

Request for Qualifications
Expert Advisor for:
Coffee Wet-mill Capacity Building & Training Programme Development & Set-up

TechnoServe invites you to participate in this competitive solicitation for qualifications related to the position Coffee Wet-mill Advisor for support to global coffee supplier, Mercon. The work will be conducted closely with the Mercon and CASA Technical Assistance Facility teams.

Position Location: The support will be provided in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Anticipated start date: 15 November 2021.

Estimated Duration & LOE: The timing of the project is 15 November 2021 until 15 March 2022 as a full-time consultant for 3 months (~45 days LOE).

Budget: Maximum £12,600.

I. About TechnoServe

TechnoServe is managing the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office (FCDO) funded five-year programme – Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusinesses (CASA) – focused on driving catalytic change in how investors view and invest in agribusinesses operating in supply chains with significant numbers of smallholder producers. CASA is focused on increasing economic opportunities for smallholder farmers (SHF) by:

- Enabling more smallholder farmers to engage with and trade into commercial markets;
- Demonstrating the commercial viability of agribusinesses with significant smallholder supply chains and attracting more investment into these businesses;
- Deepening the smallholder impact of investments made by development finance institutions and impact investors.

TechnoServe's role on CASA is to establish and operate a £8 million Technical Assistance Facility (TAF)¹ to support agribusinesses that have received development finance institution (DFI) or impact investor financing to extend and deepen their smallholder impact. CASA TAF's aim is to increase the development impact of individual deals and help build an evidence base of the potential development returns from agribusiness investments that can be used to raise expectations of investors from future deals. CASA TAF has the potential to re-define the role private investments in agriculture can play towards driving development impact for millions of smallholder producers across the globe. Over five years, our objective is to increase sales and productivity of over 100,000 smallholders, and increase jobs and rural income generation opportunities on farms and in invested agribusinesses.

¹ <https://www.casaprogramme.com/technical-assistance/>

II. Background

To meet our objectives, we are working with at least 35 agribusinesses to design and implement commercially viable, high-impact and sustainable inclusive business plans.

One of the businesses supported, Mercon, is global green coffee supplier operating in several origins (eg. Vietnam, Brazil, Nicaragua). Regulatory changes created an opportunity for Mercon to bring its sustainable sourcing programme (“LIFT”) to Ethiopia, enabling Mercon to establish its operational presence and grow its market share in a sustainable Ethiopian coffee market while delivering impact for thousands of smallholder farmers (SHFs). Sustainability is a growing trend in the global coffee market, and key to Mercon’s strategy. Mercon implements its LIFT in key origins to ensure progress on environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Mercon engaged CASA to customise LIFT for Ethiopia to meet customer requirements and improve the livelihoods of SHFs, in a commercially-viable way. The Inclusive Business Plan was finalised in April 2020.

To-date, Mercon has directly sourced green coffee beans in Ethiopia from one wet-mill that sources from ~800 farmers. To meet its growth target of 20K bags (~1200 tonnes) per annum of LIFT coffee by 2025, Mercon plans to enter commercial relationships with up to 14 private wet mills and directly support these businesses and ~9.3K SHFs to adopt key LIFT standards. Stumping, waste-water management, and child labor prohibition are the priority standards that meet key customer requirements and drive biggest impact at the wet-mill level. At the farmer level, agronomy training, financial training and a stumping programme drive biggest impact.

Mercon’s ambitions to establish operations in Ethiopia by setting up partnerships with up to 14 wet-mills require a development of a wet-mill LIFT manual with its associated training programme, implementation and monitoring system, to support these partnerships. The aim is to develop an Ethiopia wet-mill LIFT manual that will be applicable to all the wet-mills that Mercon will partner with, however, meaningful context to the practices and processes for the manual will be provided by the TA provider based on issues identified locally in combination with their expertise on training wet-mills and building capacity on sustainability practices.

To achieve these outputs, the company needs hands-on upfront technical inputs and advisory on wet-mill training and capacity building in a systematic manner. This expert advisory support is the focus of this scope of work.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

In developing the wet-mill manual and associated training programme, implementation and monitoring system, it must build upon the inclusive business plan and the training methodology (inclusive of cost-structure) already developed as a framework for it.

The TA provider will be providing advisory to the Mercon team on-the-ground in Ethiopia (country manager and sales director) with guidance/directional support from the Mercon Sustainability Director and the CASA TAF team.

Deliverable 1.1: Customisation of LIFT manual to Ethiopia wet-mill interventions (Months 1-3)

- 1.1.1 Review existing wet-mill training manuals (eg. LIFT manual, TechnoServe wet-mill manual, and others to be identified)
- 1.1.2 Provide recommendations on LIFT wet-mill manual customisation areas, by identifying training modules that require refinement, and/or by identifying new training modules appropriate for Ethiopian context including eg. best use of the LIFT app to register purchases and identify farmer needs at the wet-mill
- 1.1.3 Present findings from activities 1.1.2 above to Mercon and agree on module refinements/additions to LIFT Ethiopia wet-mill manual
- 1.1.4 Make detailed refinements to existing modules, and develop new modules agreed upon in activity 1.1.3 above
- 1.1.5 Present module adjustments to Mercon, incorporate feedback, finalise LIFT Ethiopia manual

Illustrative training areas TBC through deliverable 1.1

- Wet-mill processes from cherry receipt to storage
- Quality control processes (grading & sorting, payment based on grades/quality, farmer education on quality/grades)
- Digitalisation of purchases registration process
- Environmental/wastewater management/usage of coffee pulp procedures
- Social/health and safety processes (e.g. child labour prevention practices, safe equipment operation)

Deliverable 1.2: Develop LIFT programme implementation & monitoring system (Months 1-3)

- 1.2.1 Establish a set of wet-mill level LIFT KPIs in Ethiopia focused on the critical wet-mill level practices; define what the KPI is, when to measure it, how to measure it
- 1.2.2 Define a set of LIFT implementation controls/audit tools and processes required in relation to the wet-mill manual (integrated in 1.1.3 above)
- 1.2.3 Present LIFT KPIs and implementation controls/audit tool framework to Mercon for feedback and refinement before developing actual tools, processes and templates
- 1.2.4 Develop the tools, processes and associated templates/materials agreed upon in 1.2.3 above. For example:
 - For conducting risk-mapping baseline and measuring wet-mill baseline KPIs (e.g. develop checklist/analytical table)
 - For establishing management plan (e.g. develop management plan draft template indicating a series of focus areas and tasks required for continuous improvement to meet LIFT standards/KPI targets, disaggregated by year 1, 2, 3 etc)
 - Development of educational content for quality/grading e.g. customising terminology to Ethiopia, customising illustrations to describe the requirements
 - Inclusion of templates/examples of policies against discrimination and child labour
 - Develop wet-mill commitment statement template/example
- 1.2.5 Building upon the inclusive business plan wet-mill level training methodology, develop training delivery methodology, calendar, roles and responsibilities disaggregated by training module to ensure adoption of knowledge at wet-mill

For the project, Mercon team on-the-ground will be implementing the LIFT training programme developed by the TA provider; therefore, close engagement with Mercon and team throughout the project, in combination with a robust handover, will be critical.

Candidate selection and performance will be judged on capability to implement and successful achievement of the above activities.

IV. Deliverables

Activity	Deliverable	Level of Effort	Anticipated due date
Customisation of LIFT manual to Ethiopia wet-mill interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of module recommendations to Mercon • Recommendation report of LIFT manual modules with feedback incorporated • Finalised LIFT Ethiopia manual 	~22 days	20 February 2022
Develop LIFT training programme implementation & monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memo of wet-mill level LIFT KPI Framework with feedback incorporated • Presentation of control/audit tools and process recommendations to Mercon • Memo of LIFT implementation controls/audit tools and processes agreed upon, with feedback incorporated • Finalised LIFT implementation controls/audit tools, processes and associated templates/materials, with feedback incorporated • Develop LIFT Ethiopia Manual training delivery methodology; including training calendar and roles and responsibilities disaggregated by training module to ensure adoption of knowledge at wet-mill, with feedback incorporated 	~18 days	20 February 2022
Consolidation of LIFT manual, training programme implementation & monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of final report incorporating LIFT Ethiopia Manual, implementation controls/audit tools and processes, training programme delivery methodology to Mercon • Incorporate feedback to all materials and tools developed and handover to Mercon 	~5 days	15 March February 2022

V. Expected Impact:

Smallholder Farmer (SHF) impact: The wet-mill level support will create market opportunities for farmers in surrounding areas by enabling wet-mills to source more efficiently and effectively, thereby creating a more stable farmer base.

Business impact:

The project will support Mercon to stabilise and deepen partnerships with 2 wet-mills already engaged, as well as to accelerate partnerships with the 12 additional wet-mills, thereby supporting its growth ambition to source ~20K bags (~1200 tonnes) per annum of LIFT coffee by 2025.

VI. Skills Required

- Experienced wet-mill training consultant with expertise in design, delivery and M&E of wet-mill capacity building and training programmes for wet-mills in Ethiopia (preferably in Limmu and Sidamo)
- Track record of successfully supporting wet-mills in commercially oriented wet-mill capacity building design and implementation.
- Expertise in sustainability certification programme audit, non-compliance management, tool development and application, as well as change management, to support adoption of the certification programme.
- Experience working with private agribusiness companies around shared value initiatives preferred.
- At least five years of design and delivery of wet-mill training.
- Advanced degree in business management or other relevant field preferred.
- Prior management consulting experience will be reviewed favourably.
- Strong stakeholder engagement and communication skills required.
- Demonstrated leadership skills, teamwork and relationship building.
- Proven expert analytical and quantitative skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills.
- Excellent Oromifa, Amharic and English written and spoken language skills.
- Strong computer skills, including MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- Ability to work independently, flexibly, and responsively.
- Ability to adapt to changing working conditions.
- Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.

VII. Instructions

Interested candidates should submit their CV, with cover letter, budget and a workplan which captures their approach to implementing the required assignment and deliverables outlined in this document. No travel is expected.

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the submission that is deemed to be in the best interest of TechnoServe and the Donor. The winning submissions will be notified in writing. Those who were not selected may or may not be notified, at the sole discretion of TechnoServe.

Submission deadline: 31 October 2021

Questions regarding this request may be addressed to Tasmin Mulder (tmulder@tns.org) and must be received no later than 29 October 2021.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Request for Qualifications 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 on the RFQ. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
5. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any submission or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing party submitting for such rejection or cancellation of the request for qualifications.
6. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the submission when award is provided.
7. All information provided by TNS in this RFQ 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.
8. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
9. 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.