. Identify suppliers of seeds for root stock production (using size and quality of seeds)
 - g. Provide training to scion and seed suppliers as needed, including:
 - i. Best management practices
 - ii. Cost estimation
 - h. Investigate the possibility of polyclonal seed production and distribution
 - i. Conduct a feasibility study on polyclonal seed gardens
 - ii. Lead a workshop with relevant stakeholders on polyclonal seed production
 - iii. Provide actionable recommendations and intervention strategies
2. Training and technical assistance to nurseries
 - a. Conduct a field-level diagnostic of existing nurseries to identify challenges and needs for support
 - b. As needed, identify additional nurseries

- c. Develop training material for nursery owners and managers on topics including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. Planning and forecasting of resource and equipment needs
 - ii. Timing and synchronization of operations
 - iii. Grafting theories, techniques, and other best practices for nursery businesses
- d. Support implementation of training to nurseries
- 3. Farmer adoption of good agricultural practices (GAP) specific to the Beninese local context
 - a. Conduct a field-level diagnostic in the various cashew-producing regions of Benin to identify production challenges and needs for support
 - b. Review existing GAP documentation, including technical reports and studies, and training materials
 - c. Identify existing capacity and needs of various farmer-training organizations (government, trade associations and farmer groups, processors)
 - d. Lead discussions and workshops with relevant stakeholders to ensure buy-in
 - e. Outline key GAPs, strategies for propagating GAPs, and key performance indicators to measure farmer application of GAPs, ensuring alignment with cashew sector development plans
 - f. For each of the farmer-training organizations, support drafting of any missing training material, and revision/improvement of existing training material
 - g. Provide training and coaching on GAPs and farmer training to identified BeninCajù staff
 - h. In collaboration with BeninCajù staff, provide training, coaching, and follow-up on GAPs and farmer training to identified farmer-training organizations
- 4. Producer-buyer linkages
 - a. Conduct a field-level diagnostic with buyers (domestic processors, exporters) and producers to identify needs and challenges related to buyer-seller relationships
 - b. Provide actionable recommendations and intervention strategies to improve buyer-seller relationships and increase value-chain efficiency

V. Deliverables and Payment Terms

Due to the variety of stakeholders involved and the dynamic nature of production activities, the contract will be formulated and paid in terms of level-of-effort. Each invoice must be accompanied by a summary of activities completed and associated level of effort (in number of days spent per activity).

The following table presents a preliminary timeline and expected list of deliverables to inform potential candidates of what will be required to demonstrate satisfactory contract performance. Regular check-ins with the Chief of Party will be necessary to ensure continued alignment of expectations and timelines.

Date	Deliverable
	National/Regional database of geo-tagged existing mother trees
	Guidance document/form for selecting mother trees aligned with national R&D parameters
	Diagnostics of: existing genetic material, farmer training needs, producer-buyer linkages, nursery capacity

	Activity, training, and workshop reports
	Workplans
	Nursery training materials
	Farmer training materials and field manuals
	List of GAPs and associated KPIs
	Feasibility study on polyclonal seed gardens
	Recommendations and intervention strategies for increasing seedling production, polyclonal seed gardens, adoption of GAPs, and improving buyer-seller relationships

VI. Logistics

All travel to Benin or elsewhere must be accompanied by a clear workplan and be pre-approved by the Chief of Party or his delegated representative. TechnoServe will directly cover travel-related costs including international airfare, in-country accommodation, in-country transportation, and per diem for living expenses.

VII. Required Skills & Experience

- Bachelor's degree in agronomics, agricultural development, or related field
- At least 10 years of experience working in the cashew industry, with a focus on production in Africa strongly preferred
- Experience in strategy development and implementation
- Experience creating and implementing farmer-adapted training programs
- Extensive knowledge of the global cashew industry, including global export market requirements
- Strong network of contacts working in the African cashew industry
- English proficiency required, French would be a plus
- Comfortable working with a diverse range of stakeholders in a diverse range of settings (from formal government offices to remote rural areas)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Willingness to travel throughout Benin, when required

VIII. Terms and Conditions

1. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
2. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated below in XVI. Schedule of Events. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for 60 days after the proposal deadline noted below.
5. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
6. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
7. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
8. All information provided by TNS in this TOR is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.

9. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
10. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.
11. Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

IX. Instructions

All proposals shall:

1. Be in the English language.
2. Include an estimated budget, including the applicant's daily rate, required additional non-TechnoServe personnel, etc. Costs should be detailed in US Dollar, with applicable Tax/Charges clearly identified.
3. Provide requested payment terms and conditions.
4. Describe the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the firm in providing the type of services being request by this TOR. Resumes or CVs of "key personnel" shall be submitted as an attachment.
5. Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between TNS and the submitting organization.
6. A brief outline of the organization and services offered, including:
 - a. Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company
 - b. Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President and / or Chief Executive Officer, and all other officers and senior managers of the company
 - c. Year business was established
7. A descriptive of:
 - a. Project Approach/Methodology
 - b. Work Plan
 - c. Project Schedule
 - d. Project Deliverables
8. List of 2 references who can attest to the applicant's experience and expertise as it relates to this project and this ToR

All applications must be submitted by 5:30pm, Monday, April 2, 2019 electronically to offresbenin@tns.org with in cc tnsbenin@tns.org.