

Terms of Reference

Title	Technical Support for Strengthening Market Linkage, Product Packaging, and Brand Development
Client	Toan Thang, Hoa De, Tan Phat Loi and Tai Thinh Phat Farm Cooperatives.
Country	Vietnam
Project number	24ATVN-9764
Assignment number	August – December, 2025
Period	
Cooperative advisors (CAs)	Le Anh Tuan, Tran Quang Dieu, Le Thanh Trang and Pham Nguyen Duy
Mode of Agripool involvement	No agripooler

1. BACKGROUND

The shrimp farming sector in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta is undergoing a critical transformation in response to rising demands for sustainability, traceability, and value addition. The MACIB (Making Aquaculture Cooperatives in the Mekong Delta Inclusive and Bankable) Project—funded by the Netherlands Government and implemented by Agriterra under the Combi-Track initiative—supports this shift by empowering a cohort of aquaculture cooperatives to become professional, inclusive, and investment-ready.

Among the seven target cooperatives, **Tai Thinh Phat Farm** and **Tan Phat Loi** (Ca Mau), and **Hoa De** and **Toan Thang** (Can Tho) stand out for their relatively advanced production systems, high certification readiness, and existing market linkages. Together, they manage over **1,200 hectares** of mangrove-integrated shrimp farms, including ASC-certified and organic production zones. Their product lines span fresh and value-added offerings such as dried shrimp, fermented shrimp paste, shrimp salt, and shrimp powder.

However, as confirmed in the **July 2025 Mid-Term Review**, while the cooperatives demonstrate strong production potential and member commitment, they face systemic constraints to scaling:

- **Limited buyer segmentation and weak B2B/export readiness**, particularly for supermarkets and e-commerce platforms;
- **Outdated and inconsistent packaging**, undermining consumer confidence and brand visibility;
- **Fragmented market channels**, over-reliant on informal traders with poor feedback mechanisms;
- **Undifferentiated branding**, even for certified and eco-friendly products;
- **Insufficient marketing materials and engagement capacity**, limiting outreach to higher-value buyers.

The MTR highlights the **unique strengths and ambitions** of each cooperative:

- **Tai Thinh Phat Farm:** Supplies Aeon Mall and HORECA channels; plans to upscale value-added production under organic certification.
- **Tan Phat Loi:** Operates solar-powered drying; manages 14 distributors; seeks to enhance packaging and traceability for premium segments.
- **Hoa De:** A women-led cooperative excelling in processing; aims to develop branded powdered and fermented shrimp products.
- **Toan Thang:** ASC-certified and well-governed; plans to promote shrimp salt and mangrove shrimp under OCOP branding.

To respond to these needs, this **Terms of Reference** outlines a targeted technical assistance package to strengthen cooperative branding, product positioning, and buyer engagement. This intervention directly addresses the MTR's recommendations and supports MACIB's strategic goals of enhancing climate-smart aquaculture, value addition, and cooperative bankability.

Strengthening these cooperatives' access to higher-value markets and year-round sales will not only improve income stability but also promote inclusive employment for women and youth in processing and marketing. This initiative serves as a model of how **farmer-led enterprises**—with the right support—can meet international sustainability standards, attract commercial partners, and thrive in competitive value chains, while contributing to environmental and economic resilience in the Mekong Delta.

2. OBJECTIVES

This assignment aims to:

- **Conduct a target market study** to identify viable segments and strategic buyers.
- **Strengthen product packaging, labeling, and presentation** to align with market demands.
- **Build distinctive brand identities** for each cooperative based on their values, certification, and product quality.
- **Develop marketing and promotional strategies** that are tailored, actionable, and cooperative-led.
- Facilitate direct connections between cooperatives and priority buyers/distributors.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

Phase 1: Market Study and Buyer Mapping

- Analyze domestic and international markets for eco-shrimp and value-added products.
- Segment potential buyers (e.g., supermarkets, organic food retailers, exporters, HORECA).
- Identify entry points, pricing strategies, and buyer expectations per cooperative profile.

Phase 2: Product and Brand Assessment

- Review existing product lines, packaging, and labeling for all four cooperatives.
- Assess alignment with ASC, Organic, MSC, OCOP, and other market-based certifications.
- Develop cooperative-specific action plans:
 - **Tài Thịnh Phát:** Design premium organic packaging; strengthen storytelling for urban retail buyers.
 - **Tân Phát Lợi:** Improve brand consistency across agents; introduce traceability elements.
 - **Hòa Đức:** Package and brand women-led processed products with premium, artisanal appeal.
 - **Toàn Thắng:** Promote ASC shrimp salt and explore e-commerce readiness.

Phase 3: Marketing Strategy and Promotional Tools

- Design cooperative-level marketing strategies with clear buyer personas and value propositions.
- Support development of:
 - Product brochures and sales decks
 - Photo bank and digital storytelling assets
 - Sample packs and upgraded labels
- Coach cooperatives on promotional planning and pricing tactics.

Phase 4: Buyer Engagement and Distribution Strategy

- Guide negotiation tactics and contract management with wholesalers, supermarkets, and exporters.
- Facilitate B2B buyer meetings in Can Tho, Ho Chi Minh City, and Hanoi.
- Prepare cooperatives to participate in selected trade expos (e.g., OCOP Fair, VietShrimp).
- Support in establishing pilot distributor partnerships or consignment models.

4. DEVELERABLES

The consultant will be responsible for producing the following outputs to strengthen market access and branding for MACIB-supported cooperatives:

- **Consolidated Market Study and Buyer Mapping Report:** A comprehensive report analyzing domestic and international market opportunities for processed shrimp and aquaculture products. This will include buyer segmentation, demand trends, pricing benchmarks, certification requirements, and a mapping of potential buyers and partners.
- **Cooperative-Specific Product and Brand Development Action Plans (4 plans):** Tailored action plans for each selected cooperative, focusing on product differentiation, brand positioning, quality assurance, and packaging strategies. Each plan will provide clear, practical steps to strengthen competitiveness and align with target buyer requirements.
- **Marketing Kits (4 sets):** Professionally designed marketing materials for each cooperative, including:
 - Brochures highlighting cooperative strengths and product attributes
 - Sales pitch decks for meetings with buyers and investors
 - Sample packaging designs that meet both domestic and export market standards
- **Promotional Calendar and Buyer Engagement Toolkit:** A structured calendar of promotional activities (trade fairs, campaigns, seasonal pushes) combined with a toolkit offering templates, communication guidelines, and outreach strategies to maximize buyer engagement and follow-up.
- **B2B Matching Events (at least 2) with Feedback Reports:** Organization and facilitation of at least two business-to-business (B2B) events linking cooperatives with potential buyers and partners. Each event will be documented with a feedback report capturing participation, buyer interest, challenges, and follow-up recommendations.

6. TEAM COMPOSITION AND CONSULTACY

- **Lead Marketing Consultant** – Strategy, buyer analysis, branding oversight
- **Packaging & Design Expert** – Visual packaging, label redesign
- **Agriterra Business Advisor** – Cooperative coordination, follow-up coaching

To be developed based on scope of fieldwork, design services, and cooperative-specific deliverables. A detailed financial proposal will be submitted separately.

♦ **Estimated Consultancy Days by Role**

Role	Tasks Covered	Estimated Days
Lead Marketing Consultant	Market study, buyer mapping, strategy design, brand direction, B2B engagement, coaching	32 days
Packaging & Design Expert	Packaging review, new label development, sample design per cooperative	18 days
Agriterra Business Advisor	Coordination with cooperatives, coaching, support buyer meetings and events	20 days

♦ **Breakdown by Phase**

Phase	Key Activities	Total Estimated Days
1	Market study, buyer segmentation	10 days
2	Cooperative-specific brand/product packaging assessments	12 days
3	Development of materials, storytelling, strategy	12 days
4	Buyer engagement, trade event prep, B2B matching	16 days
Total		50 days

7. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Interested consultants or consulting teams are invited to submit a complete application package that demonstrates their capacity and suitability for delivering this assignment on **Technical Support for Strengthening Market Linkage, Product Packaging, and Brand Development**. Applications should include:

- **Cover Letter:** Indicating the applicant's interest in the assignment, highlighting relevant experience, and outlining suitability for the role.
- **Technical Proposal** (*maximum 5 pages*): Presenting the proposed methodology, tools, work plan, and availability to carry out the tasks and deliverables outlined in the ToR.
- **Financial Proposal:** Including the daily rate in VND (inclusive of taxes), with a clear breakdown of estimated costs.
- **Updated CV(s):** Detailing qualifications, professional experience, and at least two references. Examples of similar past assignments in product development, brand building, or market linkage should be attached.

Submission Guidelines:

- All application documents must be in English.
- Please submit the full package by email with the subject line: *"Consultant – Market Linkage, Product Packaging, and Brand Development for MACIB Cooperatives"*
- Email submissions should be sent to: **vietnam@agriterra.org**

Selection Process:

- Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited for an interview.
- The closing date for applications is **17:00 (Vietnam time), August 20, 2025**.

Agriterra, for cooperatives

We are a purpose-driven organisation, aimed at strengthening farmer cooperatives in 13 countries in Africa and Asia. Agriterra's wheel of impact depicts how strong farmer cooperatives contribute to societal development and the relevance to many of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Positively impacting farmer cooperatives is at the heart of our identity and is reflected in our legal entity as a Dutch non-profit foundation.



Agriterra provides high quality and hands-on advice, training and exchange services to farmer cooperatives with maximum impact to support dynamic, economic and sustainably strong and productive rural areas. We draw on a century of cooperative knowledge in the Netherlands shared through our extensive network in the Dutch agri-food sector. These Agripool experts from farmer organisations across the world work with Cooperative advisors from our country offices, supported by staff teams in the Netherlands.

In 2022 Agriterra worked together with 579 farmer organisations, trained 8,989 people and 3,808,366 farmers were reached.