



## RECOVERY OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FOR LIBERIA INFORMAL SECTOR EMPLOYMENT (REALISE) PROJECT

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### **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR Service Provider to support implementation of Community Livelihood and Agriculture Support (CLAS) Program**

#### **1.0 Background**

The Government of Liberia has received funding from the World Bank, Swedish International Development Association (Sida) and the French Agency for Development (AFD) to implement the Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment (REALISE) Project. The Project Development Objective is to increase access to income-earning opportunities for the vulnerable in the informal sector in response to crises, expand income and livelihood support to poor and food-insecure households, and improve efficiency in managing social protection programs in Liberia. The REALISE project comprises six components namely: (i) Grant Support to Vulnerable Households to Revive or Start Small Businesses; (ii) Temporary Employment Support and Employability Development for Vulnerable Workers, (iii) Program Implementation, Capacity Building, and Coordination; (iv) Contingency Emergency Response Component (v) Community Livelihood and Agriculture Support, and (vi) Social Cash Transfer and Strengthening of the National Social Protection System. The REALISE Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP), and the Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE). Implementation of project activities is managed by a single Project Management Team (PMT) that sits outside of the implementing institutions and is comprised of consultants hired by them. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is responsible for overall coordination of the Project.

In preparation for implementation of activities under the CLAS Program, LACE is seeking to hire the services of qualified Non-Governmental Organization (s)/firm (s) to serve as Service Providers (SP) for the program. Implementation of the CLAS program will be carried out concurrently across all eight counties, which will be organized into clusters. Cluster 1 will comprise Bomi, Bong, Gbarpolu, and Lofa Counties and will be funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). On the other hand, Cluster 2 will comprise Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, and Sinoe Counties, with funding support provided by the World Bank. One or more service providers will be contracted to support implementation of program activities in the two clusters. These providers will adhere to important project documents, including the Project Operations Manual (POM), Program Handbook, and Implementation Guidelines, among others. The Service Provider(s) shall be under the supervision of the

REALISE Project Management Team (PMT), which will ensure that the program is executed in compliance with the processes specified in the primary project documentation.

**1.1 Objectives of the Assignment**

The Objective of this assignment is to facilitate the successful implementation of all activities of the CLAS program at the community level in targeted communities in 8 counties in Liberia. Implementation will build on utilizing a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach to mobilize and coordinate the resources and services needed for the rollout and implementation of core activities under the program.

**1.2 Duration**

The support sought under this assignment is expected to run for 12 months with possibility for extension based on performance and continued need.

**2.0 Description of CLAS Program**

The CLAS program is aimed at improving livelihood opportunities and climate resilience for poor and vulnerable populations in rural areas of Liberia. The program targets to support up to 16,200 beneficiaries living in rural communities in Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Bomi, Bong, Lofa, and Sinoe Counties with inputs and technical support to engage in, among others, community-level farming that will help recover or strengthen their income generation potential and improve their resilience to cope with current and future food crisis in Liberia. Program resources will be aimed at providing direct income support to vulnerable and food-insecure households, as well as to promoting local food production. In view of this, support under the program will be delivered through the following key interventions:

**2.1 Livelihood and Agriculture Support (LAS)**—this includes on the ground facilitation of beneficiaries to federate into Beneficiary Farming Groups (BFG) and develop farming subprojects that would enable them to access farm start-up grants of up to US\$1,800 to procure farm inputs. The program will also provide life skills training and promote climate-smart agriculture practices deemed necessary for sustaining the farming activities. Additionally, each beneficiary will be provided labor subsidy of US\$350 in the form of cash transfer to help smooth consumption during the lean season. Each beneficiary will be guaranteed a total of 100 working days per implementation cycle (12 months). The program will also facilitate the transition of beneficiaries to mobile money through the provision of a low-cost mobile phone and SIM card to each beneficiary to enable them access their labor subsidies. The table below provides an estimate of beneficiaries across targeted counties divided into two clusters. Please see table below for information on estimated number of beneficiaries per county.

**Table1: Cluster 1- Distribution of targeted beneficiaries**

No	County	Number of beneficiaries
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1	Bomi	420
2	Bong	1,400
3	Gbarpolu	420
4	Lofa	980
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,220</b>

**Table 2: Cluster 2 -Distribution of targeted beneficiaries**

No	County	Number of beneficiaries
1	Grand Cape Mount	420
2	Grand Gedeh	420
3	Nimba	980
4	Sinoe	420
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,240</b>

**2.2 Community Development Support (CDS)**—This intervention of the program will provide grants of up to US\$1,800, alongside technical assistance, to each participating community to help maintain or improve small-scale common infrastructures that contribute to enhancing wellbeing of the community and promote livelihood opportunities. Identification of activities to be supported under this intervention will be done by the larger community under the leadership of a Community Oversight Committee. The small-scale and labor-intensive nature of community projects to be supported implies they are also likely to be low-carbon activities. Please see table below for information on estimated number of subproject communities to be supported across the various counties.

**Table 3-Custer 1: Estimated number of targeted communities per county**

No	County	Number of communities
5	Bomi	15
6	Bong	50
7	Gbarpolu	15
8	Lofa	35
	<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>

**Table 4-Custer 2: Estimated number of targeted communities per county**

No	County	Number of communities
1	Grand Cape Mount	15
2	Grand Gedeh	15
3	Nimba	35
4	Sinoe	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>

**2.3 Market Link Support (MLS)**—is aimed at increasing market access opportunities for project beneficiaries and the communities at both local and regional levels in Liberia. Additionally, the intervention will support the promotion of sustainable/climate smart agricultural practices (integrating agroecology) geared towards deepening the overall impact

and increasing sustainability of the CLAS program in the targeted communities. MLS will serve as a medium for putting in place support structures geared towards mitigating challenges farmers face in getting the produce to market as well as increasing productivity and value addition as part of improving CLAS based on lessons learned from implementation of the Youth Opportunities Project (YOP) that was closed in September 2021. In furtherance of this, delivery of services under this intervention will rely heavily on farmer cooperatives (to be recruited in close consultation with the REALISE PMT) for playing the interlocutor/facilitation and knowledge transfer role. Each farmer cooperative will be facilitated to develop business proposals that would enable them to access up to US\$20,000 in grant from the project to deliver the proposed MLS services. Please see table below for information on estimated number of beneficiary farmer groups to be supported per county.

**Table 5- Cluster 1: Number of targeted Beneficiary Farmer Groups per county**

No	County	Number of Beneficiary Groups
1	Bomi	15
2	Bong	50
3	Gbarpolu	15
4	Lofa	35
	<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>

**Table 6-Cluster 2: Number of targeted Beneficiary Farmer Groups per county**

No	County	Number of Beneficiary Groups
1	Grand Cape Mount	15
2	Grand Gedeh	15
3	Nimba	35
4	Sinoe	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>

### 3.0 Scope of the Assignment

The SP(s) will facilitate the rollout of activities at the community level and provide supervision and technical support to project beneficiaries as well as participating communities. In fulfillment of the scope of this assignment, the SP shall perform the following duties:

#### 3.1 Livelihood and Agriculture Support (LAS)

- Carry out mobilization and sensitization activities to create awareness of the Project within targeted counties, districts, and communities.
- Facilitate the formation of a Farm Management Committee consisting of 5 members from the farming group membership, with at least 2 female members representatives.
- Employ a participatory rural appraisal process to support BFGs develop subproject proposals for their farming activities;
- Review subproject proposals to verify they are viable and sustainable, and provide technical assistance needed to complete all relevant project forms and data necessary for their subproject through a field appraisal process.

- Assist BFGs with local purchase and delivery of agro-inputs (planting supplies and tools), ensuring that required paperwork is established and maintained in subproject communities and the SP office, and that copies are sent to the PMT.
- Encourage and support BFGs to establish saving accounts to support the group's long-term sustainability efforts as well as facilitate the groups to develop a harvest revenue utilization plan, which includes percentage allocations for the Village Saving Loan Scheme, the continuation of future farming operations, and dividend sharing for each beneficiary.
- Promote climate-smart agriculture and improved livelihoods for BFGs by providing them with innovative ways of cultivating their farms, such as intercropping and growing crops with shorter durations, allowing beneficiaries to harvest on a regular basis and generate income from farm proceeds.
- Conduct weekly field visits to each subproject to validate farm size and provide specialized agriculture and market linkage advice needed to boost overall output.
- Conduct routine monitoring visits to collect relevant data on the progress of subprojects while ensuring adequate record keeping is being maintained at the community level, including accurate attendance records and a Guest-book system to record attendances for all monitoring/site visits by the SP and other visitors, including PMT members.
- Conduct 20-day life skills and financial literacy training for beneficiaries and submit an end-of-training report to PMT, along with copies of signed beneficiary attendance records;
- Submit monthly monitoring reports to PMT outlining subproject progress, dates of community support and monitoring visits, any noticeable difference or deviations from approved subproject proposals, and any other notable occurrence.
- Support the implementation of the grievance redress mechanism in all project communities;
- Attend regular County and Sectoral meetings in coordination with the PMT, and offer regular briefings to local government officials on the progress of subproject operations. Assist the PMT with workshops and meeting preparations as required, including identifying a venue, mobilizing participants, and arranging catering services in the counties of assignment.
- With support from the PMT and in collaboration with local authorities, organize and implement end-of-subproject commissioning for each subproject community, awarding certificates of completion to the community leadership;
- Work with BFG and identify trusted group members that will receive the farm start-up grant on behalf of the group;
- Collect BFG attendance and submit to PMT electronically through the MIS for payroll generation;
- Work with the Project Management Team (PMT) and support labor subsidy payment through the mobile money or the Liberia Household Social Registry (LHSR) as may be applicable at the time of payment;

- Obtain from PMT and distribute mobile phones and SIM cards to project beneficiaries in all selected communities;
- Work with PMT and support beneficiary registration for the National Identification Cards, and also ensure that the ID cards are distributed to beneficiaries.
- Conduct a thorough risk assessment at the ALS onset and periodically update it, developing strategies to mitigate identified risks and ensure continuity and success.
- Adapt implementation strategies based on guidance and feedback received from the PMT.

### ***3.2 Community Development Support (CDS).***

- Support communities in conducting a local needs assessment to inform the selection of community projects, ensuring that they meet local needs, aligning them with community priorities and requirements.
- Facilitate community discussions/dialogues aimed at identifying eligible community development activities using participatory approaches;
- Collaborate with local authorities and entities to identify and engage key stakeholders, ensuring alignment and their participation in community development activities;
- Provide technical support to Community Oversight Committees (COCs) and Beneficiary Farmers Groups (BFGs) to incorporate identified community development activities in the larger subproject proposal from the communities;
- Identify and strengthen responsibilities within COCs, BFGs and other local stakeholders, ensuring that they understand and commit to their roles and responsibilities.
- Undertake the required due diligence to ensure that proposed community development activities adhere to all safeguard requirements under the REALISE project or local regulations;
- Provide technical and supervisory support needed for the successful implementation of community development activities, including tracking of milestones, financial management, and processing of disbursement requests to the PMT;
- Offer technical assistance (TA) and training to community groups and representatives to strengthen their capacity in project execution, management and sustainability;
- Support communities to procure goods and/or services, ensuring transparency, value for money and accountability for all procured items per approved project;
- Develop and execute quality assurance procedures for all procured resources and community development projects to ensure they meet requirements and standards set by the PMT.
- Support communities to organize and put in place appropriate community structures to oversee utilization and sustenance of community subprojects;
- With PMT approval on the content, print, deliver, and install signboards, and disseminate any other PIC material to all farming communities;
- Develop a robust feedback mechanism with the communities to ensure questions, concerns and issues that may arise are appropriately reported and timely addressed.

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment at the CDS onset and periodically update it, developing strategies to mitigate identified risks and ensure continuity and success.
- Regularly monitor progress of community development projects and adapt strategies based on guidance and feedback received from the PMT.

### **3.3 Market Link Support (MLS)**

- Using eligibility criteria and procedures set out in the POM, support the PMT in identifying and enrolling the most qualified cooperative in each county into the program to support market linkage for beneficiaries and their communities;
- Collaborate with local authorities, cooperatives, and other potential stakeholders to ensure a participatory and inclusive approach to market linkage activities. This may include conducting consultation sessions to integrate stakeholder perspectives, ensuring alignment with local priorities.
- Strengthen activities by ensuring that all stakeholders, cooperatives and from farmers to buyers, understand and commit to their roles and responsibilities.
- Assess capacity needs of the cooperative, propose and execute a capacity building plan for strengthening the enrolled cooperatives.
- Prioritize (and conduct, if necessary) market analyses to determine potential market opportunities and challenges, guiding cooperatives in strengthening their market linkages activities.
- With support from the Ministry of Agriculture, develop training curriculum and conduct livelihood and business management training for enrolled cooperatives, providing them support in developing market linkage business plans to be submitted to the PMT for approval. Training will include business maintenance and recovery, business skills and marketing training for key staff of the cooperatives, financial literacy and use of digital financial services (mobile money) and grant management;
- Support the PMT with evaluation of business plans by ensuring that all due diligence relative to key activities in the business plan have been carried out and that plans meet all environmental and social safeguards requirements under the REALISE project or local regulations.
- Work with the enrolled cooperatives to rollout market linkage support in all project communities. The actual number of cooperatives will be determined by the number of beneficiaries per county; however, on the overall, there will be a total of 15 cooperatives for the eight counties;
- Successfully manage the tracking of milestones and disbursement of grant payments, to ensure efficient financial operations, transparency and accountability.
- Supervise, monitor and report on progress of MLS implementation, flagging to PMT attention areas requiring attention or feedback. Establish a mechanism for cooperatives to report on progress, express concerns, provide insights, and offer suggestions.
- Develop and execute quality assurance procedures to ensure services provided and activities implemented by cooperatives meet requirements and standards set by the PMT.

- Work with the assigned cooperatives in each county to identify potential buyers and link them to each farming group either during or after harvest, and share the list with PMT.
- Conduct a thorough risk assessment at the MLS onset and periodically update it, developing strategies to mitigate identified risks and ensure continuity and success.

#### **4. Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible to serve as Service Provider under this program of the REALISE project, the service provider must meet the below qualification and selection criteria:

- Must be a registered NGO in Liberia with a functional office in the county seeking to provide services;
- Must have at least 10 years of experience in implementing livelihoods, agriculture, rural or community development programs;
- Demonstrated experience organizing agriculture fieldwork (creating market linkages, value addition, smart agricultural training and practices, and extension services) over the last 5 years;
- Must have experience in participatory rural appraisal and community-driven development processes.
- At least 5 years of experience working on World Bank-sponsored projects or other international organizations in similar fields.

#### **4.1 Additionally, the firm must have the following staff with the required qualifications and experience:**

##### **i. Executive Director**

- Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, Public Administration, Social Sciences, Agriculture, Accounting, or related field;
- Must have 3–5-years' experience in managing livelihoods, agriculture, food security, or community development projects;
- Must have leadership skills and management experience;
- Must be computer literate

##### **ii. Project Officer (Each county must have one)**

- Must have a minimum of Associate Degree/in any of the Social Sciences or a Diploma in Agriculture or Project Management;
- Must have a minimum of 2 years of project management experience in rural communities;
- Experience in monitoring and evaluation;
- Good report writing skills;
- Experience in using participatory approaches eg. PRA/PLA methodologies
- Must be computer literate

##### **iii. M&E Officer (Each county must have one)**

- Must be at least a High School Graduate
- Possess professional certificate in M&E Training from a recognized institution;



- Must have had at least 2-year experience in monitoring and evaluation activities;
  - Good writing skills and must be computer literate.
- iv. **Community Agriculture Technician-CAT (one per project community)**
- The CAT should have a background in agricultural training and demonstrated expertise in farming, particularly in the crop(s) that beneficiaries can cultivate over a 12-month period in the different counties of Liberia;
  - The CAT should be located within, or nearby, the participant community in order to facilitate regular support and frequent monitoring
- v. **Community Trainer (1 per community)**
- Must be a High School Graduate
  - Must have Life Skills and Enterprise Training Experience;
  - Must have received TOT training in Life Skills and Enterprise Development Training;
  - Must have conducted training for community groups over the past 24 months;
  - Good report-writing skills

## **5.0 Deliverables**

### **5.1 General Project Administration & LAS**

- Inception report upon contract signing, including a 12-month work plan.
- A summary report on awareness and mobilization activities, FMC formation, approved subproject proposals, reviewing process and the participatory rural appraisal process outcomes.
- Delivery of relevant training and TA (i.e., on innovative, climate-smart and sustainable agriculture, and life-skills).
- Monthly subproject milestone completion reports (for LAS, MLS and CDS as needed), including qualitative/quantitative evidence on subproject implementation, farm cultivation (e.g., number of acreage), attendance sheets and other relevant metrics as per program's requirements on the project's MIS.
- A harvest revenue utilization and sustainability plan for each BFG, including savings and investment plan.
- A risk assessment report on LAS, CDS and MLS activities, including identified risks, mitigation strategies, and periodic updates.
- Subproject commissioning report and consolidated reports as per Reporting Requirements section.

### **5.2 Market Linkage**

- Report on the selection process and criteria used to identify and enroll cooperatives, along with feedback from collaboration sessions with local authorities and stakeholders.
- List of selected cooperatives that will support value addition and market linkage for project communities per county;

- A capacity needs assessment and capacity development plan to strengthen enrolled cooperatives, followed by a training and TA report.
- Report on market linkage business proposals, their assessment and review/clearance process conducted along with cooperatives.
- A functioning market information system for project communities (on various markets/institutions where produce can be sold), accompanied by a market analysis detailing potential opportunities, challenges, and strategies recommended for cooperatives, a directory of potential buyers categorized by region and produce type, and consolidated feedback from cooperatives.

## **5.2 Community Development Support**

- A report detailing the findings from the local needs assessment and the outcome of community, stakeholders and BFGs discussions.
- List of proposed and approved CDS sub-projects for all the participating communities, including safeguard screening outcomes for each CDS project.
- A report highlighting key findings from due diligence checks and quality assurance reviews of CDS project, including financials on grants expenditure.
- TA materials, curricula, and post-TA feedback reports from community groups and representatives.

## **6.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The Service Provider will report to the Deputy Project Coordinator for Economic Inclusion and the reporting duties shall include the following:

### **6.1 Inception Report**

The Service provider will submit inception report detailing the Consultant's understanding of the requirements of the assignment, and detailed work plan with a breakdown of implementation milestones. The Inception report should be submitted within two weeks of contract signing.

### **6.2 Subproject Progress Reports**

The Service Provider must keep records for each Beneficiary Farming Group indicating:

- I. Dates of the Service Provider's follow-up support meetings with each beneficiary farming group,
- II. Beneficiaries' attendance at the follow-up support meetings,
- III. All beneficiary farming groups status and current activities,
- IV. Milestone progress,
- V. Planned activities,

### **6.3 Progress Reports**

The progress report shall be monthly updates, quarterly reports, and end-of-project cycle reports. These reports shall provide at least the following information:

- i. Detailed description of the activities performed and results achieved in the current reporting period (monthly Updates and quarterly reports) as well as the resources used for performing these activities.
- ii. Detailed evaluation of the performance of all Community Agriculture Technicians (CATs);

- iii. A brief description and assessment of the current state of all component indicators;
- iv. Issues encountered (Challenges) in the implementation of all subprojects, including grievances reported by beneficiaries and actions taken to resolve complaints;
- v. Brief description of activities to be performed (Next Steps) in the next reporting period as well as the resources estimated to be used for performing such activities;
- vi. Expected results in the next reporting period.

### **7.0 Final Report**

A final report detailing the achievements, challenges, and success stories from all subprojects supported during the project cycle. A final report will be due **15 days before the end of the contract.** The monthly updates and quarterly Progress Reports should be sent to the Deputy Project Coordinator no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the next reporting period. (ex. if the report covers the period up to October 30th, 2023, the report must be delivered by the latest 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2023).