

Vacancy Notice: Alliances for Action (A4A) Service Centre (Sales advisor, Japan)

Assignment Title: Consultant(s) specialised in Japan food market

Requesting Division/ Section: Division of Enterprises & Institutions/ Sector & Enterprise Competitiveness (DEI/SEC)

Duty station: Homebased (Japan)

Duration: from 6 months to 1 year

Application period: March 24th - April 11th 2021

Further information: Candidates based in Japan are encouraged to apply.

BACKGROUND

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization for trade-related technical cooperation in developing countries.

The Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness Unit (SEC) is responsible for developing and disseminating sector level expertise for sustainable market driven solutions in ITC, including the Alliances for Action (A4A) methodology. A4A is a participatory partnership model that engages smallholder farmers and MSMEs in order to manage risk and facilitate networks that provide the required technical expertise and capacity building.

The Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OLAC), as a geographical section of the Division of Country Programmes (DCP), is responsible for defining the ITC strategy and coordinating all interventions in the region, either for individual countries or at the sub-regional and regional levels.

The “Support to Business Friendly and Inclusive National and Regional Policies, and Strengthening Productive Capabilities and Value Chains” Programme aims to complement the European Union support for private sector development in ACP countries, under the context of the joint ACP-EU Programme for ACP Private Sector Development Support, adopted by ACP-EU Council of Ministers in Nairobi in 2014, and is financed from the 11th European Development Fund.

With major focus on the development of agriculture and agri-business value chains, the Programme is designed to achieve two key outcomes: (1) adopting and implementing business-friendly, inclusive and responsible national policies and legal frameworks, and (2) strengthening productive, processing, promoting and marketing capabilities and value chains.

ITC Alliances for Action team is seeking consultants and experts to facilitate the creation of commercial relationships among Coffee, Cocoa, Coconut and Specialty food farmers’ cooperatives/social enterprises (MSMES) from the ACP countries with buyers in the Asian market with primary focus in Japan.

DUTIES

Under the direct supervision of the Program officer – Inclusive Agribusiness Systems in close collaboration with project officers in each beneficiary country, the consultant shall perform the following main tasks:

The consultant will:

- Assess the capacities of cooperatives (CC)/ social enterprises (SE)/SMEs from the ACP countries. to export to the Japan market
- Develop a training and coaching program to close the identified gaps, or recommend other suitable technical training to enhance the capacity of the cooperatives/ social enterprises (SE)/ SMEs to export to the Japan market
- Train and coach cooperatives/ social enterprises (SE)/SMEs to improve their capacities to export to the Japan market;
- Compile a toolkit of resources that will enable CC/SEs to better access the Japan market, including relevant contacts, custom requirements, certifications, label and packaging, channel appraisals, pricing recommendations and communicational and branding tools that are tailored to each SE.
- Carry out online capacity building activities, specifically targeting different markets (i.e. Importers, wholesalers, supermarkets, niche markets), focused in three stages of the process: pre-sales, during sales, and after-sales. This shall include facilitation of advisory that results in sales by CC/SEs in Japan
- Design and implement a series of sales promotion activities targeting the Japan market B2B markets:
 - o Receive, collect and assemble sample packages
 - o Send out sample packages to distributors and collect feedback;
 - o Send out sample packages to retailers to encourage feedback / buy in;
 - o Visit key distributors to introduce the brand
 - o Select list of top potential distributors to send samples and target in sales efforts;
- Monitor feedback from sales meetings and samples sent to inform ongoing development plans for Coffee, Cocoa, Coconut and Specialty food cooperatives and SEs that will include:
 - o Competitive analysis for product market combinations including several distribution channels, starting with B2B and build up to B2C component;
 - o Buyer appraisals
 - o Customer feedback at point of sales
 - o Product development options based on market potential;
 - o Sales and pricing recommendations;
 - o Import, storage and logistics recommendations and model;
 - o Cost of Goods Sold, Gross margin analysis, Tax and net Profitability analysis including landed costs, Japan logistics – distribution and marketing costs;
 - o SWOT analysis;
 - o Brand development and assessment, labelling, certification and packaging requirements;
- Produce five year strategic plan for entry into the Japan market, based on the above feedback, for each Coffee, Cocoa, Coconut and Specialty food CC/SE.

OUTPUTS AND TIMELINES

The consultant will provide the following outputs:

Outputs	Deliverables	Estimated due date
Output 1	Assessment report of the cooperatives/ social enterprises (SE) capacity to export to the Japan market	30 days after signature of contract
Output 2	Individual calls arranged with CC/SE to review findings of the report in detail, and identify USPs of each CC/SE. Use this information to generate a report that suggests branding, website development, messaging, and recommended channels to target in the general export market. Provide ongoing consultancy and review any created materials where appropriate.	60 days after signature of contract
Output 3	Deliver 3 videos on training for meetings focused in three stages of the process: pre-sales, during sales, and after-sales, targeting specific market segments relevant to producers. After delivery of videos, the consultant will ensure personalised guidance with each of the CC/ SE, with a minimum of 2 meetings	80 days after signature of contract
Output 4	Creation of a commercial campaign. Includes the design and creation of sample sales literature, allowing all SEs to be marketed as a collective.	90 days after signature of contract
Output 5	Introductions to potential customers, using leads acquired via the online, social and brochure campaign and personalised guidance for each CC/SE who has interest from a buyer, by way of facilitating communication between producer and buyer, in the buyers preferred format (phone call, video meeting, email only), and by collecting and distributing samples to potential buyers, resulting in a list of contacted buyers and feedback	By 30 th September 2021
Output 6	Final sales strategic report targeting the Japan market for Coffee, Cocoa, Coconut and Specialty food developed successfully. The report shall include packaging, pricing and communications recommendations, full results of the 8 month project including B2B interest achieved, a comprehensive detailed breakdown of profit and loss, as well as supply chain costs	By 30 ^h October 2021

TRAVEL DETAILS

International and domestic travel

SKILLS

- Ability to work with minimum supervision, efficiency, competence and integrity and in harmony with people from different backgrounds.
- Extensive knowledge in the areas of food import in the Japan market quality compliance and related areas.
- Direct experience in sales of food products
- Good knowledge of value chain and MSME development concepts, as well as development theory.
- Capacity to travel and to network with stakeholders and partners;
- Excellent writing and communication skills with ability to produce documents/ reports for official circulation among institutions and international stakeholders;
- Ability to design, develop, monitor and coordinate work plans and take corrective actions;
- Good understanding and direct knowledge of the agribusiness sectors in the selected regions and/ or countries;
- Good knowledge of Microsoft Office.

EDUCATION

Masters or University degree in business administration, economics, marketing, food sciences or related field.

Extensive relevant experience may be accepted in lieu of the university degree.

EXPERIENCE

At least 5 years of experience in agro-food sales, quality compliance or related areas.

NUMBER OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE REQUIRED:

5

LANGUAGE

Advanced knowledge of English and Japanese, knowledge of Spanish and French would be an asset.