

Request for Qualifications **Consultant, Senior Agronomic Advisory Services**

TechnoServe invites you to participate in this competitive solicitation for qualifications related to the position of Senior Agronomist Advisor to support Sucafina to develop practical recommendations for smallholder farmer (SHF) input optimisation to increase short- and longer term farmer resilience to market and climate shocks in Tanzania.

Position Location: Tanzania (targeted locations in Mbinga, Mbeya and Kagera)

Anticipated start date: 1 December 2022

Estimated Duration: 6 months, part-time

Budget ceiling: GBP 8,900

I. About TechnoServe

TechnoServe (www.technoserve.org) is a non-profit, economic development organisation with sustained commitment to its 50-year old founding mission to work with enterprising men and women in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. We are business specialists assisting farmers and other entrepreneurs in 29 countries, increasing their access to information, capital, and markets. The increased income our clients derive enhances resilience and prosperity for their families and communities. In 2021, TechnoServe assisted 407,000 farmers and businesses resulting in \$250 million of new revenues and wages for participating farmers, businesses, and employees.

TechnoServe was competitively selected by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to lead part of a 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 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) to support agribusinesses that have received development finance institution (DFI) or impact investor financing to extend and deepen their smallholder impact. The facility provides grants and technical assistance to agribusinesses that have received financing from a DFI (e.g., CDC, FMO) or an impact/patient capital investor (e.g., Dob Equity, Barak Fund) for projects which will increase the volumes of purchases from smallholders and bring new smallholders into business supply chains. 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 that private investments in agriculture can play towards driving development impact for millions of smallholder producers across the globe. Over 5 years, our objective is to work with 35 agribusinesses to increase sales and productivity of over 100,000 smallholders, and increase jobs and rural income generation opportunities.

II. Background

CASA TAF is working with Sucafina – a global green coffee trader which has been operating in Tanzania for over 20 years. Sucafina has ambitions to increase the proportion of certified coffee purchased in Tanzania. To hit this target, Sucafina is working with CASA TAF to establish relationships with coffee co-operatives (Agricultural Marketing Co-Operative Societies – “AMCOS”) and maintain these over time through a loyalty programme to support progressive investment in AMCOS in way that minimises risk and maximises impact potential over time.

In the meantime, rapidly increasing food, fuel, and fertiliser prices, exacerbated by the recent conflict in Ukraine, have had knock on effects on Tanzania’s economy, particularly considering high import dependency on wheat and edible oils. Fertiliser price shocks in particular present real risks for coffee smallholder farmers, including that they:

1. Reduce their use of fertiliser, leading to a drop in production
2. Are not able to cover the costs of fertiliser and experience a disproportionate rise in costs compared to the expected increase in coffee prices, resulting in income losses in the next buying season.
*This risk may be partially resolved via the Government fertiliser subsidy programme.

To mitigate these risks, Sucafina aims to leverage a soil testing initiative recently launched to design more customised recommendations to help farmers withstand these shocks, optimise their use of inputs and production practices to improve soil health, reduce reliance on chemical fertiliser, improve coffee quality and drive more sustainable production.

Specifically, the project will support quality soil data interpretation and development of practical recommendations on appropriate SHF input packages and application rates, drawing on soil test results; as well as an assessment of broader household conditions (e.g. household affordability, availability of inputs in a particular region, overall crop mix, etc.). A Senior Agronomist would lead the analysis and build the capacity of Sucafina staff to train farmers in optimising their decision-making processes when it comes to input choices and broader production practices. This will help to pinpoint what inputs are really needed and at which specific quantity, ideally reducing input costs for farmers. It will also allow for opportunity to consider alternative, climate adaptation options (e.g. crop diversification, addition of fertility crops, alternative organic practices, water management, soil amendments etc) which will support longer term resilience to climate change and economic shocks. The Senior Agronomist will help to build this into longer term extension curricula and advisory to farmers, including capacity building and coaching of Sucafina’s field team.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

Deliverable 2.1: Soil analysis interpretation & Agronomic recommendations for input optimisation

- Conduct interviews and farmer group meetings around 6 targeted AMCOS in Mbinga, Mbeya and Kagera to assess the effects of the fertiliser price increase from the farmer’s perspective, trade-offs they have made and changes in their production practices in the current and recent planting cycles.
- Analyse results and recommendations from soil testing conducted in target areas leveraging the Agro-care tool analysis.
- Assess household economics and consider practical implications of adopting recommendations – key barriers, alternative options, etc.
- Based on soil tests conducted, develop protocol for appropriate input mix, additional interventions required (e.g. liming) and fertiliser application rates for targeted farmers.

- Propose additional recommendations on ecological intensification practices such as crop diversification, addition of fertility crops (e.g. adding legumes or cover crops) and/or addition of organic matter (e.g. manure, raw/composted plant materials or other soil amendments such as biochar).
- Align with partner AMCOS on content and SHF communication approach and delivery channels.
- Develop appropriate communication strategy and list of proposed materials for disseminating interpreted data and advice to target farmers.

Deliverable 2.2: Training packages for input optimisation

- Develop content for practical training modules targeted at Sucafina field staff, AMCOS staff and farmers.
- Conduct Training of Trainers sessions for Sucafina field team and AMCOS staff ensuring alignment and consistent messaging around input recommendations developed.
- Support Sucafina field team in advising at least 5,000 farmers based on results and recommendations.

Deliverable 2.3: Performance report

- Conduct field observations and gather qualitative data on farmers' responses and effectiveness of advisory services.
- Document constraints and drivers of adoption as well as what doesn't work
- Document and present findings to Sucafina senior management and field teams, and CASA TAF.

Deliverable 2.4: Roadmap for future scale up

- Discuss sustainability plan for soil testing and customised advisory service delivery post TA implementation.
- Draft roadmap for scaling up soil testing and rolling out customised advice to farmers across partner AMCOS.
- Consider how this fits into the broader loyalty programme, make recommendations on how to incorporate into the relevant loyalty tier packages; and how to market packages to roasters to allow them to invest in sustainability practices in their origins.
- Embed recommendations into extension curricula and support adoption by Sucafina field teams.
- Discuss soil results and implications for other market actors (e.g. input suppliers) and make recommendations on potential areas of influence (e.g. fertiliser blends, seed varieties etc).

IV. Deliverables

2.1 Soil analysis interpretation & Agronomic recommendations for input optimisation

- Assessment report documenting results, practical implications and options for SHFs in target areas factoring in household economics, soil conditions, available inputs etc.
- Recommendations on appropriate communication and dissemination strategy/channels

2.2 Training packages for input optimisation developed and deployed

- Practical training guides and materials targeted to Sucafina field team based on secondary research, farmer feedback and soil testing results
- Training materials targeted to farmers that can be used through group trainings and disseminated through various channels (to be determined)
- ToT sessions conducted for the Sucafina field team
- Lead training sessions with AMCOS and support Sucafina staff to roll out farmer training

2.3 Performance report

- Performance assessment capturing field observations and quantitative and qualitative data on farmers' responses and effectiveness of advisory services
- Documented farmer constraints and drivers of/barriers to adoption

- Submission of monthly reports with insights and findings presented to Sucafina senior management and field teams, and CASA TAF. Monthly reports will be based on an agreed upon template with CASA TAF

2.4 Roadmap for future scale up

- Roadmap documenting how soil testing and advisory services should be embedded longer term in business operations; and practical recommendations on scale up including how advisory services can be linked to farmer profiling and loyalty programme in the long run (including comments on organisational structure and staff training required)

3 Expected Impact:

Through this initiative, it is expected that Sucafina will reach at least 5,000 farmers in targeted sourcing regions. Specifically, we expect the following impact:

- **Improved farmer production decision making** based on customised advice relevant to SHF soil and economic conditions to minimise impact of the crisis on farm profitability in the short term and create basis for sustainable increases in profitability in the long term.
- **Optimised or sustained farmer incomes for at least 5,000 farmers linked to reduced input costs and/or optimised yields.** Advisory services will enable farmers to make more nuanced decisions on optimal fertiliser application rates on their farms, considering current constraints on purchasing inputs, soil conditions and household economics.
- **Improved soil health conditions** by applying appropriate ratios and input packages according to specific nutrient levels.
- **Enhance biodiversity and longer term climate resilience** of supported SHFs through ecological intensification practices promoted.

4 Skills Required

- Bachelor's Degree in agriculture, business management or relevant field
- At least 8 years experience in agronomy, advisory services and farmer extension programmes
- At least 8 years experience in directly working with farmers and incorporating the farmers perspective in programmes and initiatives
- Advanced degree in agronomy, business management or other relevant field preferred
- Experience in soil testing implementation and analysis preferred
- Experience in promoting/supporting adoption of technology platforms preferred
- Experience working with smallholder farmers on farmer extension and advisory within Tanzania required
- Should possess excellent business management and project management skills
- Full professional language proficiency in English required
- Experience working with agribusinesses around shared value initiatives required
- Strong written and verbal communication and interpersonal 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

5 Instructions

Interested candidates should submit their CV and budget (including daily rate in GBP) for implementing the required assignment and deliverables outlined in this document.

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: 18 November 2022

Questions regarding this request may be addressed to Melanie Machingawuta (mmachingawuta@tns.org) and must be received no later than **16 November 2022**

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 with TNS as well as Sucafina.
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.