World Vegetable Center

World Vegetable Center (WorldVeg)
Terms of Reference (TOR) — Consulting Firms

1. ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Assignment Title: Business Development Services for Vegetable and Potato Seed Markets in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire under the HortiFuture Project

Consultancy Type: Consulting Services — Firms

Division / Requesting Office: West and Central Africa–Coastal and Humid Regions (WCA-CH)

Duty Station / Assignment Station: Benin and Côte d'Ivoire. Potato activities in Côte d'Ivoire are subject to an assessment in the first year (to be conducted by another partner).

Contract Managers: WCA-CH Regional Director Malick N. Ba (contractual), Director – Social Sciences and Nutrition Dr. Pepijn Schreinemachers (technical)

Expected Contract Duration: From contract signature to 30 September 2031, subject to annual approval of work plans and budgets

Type of Contract: ☐ Lump sum ■ Time-based

2. BACKGROUND

"HortiFuture: Seed Systems Supporting the Growth of West Africa's Horticultural Sector" is a five-year programme funded by the Government of the Netherlands, running from 1 October 2026 to 30 September 2031. It aims to create an inclusive and competitive vegetable and potato seed sector that provides smallholder farmers with access to affordable, quality seed of a wide range of adapted varieties. The programme operates in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal, with WorldVeg as the lead implementing organization.

Using the Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD) approach, HortiFuture recognizes that different crops, market segments and farmer groups require different seed supply systems. International seed companies, domestic public and private seed enterprises, and farmer- and community-based seed producers play complementary roles in meeting farmers' seed needs.

HortiFuture comprises four intervention domains: (1) seed market development; (2) biodiversity, varieties and seed supply; (3) seed sector regulation; and (4) seed sector governance.

This assignment covers the seed market development domain in **Benin and Côte d'Ivoire**, focusing on strengthening domestic and international seed companies, facilitating access to finance, and improving last-mile seed distribution systems. Activities primarily cover vegetable seed markets; potato activities in Côte d'Ivoire will be informed by the programme's first-year assessment.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

The consultancy aims to strengthen inclusive, competitive and commercially sustainable vegetable seed markets in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, with potato activities in Côte d'Ivoire subject to an assessment to be conducted in the first year of the programme:

- Increasing farmers' demand for and access to quality seed of adapted varieties through on-farm demonstrations, training, marketing campaigns and seed fairs.
- Strengthening the technical, managerial and commercial capacity of domestic and international seed companies through tailored business support and technical assistance.
- Improving companies' investment readiness and access to finance, and mobilizing co-investment for seed-sector development.
- Strengthening last-mile seed distribution systems through support to agro-input dealers and improved linkages among seed companies, distributors and farmers.

The selected consulting firm shall propose a coherent conceptual and methodological approach covering both countries, adapted to their respective market conditions and coordinated with existing initiatives, such as SafeVeg in Benin and Centre Moyé in Côte d'Ivoire. Particular attention shall be given to the participation of women and youth and the sustainability of results beyond the programme period.

The consultancy covers four interrelated actions:

- Action 1.1: Strengthen domestic seed companies.
- Action 1.2: Support international seed companies.
- Action 1.3: Facilitate access to finance.
- Action 1.4: Strengthen last-mile distribution systems.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm shall implement the following actions in close collaboration with WorldVeg and programme partners. Activities shall complement existing initiatives, such as SafeVeg in Benin and Centre Moyé in Côte d'Ivoire.

4.1 Action 1.1: Strengthen domestic seed companies

4.1.1 Identify and assess domestic seed companies—Year 1

Identify companies through an open call, conduct field assessments and due diligence, and contribute to the programme database. Assess business performance, growth potential and participation of women and youth.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: One database and 20 domestic seed companies selected.

4.1.2 Prepare company development plans—Years 1–2

Assess companies' production, variety portfolios, marketing, management and financial performance; collect baseline data; and prepare tailored development plans.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: 20 companies supported and 20 development plans prepared.

4.1.3 Support implementation of development plans—Years 2–5

Provide training and coaching; facilitate access to improved varieties and licensing arrangements; and support company-led demonstrations, farmer training and links with agro-input dealers.

▲ **Project-wide targets:** 100% increase in seed production; 50% increase in crop and variety diversity; 260 demonstration plots; 7,800 farmers trained; and 3,900 farmers adopting improved/certified seed. Farmer targets include at least 30% women and 25% youth.

4.2 Action 1.2: Support international seed companies

4.2.1 Identify and engage Dutch seed companies—Year 1

Work with SeedNL and programme partners to identify and assess eligible Plantum or Netherlands Potato Organization (NAO) member companies for participation in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire. In Benin, support shall focus on companies already active in the market.

▲ **Project-wide targets:** Approximately 20 Dutch seed companies engaged.

4.2.2 Support market entry and partnerships—Years 1–2

Provide market intelligence, identify and assess distributors, facilitate matchmaking and business partnerships, and coordinate advice on seed regulations.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: At least 6 new Dutch seed companies engaged and 20 distribution or business partnerships established.

4.2.3 Support demonstrations and farmer training—Years 2–5

Coordinate company-led variety demonstrations and training on good agricultural practices, involving distributors, farmer organizations and extension actors. Coordinate additional demonstrations in Côte d'Ivoire with Centre Moyé.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: 260 demonstration plots; at least 40 improved varieties introduced, tested or commercialized; 7,800 farmers trained; and 3,900 farmers adopting improved/certified seed. Farmer targets include at least 30% women and 25% youth.

4.3 Action 1.3: Facilitate access to finance

4.3.1 Support the Innovation Fund—Years 2–4

Support preparation of the Fund Manual, competitive calls, independent evaluation, beneficiary coaching, milestone monitoring and follow-on investment. Manage the assigned cost-sharing mechanism under WorldVeg's procedures.

Benin–Côte d'Ivoire targets: 6 domestic innovation projects per country, with programme funding of EUR 12,500 per project; and 3 international innovation projects per country,

with EUR 30,000 per project. This totals 18 projects and EUR 330,000 in beneficiary funding.

Beneficiary co-financing shall be at least 25% for domestic projects and 50% for international projects, subject to the approved Fund Manual.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: 7 fund calls; 33 innovations improved or introduced; and EUR 0.42 million in private finance mobilized.

4.3.2 Strengthen investment readiness and financing linkages—Years 2–5

Assess financing needs; prepare business plans and investor-ready documentation; facilitate investor matchmaking; and support due diligence and financing negotiations.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: 20 investment, trade or service plans—12 domestic and 8 international; 10 MSMEs obtaining financial services—6 domestic and 4 international; 10 MSMEs using business development services; 10 financing partnerships; and EUR 2 million in private finance mobilized.

4.4 Action 1.4: Strengthen last-mile distribution systems

4.4.1 Map networks and select agro-input dealers—Year 1

Map distribution networks and select dealers transparently, considering market coverage, advisory capacity and women- and youth-led businesses.

Benin–Côte d'Ivoire targets: 2 country maps and approximately 40 dealers per country.

4.4.2 Strengthen dealer capacity and business models—Years 2–5

Provide training and coaching and improve seed storage, packaging, marketing, advisory services and commercial partnerships.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: Approximately 80 agro-input dealers supported—40 per country.

4.4.3 Organize seed fairs and outreach events—Years 2–5

Organize seed fairs, field days and outreach events connecting seed companies, dealers and farmers.

▲ **Project-wide targets**: Approximately 40 platforms or events involving Dutch seed companies.

4.4.4 Implement quality-seed campaigns—Years 2–5

Develop and implement campaigns in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire using farmer research and appropriate local communication channels, drawing on experience from the Business Seed Partnership (BSP) in Ghana.

Country targets: At least 50,000 farmers reached in each country, including 50% women and 33% youth.

4.5 Coordination and reporting

Coordinate with WorldVeg and programme partners, contribute to seed-sector coordination and private-sector representation, and maintain evidence of activities and results. Report against

contract-specific targets and annual milestones, with supporting records for deliverable acceptance and payment.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES

Each deliverable shall comprise a narrative report, financial report and supporting evidence of the outputs completed against the approved annual work plan and contract-specific targets. WorldVeg will provide reporting templates.

No	Deliverable	Description / Expected Output
1.	Reports and verified outputs from contract commencement to 31 December 2027	Company database, selection and assessment records, baseline data, tailored company development plans, distribution maps, dealer selection records, and other outputs scheduled for this period.
2.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2028	Coaching and training records; demonstration and partnership outputs; Innovation Fund implementation records; financing support; dealer development; and campaign and event results, as scheduled in the annual work plan.
3.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2029	Outputs scheduled for 2029, with annual and cumulative results against contract-specific targets and evidence of completed milestones.
4.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2030	Outputs scheduled for 2030, with annual and cumulative results against contract-specific targets and evidence of completed milestones.
5.	Final reports and verified outputs for 1 January–30 September 2031	Remaining contracted outputs; consolidated results against all contract targets; final financial statement; lessons learned; sustainability and handover arrangements; and transfer of project records and materials.

6. SCHEDULE AND MILESTONES

No	Deliverable	Due Date	Review Completion Date	Target Acceptance Date
1.	Reports and verified outputs from contract commencement to 31 December 2027	30-Jan-2028	14-Feb-2028	28-Feb-2028
2.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2028	30-Jan-2029	14-Feb-2029	28-Feb-2029

No	Deliverable	Due Date	Review Completion Date	Target Acceptance Date
3.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2029	30-Jan-2030	14-Feb-2030	28-Feb-2030
4.	Reports and verified outputs for 1 January–31 December 2030	30-Jan 2031	14-Feb-2031	28-Feb-2031
5.	Final reports and verified outputs for 1 January–30 September 2031	30-Sep-2031	15-Oct-2031	31-Oct-2031

Acceptance authority: Contract Manager(s).

Acceptance criteria: Reports shall identify completed outputs, quantify results against agreed targets, explain deviations and include verifiable supporting evidence. Farmer participation data shall be disaggregated by gender and youth status. Financial reports shall distinguish consultancy payments from beneficiary funds and co-financing.

Acceptance is subject to satisfactory completion of the corresponding deliverables and resolution of review comments. The target acceptance dates do not constitute automatic acceptance.

7. WORLDVEG RESPONSIBILITIES

WorldVeg shall:

- Provide relevant programme documents, existing studies, available data and reporting templates.
- Review and approve annual work plans and budgets, review deliverables and supporting evidence, and provide timely feedback and written acceptance.
- Facilitate access to shared programme logistical support and technical expertise, as specified in the agreed work plans and contract.
- Arrange beneficiary contracting and fund disbursement in accordance with WorldVeg procedures and the responsibilities assigned in the contract.
- Make payments in accordance with the contract, subject to acceptance of the corresponding deliverables.

8. PAYMENT TERMS

- Payments shall be made on an input basis, using the agreed fee rates and actual time worked, supported by approved timesheets. Consultancy-related expenses shall be reimbursed at

actual cost against receipts or other acceptable supporting documentation, within the agreed budget.

- Each payment shall be subject to receipt of an invoice and the Contract Manager's written verification and approval of the services performed, time charged and reimbursable expenses.
- The selected firm shall submit an audit report for each reporting period specified in the contract, covering its financial reports, consultancy fees and reimbursable expenses, and retain the supporting records for audit purposes.
- Beneficiary funds and co-financing shall be accounted for separately from the firm's consultancy fees and reimbursable expenses.