

Terms of Reference

Position Title:	Consultant(s)/ Consulting firm to conduct technical support on market access, digital applications in business management and income-generating economic/livelihood activities for EMW-focused MSMEs/ cooperatives/ producer groups and their linked members
Location:	Yen Bai Province and online (via Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.), with flexibility based on actual needs
Period of Assignment:	August 2025 – December 2025
Reporting To:	Project Coordinator/GEWEE Focal
Project:	SMEs Promote Resilience, Inclusion, and Innovative Transformation (SPRINT)
Activity Code:	1211.5

1. Background

SMEs Promote Resilience, Inclusion, and Innovative Transformation (SPRINT) is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), with an implementation period from 2024-2029. The SPRINT is implemented in Yen Bai province and managed by Cowater International.

Cowater International is a leading global development consulting company founded in 1985. Headquartered in Ottawa, Cowater International has successfully delivered a portfolio of over 2,500 projects and assignments in more than 95 countries. Cowater works with governments, private sector actors, and communities to implement projects that support socio-economic development, institutional strengthening, environmental improvements, and advancing equal opportunities for all.

(Website: <https://www.cowater.com/en/home/>)

• Introduction of SPRINT Project:

The goal of the SPRINT: Enhanced socio-economic well-being of Ethnic Minority Women (EMW) through clean growth in the agriculture sector in Yen Bai province of Vietnam.

SPRINT's two main outcomes aim to: (i) Improved performance of EMW-focused MSMEs, cooperatives, and producers in gender-responsive and climate-resilient value chains in the agriculture sector; (ii) Increased influence of EMW in clean economic growth in the agriculture sector.

With the overarching objective of enhanced socio-economic wellbeing of EMW through clean growth in the agriculture sector in Yen Bai, SPRINT targets the following two main outcomes of working with 20,000 women, especially EMW working in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), cooperatives, and producer groups within agri-food values chains; through awareness raising and application of low carbon and resilience agriculture production, renewal and efficient energy; raising awareness around gender-specific barriers; and innovation for clean, adaptive and inclusive

growth (e-commerce platforms; Clean Growth Challenge Grant; learning events and knowledge dissemination).

The SPRINT project targets five districts (Mu Cang Chai, Tram Tau, Luc Yen, Van Yen, Van Chan) and Yen Bai City in Yen Bai Province. The main project stakeholders are Yen Bai Provincial People Committee (PPC), Provincial Cooperative Alliance (PCA), Women Union (WU), Department of Agriculture and Environment (DAE), Department of Industry and Trade (DOIT).

The SPRINT project's direct beneficiaries are ethnic minority women (EMW)-focused MSMEs, cooperatives, and producer groups working in the agricultural sector.

To achieve these objectives, the project provides training and capacity-building activities, focusing on financial literacy, gender-responsive business practices, and clean growth strategies for MSMEs/coops/ producer groups owned by women/EMW/or with many female workers/or with many ethnic minority households, focusing on project prioritized value chains: chayote, tea, bamboo shoots, indigenous apple, cinnamon, and sticky rice.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

To contribute to the achievement of:

- Intermediate Outcome 1200: Increased influence of EMW in clean economic growth in the agriculture sector
- Immediate Outcome 1210: Improved business capacity of EMW-focused MSMEs/coops/producers in business development, management, and building market linkages in agriculture

The SPRINT project will implement the following 01 sub-activity through this consultancy:

Sub-Activity 1211.5: Establish cluster technical support groups in the community to maintain technical support activities for trained member units/households, ensuring effectiveness in practical work

Sub-Activity 1211.5 is designed as a follow-up to Sub-Activity 1211.4, which delivered hands-on coaching sessions to equip EMW-focused MSMEs, cooperatives, and producer groups with foundational knowledge and practical skills in market access, digital business management, and income diversification. Following the training under Sub-Activity 1211.4, 12 cluster technical support groups were selected. These groups are required to develop action plans, which will be used as the basis for receiving tailored technical guidance and mentoring under Sub-Activity 1211.5. The groups will then implement their action plans in their respective communities.

3. Expected Results

- 12 cluster technical support groups with members selected from trained people are established and act as ongoing support focal points in their communities
- An implementation roadmap is developed to guide the formation, roles, activities, and coordination mechanisms of the cluster technical support groups. With support from

technical consultants, each group will implement the action plans they developed. As a result, about 1,000 people benefit from these community technical support groups (EMW-focused).

4. Scope of Work

Together with local trainers¹, the consultant (s) will:

- Reinforce the knowledge and skills of technical support groups in key topics covered in Sub-Activity 1211.4 (e.g., market access, digital tools, income diversification)
- Address group-specific challenges identified during the initial coaching and action plan implementation
- Provide practical guidance and problem-solving support to promote real-life application
- Monitor the progress of action plans and offer technical inputs to adjust or improve implementation strategies

5. Structure and Methodology of Follow-up mentoring and technical support

The consultant(s), in close coordination with local trainers, will deliver 12 practical mentoring/technical support sessions (0.5 day/session tentatively, in person or online via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) to strengthen 12 technical support groups. Each session will:

- Be interactive and hands-on, tailored to local contexts and group needs
- Use a mix of print materials, videos, real-life examples, and field mentoring
- Equip groups with facilitation and mentoring tools to guide follow-up activities and monitor action plan progress
- Apply gender-sensitive, participatory methods like peer mentoring and group case studies
- Ensure practical, ongoing support to help groups effectively implement and track community-level activities

6. Specific Tasks & Deliverables

Note: Deliverables submitted by the consultant will be in Vietnamese

No.	Specific Task	Detailed Description	Deliverable (s)	Timeline
1	Design Technical Support	- Develop a complete technical support package including agenda,	- Complete technical support package (agenda, slides,	By August 20, 2025

¹ Individuals with relevant experience, selected by the project based on clear criteria to work alongside the consultant. Their understanding of the local context supports effective activity implementation and enables them to provide follow-up assistance to participants after the activity.

	Package and Engage Local Trainers	<p>presentation slides, handouts, facilitation guide, and technical tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide 02 orientation and technical coaching sessions (1 day/ session) for selected local trainers (individuals with relevant experience identified by the project) to enable them to support the consultant in delivering coaching sessions (including coaching content, delivery methods, and roles during implementation) - Coordinate with the project team to ensure that local trainers receive appropriate allowances in accordance with the SPRINT Cost Norm 	<p>handouts, facilitation guide and tools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two 1-day orientation and coaching sessions for local trainers 	
2	Deliver Follow-up Mentoring and Technical Support	<p>In coordination with local trainers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the establishment and capacity-building of 12 local technical support groups - Deliver 12 interactive mentoring/ technical support sessions (0.5 day/session tentatively, in person or online via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) tailored to each group's needs - Guide the groups in implementing follow-up activities, applying facilitation and mentoring tools, and monitoring their action plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12 mentoring/ technical support sessions (0.5 day/ session tentatively) delivered - Comprehensive report on mentoring sessions and technical support provided 	09/2025 – 12/2025

7. Consultant Qualifications

Criteria	Required
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Education	A university degree in business development, agribusiness or a related field. A master's degree is an advantage.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 5 years of experience in delivering capacity building, training, mentoring or coaching programs for MSMEs/ cooperatives/ producer groups, preferably in ethnic minority areas - Proven experience in designing and facilitating participatory, hands-on training/coaching/ mentoring programs on topics such as digital tools, market access, income diversification, and community-based technical support - Experience working on gender equality, women's economic empowerment, or inclusive market development is highly desirable.
Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong skills in training curriculum design, facilitation, and participatory coaching/ mentoring methodologies - Strong expertise in Facebook page/group management, digital marketing, content creation (livestreaming, short-form videos, graphics) - Familiarity with digital applications relevant to MSMEs/cooperatives (e.g., mobile apps for inventory, e-commerce, basic accounting) - Ability to design and apply tools for pre- and post-training assessments, and to document lessons learned - Knowledge of adult learning principles and community-based technical support models.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fluency in Vietnamese is required for training delivery and documentation. - Working proficiency in English is preferred, particularly for reporting and documentation purposes.

8. Application Process

Competitive tendering will be applied. Interested consultant (s) are invited to submit the following with the subject line: **[Consultancy Application _ Sub Activity 1211.5 _ Consultant (s)/ Company Name]** to procurement@sprint-vietnam.com by 17.00pm on 31st July 2025:

- Letter of interest
- Consultant CVs
- Technical proposal and financial proposal
- Examples of previous similar work: training/ coaching/ mentoring materials, tools, or reports (optional but recommended)

Note: The financial proposal should be developed based on the above-mentioned scope of work and requirements and is encouraged not to exceed 62,000,000 VND (all applicable taxes included). This amount excludes allowances for local trainers and travel/accommodation expenses for the consultant(s), if incurred during field visits.

Cowater is committed to providing equal opportunities for all applicants. Women, people with disability, and people from minority groups are strongly encouraged to apply. We thank you for your interest in building a better tomorrow with Cowater International.