
Terms of Reference



Inception Phase of Sustainable Cocoa Production in Vietnam

1. Context

Rikolto (formerly VECO/Vredeseilanden) is an international NGO with more than 40 years of experience in partnering farmer organisations and food chain actors across Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Rikolto runs programmes in 14 countries worldwide through seven regional offices. Rikolto in Vietnam is the Vietnamese regional office of Rikolto, located in Hanoi. We envision a world with production and consumption systems that allow poverty and hunger to be eradicated and that do not burden our planet more than it can bear. Therefore, we empower farmer groups to become solid business partners and implement future-proof, sustainable practices. We support them so that their products meet quality standards. We connect them with innovators in the food industry to explore new ways of doing business.

Currently, Rikolto is designing its next 5-year programme, in which cocoa is one of the commodities that Rikolto will focus on. To help design a programme that is feasible, Rikolto would like to carry out an inception phase to identify constraints and capacities to develop the cocoa sector.

2. Objectives

The overall aim of the inception phase is to understand the constraints and capacities for the development of cocoa sector:

- An assessment of the capacities and needs of the main cocoa actors: companies; farmers, fermenters, cooperatives, input suppliers (seedling, fertilisers, etc.);
- An assessment of the current policy supports and the respective institutions;
- An assessment of current value chain set-up;
- Based on these assessments, an intervention plan is developed for 2022-2025.

3. Specific tasks

- Task 1: Develop detailed activity plan with target lead business partners
 - Set up selection criteria for private partners.
 - Working with selected partners to develop activity plans for improving partners' cocoa value chain performance. The plan needs to consider practical factors and local contexts to ensure feasibility and matching with available resource.
 - Conduct field trips to validate info, if required
- Task 2: Assess in depth relationship between actors in value chain and propose solutions to address the issues that hinder value chain development.
- Task 3: Identify relevant local agencies and opportunities for collaboration
 - Identify local agencies and initiate discussions on policy environment.
 - Propose potential activities for improving policy enabling environment.
- Task 4: Recommend work stream packages for interventions across provinces. These have to be balanced between Rikolto's resources, local development policies, private business strategies, and cocoa sector's specific contexts.

4. Study focuses

In each of the suggested zones, the inception study should assess the conditions for cocoa productions from seedlings to farm design, technical trainings, fermentation and business linkages between farmers – fermenters - companies:

- Production techniques and corresponding agronomic structure:
 - Planting materials: seedlings, fertilisers, etc.
 - Planting techniques: grafting, farm design, pruning, chemical inputs like fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, etc.
 - Training and extension supports: training materials,
 - Cultivation system (recommendations) and cultivation system in reality.
- Value chain set up.
- Identification and involvement of different stakeholders in cocoa: these may be researchers, input service providers, and associations.

5. Approach/Methodology

- Business-led value chain: interventions are to be strongly adhered to practical demand of lead firms in the local cocoa value chain, to ensure relevance and market absorption for farm's outputs.
- Feasibility: the design should target activities that can be feasibly delivered within the timeframe/resource of the project, also to create success stories to build up trust in the farmer community and so enabling quick replication in subsequence.
- Flexibility: a mechanism with room to accommodate unexpected developments in the sectors is required in the design.

6. Expected output

- An assessment report of cocoa in the selected provinces
- A workplan for 2022-2025

7. Venue

The assessment takes place only in districts and communes where established cocoa production plantations already exist. Based on desk studies of Rilkolto and the pre-identification mission in March 2021, the following provinces and respective companies (as partners) are suggested:

- Dong Nai Province: Bamboo An Vien, Trong Duc
- Ba Ria Province: Thanh Dat (OCA)
- Dak Lak Province: Puratos, Nam Truong Son
- Gia Lai Province: Nam Truong Son

8. Time plan

Time	What	Note
Apr	In depth interview built on earlier discussion (4 companies) + experts + potential partners	5 days
May	Interviews and Planning meetings DakLak (EaKar) and Gia Lai provinces (2 companies – Puratos and Nam Truong Son) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Company/Fermentor/▪ Cocoa experts/extension	5 days Half a day kick off meeting in each province could be

	Local government	considered if budget available
May	Report and Project work plan draft	5 days
	Finalization	1 day
Total		16 days

9. Qualifications of consultant(s)

- Education: Master/University level education in a field of economic/business or equivalent and market service development.
- Skills:
 - Proven skills in business and marketing;
 - Knowledge on value chain approach and market development;
 - Proven experience in project/program design for agri sector;
 - Knowledgeable in cocoa development sector. Previous experience in cocoa projects is plus;
 - Knowledge on Institutional Development and Organizational Strengthening, agriculture/agro forestry in northwest Vietnam.
- Experience:
 - At least 10 years of relevant experiences. Experience/exposure to supply base development, facilitation of linkage between actors in value chain, product development, and promotion of market access will be an advantage;
 - Having substantial experience of working in development sector of Vietnam;
 - Experience in providing consultancy and technical advice in organizational development and institutional strengthening to government or private sector.
- Language: Fluency in written and spoken English and Vietnamese.

10. How to apply

Interested Candidates are invited to send CV / expression of interest letter and proposal for consideration before 07th May 2021, by email to:

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Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.