

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Agribusiness and Resilience Specialist

Job Title: Agribusiness Resilience Specialist

Duration: Full-Time

Reports to: Team Leader

Position Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

The SMEs Promote Resilience, Inclusion and Innovative Transformation (SPRINT) Project is a flagship initiative of Global Affairs Canada in Vietnam and is being implemented by Cowater International Inc. in the province of Yen Bai in northern Vietnam. The Project aims to improve the socio-economic well-being of ethnic minority women working in the agricultural sector by elevating their economic status, leadership, and agency through the promotion of clean growth. The program will implement a series of interventions designed to strengthen the performance of ethnic minority women (EMW)-led MSMEs, cooperatives and producer groups in the agri-food sector, with a focus on enhancing agricultural value chains for key commodities such as sticky rice, chayote, Shan Tuyet tea, cinnamon, indigenous apple, and Bat Do bamboo shoots. The primary beneficiaries are women living in the province of Yen Bai, while an overarching emphasis is placed on the inclusion of EMW.

The Project is scheduled to run for six years, from 2023 until 2029. It will respond to critical skill gaps, knowledge gaps, and incentivize innovation and adoption of agriculture resilience and clean growth, including Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficient (EE) solutions among EMW-led agri-food businesses while promoting sustainable agricultural product marketing and business development strategies to enhance market access and profitability.

SUMMARY OF THE POSITION

The Agribusiness Resilience Specialist (ARS) will collaborate closely with the Team Leader and the Climate Environment Specialist (CES) to provide technical support for the project's agricultural business interventions and resilience, focusing on resilience, clean growth, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and the sustainable development of robust agricultural value chains, effective marketing strategies, enhancing business capacity, and innovative financing mechanisms.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Collaboration and Planning: The ARS will work under the overall technical guidance of the CES to plan detailed interventions and provide technical support to stakeholders, including the project team, partners, and service suppliers. This includes offering technical inputs, facilitating and planning guidance, and advising on capacity-building initiatives for cooperatives and MSMEs in clean growth, climate-smart agricultural practices, and low-carbon innovation in agriculture, with a focus on RE and EE solutions as well as strengthening agricultural value chains through improved production, processing, and

distribution efficiencies. The ARS will also support the application of smart and climate-adaptive agricultural initiatives across all stages of the identified value chains, ensuring effective linkages between farmers, cooperatives, and markets to enhance product competitiveness.

General Project Support: In close coordination with the CES, the Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment GEWEE focal person and other team members, the ARS will provide advice and support for the planning, implementation, and reporting of the project, ensuring excellence in delivery, impact, and reporting. This support will encompass activities related to M&E and field-based services and tasks to ensure the achievement of established targets and compliance with socio-environmental safeguards and gender equality, in line with the Project Implementation Plan, while integrating strategies for agricultural product marketing and business development to expand market opportunities for EMW-led enterprises.

Senior Technical Team Member: The ARS will be a member of the Senior Technical Team within the project. Working closely under the overall technical lead of the CES, the ARS will focus on Intermediate Outcome 1100 of the project and report to the Team Lead and Cowater's Head Quarters team with an emphasis on leveraging value chain analysis, marketing expertise, and financing strategies to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Program management:

- Being a member of the Senior Technical Team of SPRINT, the ARS will provide advice on Project planning, ensuring Project activities align with the Project Implementation Plan, Government priorities, and GAC priorities and regulations.
- In close consultation with the CES, and GEWEE focal person, lead the technical development and implementation among established themes of the projects, focally agriculture resilient and clean growth, RE and EE, cooperative and enterprise development, and market development with a strong emphasis on optimizing agricultural value chains, developing robust business plans, and implementing innovative financing strategies to support EMW-led MSMEs and cooperatives.
- Provide technical support to the team, ensuring effective performance and results of individuals and strong coordination between activities.
- Ensure effective coordination to ensure Project agriculture and clean growth themes are integrated, mainstreamed, and aligned with gender equality, social inclusion, and women's economic empowerment values while promoting agricultural product marketing initiatives that enhance visibility and demand for EMW-produced goods in local and regional markets.
- In close consultation with the CES, and GEWEE focal person, support the M&E function of the project, supporting the M&E Specialist in the implementation of the M&E framework, database management, and reporting. This could include tracking indicators related to value chain efficiency, market penetration, and financial sustainability of EMW-led enterprises.
- Oversee the implementation of work plans, especially the interventions at the grassroots level, ensuring the update of status and progress, feedback, and issues raised by key program partners and program stakeholders, including Governments,

communities, and service providers with a focus on addressing bottlenecks in value chains, marketing, and financing access.

Program Planning:

- In close consultation with the CES, GEWEE focal person, and MERL specialist, support the Team Leader in the development of work plans to reach targets and outcomes (including feasibility of achieving them within the timing proposed). Additionally the CES will support performance indicators and risk factors/mitigation approaches; and the preparation of consolidated inputs for annual workplans and progress reports for submission to the donor.

Other:

- In close consultation with the CES and the GEWEE focal person, actively participate and contribute to provincial coordination meetings, technical partners, donors, and development partners on common values of the Project and the organization.
- In close consultation with the CES and the GEWEE focal person, actively participation and contributions to knowledge networks and communities of practice, including networks of RE/EE, climate change, cultivation, food security, and other relevant networks as well as networks focused on agricultural value chains, agribusiness marketing, and innovative financing for rural development.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

The **Agribusiness and Resilience Specialist (ARS)** should have the following qualifications, skills, knowledge, and experience:

Qualifications:

- Education: Master's degree in agriculture, natural resources management, or a related field such as business administration or international development with coursework or certifications in agribusiness, value chain development, or agricultural economics preferred.
- Technical Expertise; Experience and Skills: At least 10 years of experience providing technical and management services for development projects focused on MSMEs and cooperatives management, agriculture, climate change mitigation and adaptation, EE, RE, and climate smart agriculture (CSA), with specific expertise in agricultural value chain analysis, agricultural product marketing, business development, and financing strategies for rural enterprises; Experience working in rural development, particularly with rural ethnic minority communities; Proven expertise in gender equality and social inclusion, women's economic empowerment; Experience in project reporting and developing training materials including materials on value chain optimization, market analysis, and financial planning; Demonstrated knowledge and application of performance-based M&E approaches, with a strong preference for experience in GAC's results-based management (RBM) and tracking value chain and market-related indicators; Skills in facilitating training for MSMEs, cooperatives, farmers, and state

officials particularly on business planning, marketing strategies, and accessing finance; Strong organizational and strategic writing skills, with the ability to think systemically.

- Stakeholder Engagement: Experience working with senior government officials and local stakeholders, including private sector partners, financial institutions, and market actors to strengthen agricultural value chains.
- Risk Management: Experience in managing and mitigating project risks, including risks related to market volatility, supply chain disruptions, and financial access barriers.
- GAC Experience: Experience working with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) would be highly regarded.
- Language Proficiency: Fluency in Vietnamese and English (written, spoken, and reading) is essential.
- Ethnic Minority Languages: Understanding of any ethnic minority languages relevant to Yen Bai is an asset.

APPLICATION

Interested applicants are invited to submit their CV and cover letter in English with the subject line of **“Agribusiness and Resilience Specialist”** to Recruitment@sprint-vietnam.com **on or before 17.00, 20th May 2025**. While we appreciate all responses, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Cowater is an equal opportunity employer. Women, people with disabilities, and people from minority groups are strongly encouraged to apply. We thank you for your interest in building a better tomorrow with Cowater International.

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