

Terms of Reference

Position Title:	Consultant(s) / Consulting firm to provide Training/coaching on Production and business planning for MSMEs/coops/producer groups
Location:	Lao Cai (former Yen Bai Province)
Period of Assignment:	From November to December 2025
Reporting To:	Agribusiness and Resilience Specialist
Project:	SMEs Promote Resilience, Inclusion, and Innovative Transformation (SPRINT)
Activity Code:	1111.1 & 1111.2

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. Headquarter 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 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 Lao Cai (formerly in Yen Bai province) 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 (Cops) and producer groups (PG) in the agri-food sector, with a focus on enhancing agricultural 06 value chains for key commodities such as sticky rice, chayote, Shan Tuyet tea, cinnamon, indigenous apple, and Bat Do bamboo shoots and 03 potential value chains: medicinal herbs, mixed vegetables and mulberry silk. 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.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

This consultancy activity is undertaken to contribute to the achievement of the following objectives:

Intermediate Outcome 1100: Increased access to innovation and green growth opportunities for EMW in agriculture.

Immediate Outcome 1110: Enhanced business development and market access capacity for EMW-focused MSMEs/coops/producers in Yen Bai.

Consulting to support the implementation of activity 1111: Training/coaching on Production and business planning for MSMEs/coops/producer groups in Lao Cai Province (former Yen Bai province) through this consulting package

Activity 1111.1: Design training programs and conduct 02 training courses on business production planning (03 days/1 course) for 60 people, each class has 30 trainees who are managers and production and business managers of SMEs/Cooperatives/PG (operating within 09 value chains (sticky rice, chayote, Shan Tuyet tea, cinnamon, indigenous apple, and Bat Do bamboo shoots, medicinal herbs, mixed vegetables and mulberry silk from project areas. Training location at Yen Bai ward (old Yen Bai city) in Yen Bai ward.

Among the 30 students in a class, there will be 05 students who have participated in the ToT class on marketing (implemented in 2024 and 2025). These are the people who will continue to enhance their knowledge and skills related to the field of production and business planning to become local source trainers, participating in and supporting field training sessions in related topics and fields (under activity code 1111.2 as mentioned below).

Training content:

- i) Strategic business planning
- ii) Market analysis and value chain positioning
- iii) Business production planning
- iv) Inventory and risk management
- v) Process improvement (adaptation) and integration of green growth.

Expected results

- Pre- and post-course tests
- 01 daily training program outlining the training methodology
- 01 training-of-trainers (TOT) curriculum on business production planning
- 01 training curriculum on business production planning
- 01 slide presentation
- Practical scenarios, sample examples based on the actual needs of the training unit (specify the equipment/tools used)
- 60 members attended the class (priority for ethnic minority women)

- 10 trainees capable of participating in teaching with on-site consulting (activity 1111.2)

Activity 1111.2: Conduct 03 training sessions (03 days/session) at former Yen Bai about business production planning for 120 people of SMEs/Cooperatives/PGs including:

- Production and Business staff: Heads/Deputy Heads of Production and Business units, who are directly responsible for production planning, progress monitoring, and materials management.
- Finance and Accounting staff: Individuals involved in financial planning, cost estimation, and business performance analysis.
- Cooperative Members with Startup or Expansion Potential: Individuals with business ideas or aspirations to enhance their management capacity and scale up operations.
- Key affiliated members of SMEs/Cooperatives/PGs

Training content:

- Market analysis and value chain positioning
- Business production planning
- Inventory and risk management
- Introduce process improvement (adaptation) and integration of green growth.

Expected results:

- 120 members were trained in business production planning knowledge
- 80% of the trained people were able to apply their knowledge and skills to their work.

Note: The project's activities focus on PNDTTS - at least 70% of the students for each class, prioritizing units in the project's 09 chains as mentioned above in Lao Cai province (former Yen Bai)

3. Specific Tasks and Deliverables

Note: Deliverables submitted by the consultant will be in English and Vietnamese.

N o.	Specific Task	Activity description	Deliverable (s)	Timeline and number of working days
1	Activity 1111.1: Design training programs and conduct 02 training courses on business production planning (03 days/1 course) for 60 people, each class	Prepare training material	• Pre - and post-course tests • 01 daily training program outlining the training methodology • 01 training-of-trainers (TOT) curriculum on business production planning	The consulting group Leader: 3 days Members: 2 peoples x 1 day

	has 30 trainees who are managers and production and business managers of SMEs/Cooperatives/PGs		• 01 training curriculum on business production planning • 01 slide presentation • Practical scenarios, sample examples based on the actual needs of the training unit (specify the equipment/tools used) • 60 members attended the class (70% ethnic minority women) • 10 trainees capable of participating in teaching with on-site consulting	Finished before 25 Oct 25
		Conduct 02 training courses on business production planning, each course lasts 03 days in Yen Bai ward	• 60 trainees attended the class (70% ethnic minority women) • 10 local trainers acquired business planning knowledge and were able to train beneficiaries in subsequent activities.	Consulting Group 3 days x 3 people Divided into 2 classes Class 1: 1 leader consultant Class 2: 2 member consultants 2 classes run in parallel Finished before the second week in Nov 25
2	Activity 1111.2: Conduct 03 training sessions (03 days/session) at the facility on business production planning for 120 people of SMEs/Cooperatives/PG including the members listed above.	Conduct 03 training sessions on business production planning at the site	• 120 members were trained in business production planning knowledge • 80% of the trained people were able to apply their knowledge and skills to their work.	Consulting group: 3 days x 3 people (1 class per person) Local trainer: 2 people/class x 3 days x 3 sessions

				03 sessions are carried out at the same time Finished the third and fourth week in Nov 25
3	Report	Leader consultant synthesizes the members' reports and completes the final report.	01 English and Vietnamese report for all activities and accompanying documents Before 15/12/2025	Leader consultant: 3 days Members: 2 peoples x 1 day Local trainers: 6 peoples x 1 day
Total Working Days of Consultants: 28 days Total Working Days of Local Trainers: 24 days				

4. Consultant Qualifications

Criteria	Required
Education	- University degree in market research, marketing strategy, business accounting, agricultural economics, business administration, microfinance or related fields - Master's degree is an advantage.
Experience	- At least 05 years of experience in organizing capacity building, training, consulting or coaching programs for SMEs/ cooperatives/ production groups focusing on ethnic minority women, with priority given to those with experience in ethnic minority areas - Experience in designing and coordinating direct, participatory training/coaching programs, focusing on marketing strategy, market research, business planning, business accounting, inventory management. - Have pedagogical knowledge and experience to train local resource trainers. - Preference will be given to candidates with experience in gender equality, promoting women's economic empowerment or developing inclusive markets.

Technical Skills	• Proficiency in design training and trainer training curriculum, facilitation skills and participatory training methods • Solid expertise in market research, marketing strategy, business planning, business accounting and pedagogical skills. Practical application in financial management of SMEs/ Cooperatives/ Production Associations focusing on ethnic minority women. • Understanding of adult learning principles and community-based technical assistance models.
Language	• Fluency in Vietnamese is required. • Working proficiency in English is preferred, particularly for reporting and documentation purposes.

5. Application Process

The selection of consultants will be conducted through the process of evaluating documents and proposals. Interested candidates and units please send the following documents with the subject [Application for consulting _ Activity 1111.1 & 1111.2 - Name of consultant/company] to the email address: procurement@sprint-vietnam.com before 17:00 on Oct 22, 2025

- Letter of interest
- Consultant CVs
- Technical proposal and financial proposal
- Examples of previous similar work (optional but recommended)

Note: The financial proposal should be developed based on the above-mentioned scope of work and requirements (all applicable taxes included). This amount excludes 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.