



Terms of Reference

Consultancy Title	Cashew Post-Harvest Baseline Study and Training Material Development
Location	Gia Lai province, Vietnam
Contract Duration	From signing date – 25 September 2026

1. BACKGROUND

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. CRS works to *save, protect, and transform* lives in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through programs of emergency response, HIV/AIDS, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding.

CRS has been operating in Vietnam since 1994. In partnership with government and communities, CRS implements programs in 9 provinces/cities in Vietnam. The Vietnam Program has a diverse funding base in the sectors of Disabilities, Mine Action and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, and Community-based Climate Change Adaptation.

Project Summary

CRS Vietnam, in partnership with a private-sector partner, is implementing the Forest Flavor Project in Gia Lai province over FY26 to FY27. The project supports vulnerable and ethnic minority households through improved post-harvest practices and income-generation opportunities.

Under this project, CRS seeks to engage the consultant(s) to: (1) conduct a baseline assessment and rapid feasibility study on post-harvest activities; and (2) develop training materials for improved post-harvest handling. All activities shall be carried out by the Consultant under a CRS-managed contract and in close coordination with the partner. Field training delivery is carried out separately by the partner.

2. OBJECTIVES/PURPOSES

This consultancy comprises two complementary assignments:

Baseline and Rapid Feasibility Study

- **Component A – Improved Post-Harvest Drying:** Establish current drying practices, post-harvest losses, household labor and income context, and farmers' demand for a communal drying yard; assess the proposed site's suitability and recommend whether the intervention should proceed.
- **Component B – Cashew-Peeling Opportunity:** Assess the feasibility of a decentralized peeling model for vulnerable individuals (ethnic minority, women in single-headed households, persons with disabilities, poor/near-poor households), with particular attention to: (i) operational feasibility – labor demand, seasonality and productivity; (ii) human rights due diligence (HRDD) – working conditions, whether projected income meets or exceeds the minimum wage, and workplace safety; and (iii) child labor risk. Develop practical recommendations for the partner and CRS.

Training Material Development

- Develop user guides, technical guidance, and tailored training modules covering communal drying yard consensus rules, post-harvest handling, manual peeling techniques, quality control, food safety, and inclusive OHS for vulnerable individuals.

3. SCOPE OF WORKS/RESPONSIBILITIES

The consultancy will focus on the following tasks:

Baseline and Rapid Feasibility Study

Component A – Drying Baseline Assessment

Conduct a household survey with 100 cashew-growing households in Jrang Blo and Jrang Krai villages to collect data directly serving the Component A assessment objectives stated in Section 2. Household data will be provided by CRS's partner. The detailed questionnaire shall be finalized during the inception phase.

Based on household survey results and consultation with the partner, the Consultant shall estimate the number of potential users, seasonal demand, peak-period capacity needs, and assess the suitability of the proposed drying-yard site.

Component B – Cashew-Peeling Feasibility Assessment

The partner and the commune People's Committee compile a list of up to 30 vulnerable individuals in one of the two target villages (confirmed at kick-off) for consultation. The Consultant then carries out the following:

- Consult the identified vulnerable individuals on their interest in and conditions for participation, covering working conditions, accessibility, expected income relative to the minimum wage, and household composition to screen for child labor risk.
- Conduct key-informant interviews with the commune People's Committee, local cooperative (if any) and the partner's facility management.
- Observe working conditions at the partner's facility to assess suitability for vulnerable groups.
- Develop practical recommendations on the feasibility of a inclusive peeling arrangement.

Training Material Development

Drawing on Baseline and Rapid Feasibility Study findings and the partner's SOPs, the Consultant develops one set of instructional materials:

- Comprehensive Technical Guide and Training Modules on Cashew Post-Harvest, Processing, Food Safety, and Inclusive OHS: An integrated package combining harvesting, sorting, drying best practices, and communal yard rules with practical training modules on manual peeling, quality standards, hygiene requirements, and inclusive worker safety/ergonomics.

Draft materials shall be reviewed by the partner's technical team and CRS before finalization.

4. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

The Consultant(s) shall commence upon contract signing. All final deliverables are due before 25 September 2026. Exact dates shall be confirmed in the Inception Report. It is estimated that these deliverables will be completed during 28 working days.

Deliverable	Duration	Deadline
Inception Report (methodology, data collection tools, workplan for both sub-assignments)	3 days	Within 5 working days of contract signing
Curriculum framework and draft outline of Training Packages 1 and 2 (Training Development)	5 days	Within 10 working days of contract signing
Draft Assessment Report (Baseline and Feasibility Study)	10 days	Before 20 September 2026
Final Assessment Package (cleaned dataset, Final Assessment Report) and Finalized Training Package	10 days	Before 25 September 2026

5. METHODOLOGY AND DATA QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

- Use mixed methods and triangulate household and candidate responses with technical observation, facility records and other relevant sources.
- Define every key indicator, unit, reference period and calculation method before fieldwork.
- Protect personal and sensitive information through data minimization, restricted access, secure storage and anonymized reporting.

6. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

The following support will be provided by CRS and the partner:

- Access to relevant project documentation and reference documents, including farmer/candidate lists for the two target villages; the partner's operational review of the peeling facility; Factory SOPs for drying and peeling; and contact details for institutional and facility-level respondents.
- The partner shall arrange meetings and field access for key-informant interviews, facility observation, and community consultations.
- The partner shall coordinate the participation of households and farmers in survey interviews and consultations.

7. MAIN CONTACTS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

This consultancy will report to: Nguyen Hien Thi - DRR & CCA Program Manager II, Tran Van Phu - Project Officer
This consultancy will collaborate with CRS Vietnam Project Staff, the partner's sustainability team, MEAL staff, Deputy Head of Programs, Head of Programs.

8. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

Team Leader

- Master's degree in Agriculture, Agricultural Economics, Rural Development, or related field.
- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience.
- Experience developing training curricula and instructional materials.
- Household survey design and quantitative data analysis experience.
- Fluent in both English and Vietnamese.

Team Members

In addition to the Team Leader's qualifications, the consulting team is expected to demonstrate:

- Agricultural value-chain or livelihoods feasibility assessment experience, ideally in cashew or a similar agri-commodity.
- Experience developing training/IEC materials, including visual materials (infographics, posters, handbooks) for low-literacy and ethnic minority audiences.
- Facilitation experience for community consultations, including with ethnic minority communities and vulnerable groups.
- Experience with food-safety standards and OHS.
- Fluent in both English and Vietnamese; prior experience or presence in Gia Lai province is an advantage.
- A proposed team structure that clearly shows how the same core team will carry work from TOR 1 findings into TOR 2 design.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The selection of the consultant will be based on the following criteria:

- **Relevant qualifications and experience:** Demonstrated academic background, technical competencies, and prior experience relevant to the assignment.
- **Technical proposal:** Demonstrates a solid understanding of the TOR; presents a coherent and context-appropriate approach; includes a clear workplan with roles and responsibilities covering both TOR 1 and TOR 2 and continuity between them; proposes a realistic timeline.
- **Financial proposal:** Presents a budget that is reasonable and commensurate with the scope of work, with cost broken down by TOR; cost-effectiveness and justification of key cost items.
- **Overall value and competitiveness:** The final selection will consider the combined quality of the technical and financial proposals and their overall value for money.

10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All activities will adhere to ethical standards, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and sensitivity to the needs of affected people and communities. In addition:

- All data, tools, photographs and reports produced under the assignment shall be owned by the partner and CRS as specified in the contract.
- The implementing team shall not disclose commercially sensitive information about the partner or personal participant data without written authorization.
- Names and sensitive characteristics (including disability, poverty or ethnicity status) shall not appear in public materials unless specifically authorized.
- Photographs, practical demonstrations and quotations require appropriate informed consent.
- The Consultant shall immediately report safeguarding, safety, data-protection or food-safety concerns identified during the assignment.

11. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested parties are requested to submit a single proposal in English/Vietnamese.

Applications should include:

- Letter of Expression of Interest.
- A copy of the business license (if any).
- Company profile (if any).
- Technical proposal: understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology and workplan.
- Financial proposal: budget covering both assignments, with cost broken down in Vietnam Dong, inclusive of applicable taxes (VAT/PIT) and any travel-related expenses.
- CVs of all proposed team members, with roles clearly indicated.
- Portfolio / references of at least two similar previous assignments.
- Proposals should be duly signed, stamped (where applicable) and submitted to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) via email at: vn_rfp2@crs.org
- Submission deadline: **13.00 PM, Tuesday 25 August 2026.**

For any clarification, please contact: thi.nguyen@crs.org, Cc: thuthuy.nguyen@crs.org.