



Term of Reference

Request for Proposal: Develop the Digital Transformation Strategy and Action Plan for Vietnamese Cocoa SMEs

Project: CIRCULAR ECONOMY COCOA: “FROM BEAN TO BAR”

Helvetas is an independent organization for development based in Switzerland with affiliated organizations in Germany and the United States. Helvetas has been active in Vietnam since 1994, working in various areas typically Agriculture, Bio-conservation, Forestry, Eco-Tourism, and Rural Economy.

1. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Under the SWITCH-Asia programme of the European Union, we are implementing the Project “Circular Economy Cocoa: From Bean to Bar” with the main objective to develop circular economy solutions in cocoa and other agri-food sectors, leading to equitable economic growth decoupled from harmful environmental impacts. The Project, will be implemented within 04 years from 2022 to 2026 in 06-07 cacao provinces in Central Highlands and Mekong Delta of Vietnam.

Digital technologies have the potential to revolutionise Vietnamese agriculture by helping farmers and enterprises work more precisely, efficiently, and sustainably. Enhancing the traceability of the cocoa supply chain is an important means towards increasing the sustainability and accountability of the chocolate and cocoa sector. Digitalization in farm management and traceability will contribute to the growth of efficient, environmentally sound supply chains.

In partnership with key cocoa producers in Vietnam, Helvetas Vietnam is seeking experienced consultants to develop a comprehensive digital transformation strategy for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating within Vietnam's cocoa sector. The objective is to modernize and enhance the efficiency, sustainability, and competitiveness of the cocoa supply chain in alignment with local and international standards.

2. OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this consultancy are **(i) to develop a digital transformation strategy** for small and medium enterprises in the cocoa sector in Vietnam, and **(ii) to identify the roadmap and develop an action plan** for “going digital” considering the particular characteristics of Vietnam cocoa supply chain, domestic social and economic conditions, adaptable to the local and international requirements on farm management and food traceability.

The output of this consultancy will be used as a guideline and useful resource for project SME partners in Vietnam in the process of planning and implementing their digital transformation.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Literature Review and Best practices

- Conduct a thorough review of existing literature and research on digitalization and traceability in the agricultural sector, with a focus on cocoa production.
- Identify best practices and successful case studies from around the world.
- Analyze the current digitalization and traceability landscape in Vietnam's cocoa sector.
- Identify key technologies and trends.

3.2 Technical Requirements and Strategy

- Define the technical requirements for a digitalization and traceability system tailored to the needs of cocoa MSMEs in Vietnam.
- Develop a comprehensive digitalization strategy for cocoa production, considering factors such as affordability, accessibility, and sustainability.
- Identify and assess the feasibility of various technologies for data collection, transmission, and analysis.
- Recommend technologies and solutions to adopt.
- Propose a phased roadmap and timeline.

3.3 Roadmap and Action Plan for Cocoa MSMEs

- Create a detailed roadmap for the implementation of digitalization and traceability solutions for cocoa MSMEs in Vietnam.
- Prioritize the adoption of digital tools and technologies based on their impact on productivity, efficiency, and market access.
- Develop training and capacity-building programs to support MSMEs in adopting and utilizing digital solutions effectively.

4. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The consulting firm/team is suggested to be comprised of more than one consultant.

The team leader should have the following qualifications:

- An IT expert in computer science with significant professional experiences in developing and implementing digital solutions for farm management and traceability in agrifood sector.
- Minimum of a Master's degree in Computer Science, Information Technology, Data Science or a related field, and a minimum of 10 years experience in the software development industry.
- Proven track record in developing digital strategies for agricultural sectors, preferably in the cocoa industry or similar.
- Expertise in assessing supply chain dynamics, technological integration, and socio-economic factors within developing economies.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving abilities to address complex technical challenges and provide effective solutions.
- Understanding business processes and how technology aligns with business goals is essential.
- Experience working in Vietnam or similar Southeast Asian contexts.

- Understanding cacao production and processing technologies, sustainable development, and agricultural sector in Vietnam (would be an advantage).
- Very good communication skills and professional working efficiency in English.

Other team members should be:

- A specialist in supply chain management/agricultural integrated system/agri-business management and/or other relevant expertise.
- Minimum of a Master's degree and 07 years of working experience in a related field.
- Understanding business processes and how technology aligns with business goals is essential.
- Understanding raw materials and agricultural supply chain.
- Understanding cacao production and processing technologies (would be an advance).
- Very good communication skills and professional working efficiency in English and Vietnamese.

5. DELIVERABLES

- Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy Document.
- Detailed Roadmap and Action Plan for Implementation.

6. SUGGEST TIMELINE

Activities	Tentative timeline
Submission of proposals (extended)	January 12 th , 2024
Short-list and contract negotiation	January 19 th , 2024
Contract implementation period	February to May 31 th , 2024

7. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSAL:

Interesting candidates should send Technical & Financial Proposals to the Helvetas Vietnam – Circular Economy Cocoa Project at the following emails: helvetas.vietnam@helvetas.org and tuan.nguyen@helvetas.org.

- Technical Proposal should outline the approach, methodology, and timeline for the project. Relevant experience and qualifications of the consulting team should be included.
- Financial Proposal should be prepared in the unit of actual working days with the proposed rate of each individual consultants. Detailed budget breakdown should be indicated. Other terms and conditions under this consultancy package are subjected to the EU-based cost norms.