

Request for Qualifications
Relationship Manager for a global green coffee supplier
(updated 12 July 2023)

TechnoServe invites you to participate in this competitive solicitation for qualifications related to the position of Relationship Manager to support Mercon in starting the implementation of an inclusive sourcing strategy through capacity building of its partner mills and implementation of targeted farmer extension services.

Position Location: Limmu, Ethiopia
Anticipated start date: end July 2023
Estimated Duration: ~24 months, full-time
Budget ceiling: GBP 30,000 (for 24 months)

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., BII, 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

TechnoServe is working with Mercon, a global green coffee supplier with existing operations in Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Vietnam. Mercon implements its “LIFT platform” in all its integrated origins to provide meaningful services to farmers and ensure environmental, social, and economic sustainability in its supply chain. Recent legislative changes in Ethiopia have created the opportunity for Mercon to expand the LIFT platform to Ethiopia, enabling Mercon to capture market share in the sustainable Ethiopian coffee market and deliver positive impact for thousands of smallholder farmers (SHFs) connected to partner mills. Mercon engaged CASA TAF to customise LIFT for Ethiopia and meet customer requirements while improving the livelihoods of SHFs and small agro-enterprises, in a commercially viable way.

To meet the company’s overall objectives, CASA designed the following technical assistance (TA) projects:

1. Mill capacity building: technical assistance will focus on training partner mills covering organisational and business management principles, provision of farmer delivery services and coffee processing.
2. Farmer extension services: focused training sessions will be provided to farmers covering key topics such as soil and nutrient management, stumping and harvesting practices. A sustainability plan will also be developed targeting to embed extension services within partner mills with enough capacity to deliver.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Stakeholder alignment
 - Align partner mills with impact and commercial targets, and overall vision of the technical assistance project
 - Participate in training provided by Mercon Ethiopia focused on the LIFT platform
 - Review in depth the mill processing manual developed for the LIFT platform
 - Support the selection of a TA (technical assistance) provider for mill and farm monitoring and capacity building
 - Execute in coordination with the TA provider and Mercon team the collection of necessary mill and farmer information through the LIFT mobile application to produce farmer and mill profiles
2. Mill relationship management
 - Act as the primary contact for Mercon from partner mills and ensure quality of execution of mill training and farmer extension services
 - Together with Mercon and chosen TA provider, build a mill assessment tool that will cover the crucial areas to assess the mill’s capacity, including:
 - Governance structure
 - Leadership and management capacity

- Financial management
 - Operational efficiency
 - Production capacity
 - Using this assessment tool, evaluate partner mills' ability to be a multi-year strategic partner based on impact objectives, volume requirements, programme and client standards, and targets
 - Using the LIFT monitoring KPIs, identify mill specific KPIs related to volumes, farmer extension and training, data collection, and practices monitoring
 - Develop and implement an onboarding programme (including communication materials) for partner mills incorporating the results of the assessment tool and
 - Together with a TA provider, create a targeted mill training and management plan using the LIFT Ethiopia mill manual
 - Provide day to day operational support for partner mills involved in the project
3. Farmer extension services
- Act as the primary contact of the TA provider delivering farmer extension services for coordination activities with farmers supplying to partner mills
 - Coordinate with partner mills for the TA provider to implement farmer training extension services to their suppliers
 - Support the TA provider in delivering training and gathering feedback from farmers on effectiveness of training programmes
 - Support in transitioning farmer extension services within mills operations taking into account mills capacity and performance
4. Performance monitoring
- Develop a monitoring plan (based on the selected specific KPIs) for each partner mill onboarded to track actual performance compared to annual targets
 - Conduct annual assessments to monitor the progress of mill management plans and effectiveness of capacity building activities
 - Hold performance review sessions with partner mills to provide feedback and technical assistance
 - Monitor KPIs quarterly (or as appropriate) together with Mercon representative
 - Develop a mill graduation programme to calibrate the mill's progress against multi-year targets (when applicable)
5. Impact assessment and evaluation
- Serve as the primary contact to coordinate data collection activities with partner mills related to impact evaluation activities (e.g. baseline data collection)

IV. Deliverables

1. Project set up and launch
- Develop project work plan with milestones and deliverables
 - Identify target KPIs with partner mills
 - Conduct onboarding program with clear messaging on project objectives, the value proposition, mills' roles and responsibilities, KPIs and targets

2. Mill assessment tool

- Develop a tool (in Excel) that can be used by Mercon to evaluate various aspects of mills operations (including governance structure, leadership and management, financial management, operational and production capacity) and identify potential risks
- The tool should be able to generate an overall score covering the key areas identified above

3. Mill management plans

- Develop individual mill management plans targeted towards continuous improvement and aligned with the LIFT platform's requirements and project objectives

4. Day to day operational support

- Establish strong relationship with partner mills included in the pilot through constant engagement, provision of technical assistance in anticipation of capacity gaps
- Conduct regular farmer / farm visits throughout the duration of the project
- Serve as the primary contact of technical assistance providers on mill training and farmer extension services throughout the project's implementation period
- Provide input and logistical support in relation to monitoring and data collection activities

5. Performance reviews and program reporting

- Conduct regular performance reviews with Mercon to give feedback to partner mills based on mill management plans
- Submit quarterly progress reports to Mercon and CASA TAF
- Participate in project check-ins and Steering Committee (when appropriate) meetings to report on the project's progress

V. Expected Impact:

Through this initiative, it is expected that Mercon will reach up to 10,000 farmers in the long term, with up to an average net income benefit of £322 per farmer within a 10-year period.

VI. Skills Required

- Bachelor's Degree with a minimum of five years of relevant work experience required
- Advanced degree in business management or other relevant field preferred
- At least five years of business or project management in a similar context
- Should possess excellent business management and project management skills
- Experience working in coffee value chains
- Experience supporting organisations, cooperatives, and/or farmers to adopt certification standards and productivity improvement techniques, ideally in the coffee sector
- Experience promoting/supporting adoption of technology platforms preferred
- Experience in working with wet and dry coffee mills preferred
- Experience in or passion for implementing field work in a developing country required
- Oromo native/fluent speaker required
- Full professional language proficiency in English required

- Experience working with corporations around shared value initiatives required
- Proven analytical and quantitative skills
- Excellent 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

VII. 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 to Ana Herrera (aherrera@tns.org).

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: 21 July 2023

Questions regarding this request may be addressed to Ana Herrera (aherrera@tns.org) and must be received no later than **18 July 2023**.

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 Mercon.
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.

