

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Expert for standardization and export market qualification

Project ID:	PJ1359
Project Name:	Organizational development of NFF and improved market linkages for the small farmers and producers from rural areas aiming at increased income
Name of Intervention:	Producer Groups, Stream 3 -Improvement of Market Linkages of small scale farmers ensuring steady and fair market of their produce

Date of publication: 22.10.2025

I. Background

The National Federation of Farmers (NFF) represents the largest network of farmers and farmer's organizations in the country. It has inherited all the institutional memory and experience from the Federation of Farmers of RM. It unites the effort of 43 local farmers' organizations and cooperatives, representing the voice of more than 3.000 members and cooperating with almost all key players in the agriculture and agribusiness sector.

NFF has expanded its scope of action. This means that besides farmers, agricultural associations, and agricultural cooperatives, the organization will continue to strengthen and support vulnerable categories in rural areas, greater support for young people and women, and their direct involvement in the development of agriculture through decision-making and active action.

In addition to agriculture, one of the organization's main focuses is rural development, ie dealing with the problems and challenges that the rural population faces, such as poverty and limited approaches of the rural population to health services, education, information law, and decision-making power.

The main pillar of action is lobbying to define the problems from the field and by joint work and analysis will be presented in front of the competent institutions for finding a common solution, which is in the interest of the farmers and the welfare of our entire country.

The focus of NFF, which will continue to function under the slogan "Together for success" and the logo that symbolizes the labour and production of our farmers, is solving the biggest problems, which is placement and quality production. The mission of the rebranded organization is the ORGANIZED FARMER LEADER IN THE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA. The vision to which we strive is - PROFITABLE AGRICULTURE - STABLE VILLAGE.

As of May 2021, NFF implements the project "Organizational development of NFF and improved market linkages for the small farmers and producers from rural areas aiming at increased income" ("the Project") that is supported by Sweden and facilitated by We Effect, a Swedish development organization.

The expected outcomes of the Project are the following:

- **Outcome 1:** Rural enterprises, small farmers/producers, grow and provide more income and employment opportunities for the people from the rural area, women, and youth in particular.

The focus here will facilitate access to the market for actors that empower rural women and youth. Currently, market linkages for sales of products are broken for small farmers/produces, leading to low income of the rural target group, pushing them into poverty.

- **Outcome 2:** Increased organizational capacities and financial sustainability of NFF. As a membership-based organization, NFF represents the interests of farmers and the rural population in the country. It has developed a paid membership system with a set of free services to which only members are eligible. In the last few years as a result of the previous Institutional Development to NFF Project, the organization has improved its internal organization, management, introduced procedures, book of rules, book of conduct and other administrative and management tools that improved the performance and the impact of our work.

The focus here is the organizational development and financial sustainability as crucial to continue with the lobby and advocacy activities and develop new services to provide new sources of income.

Small-scale farmers and food operators, registered with the Food and Veterinary Agency, play a crucial role in providing high-quality, locally produced food products. However, these producers often face challenges in developing competitive, market-ready products, in gaining market access, and complying with market standards. The overarching goal of this consultancy is to assist small-scale farmers and food operators, potential members of Producers groups, in creating a strong, market-ready identity for their products, while ensuring they meet regulatory standards and have access to steady, fair markets.

II. Objective of the assignment

The **Expert in Standardization and Export Market Qualification** will provide training to small-scale farmers organized in producer groups. The goal is to help participants meet standards and other market requirements as well as enabling export and access to wider market opportunities by facilitating the training for 1 day in each of the 4 two-day workshops. The focus of these workshops is on providing practical insights into the processes and requirements for product standardization and export market qualification, as well as other topics outlined below. The workshops will be conducted with different groups of small-scale farmers and food operators to strengthen their ability to market their products effectively and comply with regulatory requirements.

The main objectives of the expert engagement are:

- To assist small-scale farmers and food operators in reaching standards for their products as well as other market demands.
- To improve market linkages for small-scale farmers, ensuring they have access to potential consumers, fair, and sustainable markets.
- Provide practical insights into processes and requirements for product standardization and export market qualification.
- Explain national and international standards (e.g. HACCP, ISO 22000, GlobalG.A.P., or similar) relevant to participants' products .
- Cover labelling, certification requirements, and quality control systems.
- Share strategies to meet expectations of foreign buyers.
- Guide participants on assessing market readiness and identifying potential barriers to export.
- Present best practices for compliance with export regulations.

Expected deliverable is:

- ✓ Conduct a preliminary assessment on food safety production practices
- ✓ Workshop programme (PPP presentations covering key topics, workshop materials and worksheets)
- ✓ Facilitate one day of training in each of the four two-day workshops on food safety production
- ✓ Provide practical guidance on food safety production, hygiene standards and contamination prevention.
- ✓ Explain national and international food safety regulations and compliance requirements.
- ✓ Demonstrate best practices for quality control, risk assessment, and documentation
- ✓ Engage multiple groups of small-scale farmers and food operators for broad knowledge transfer
- ✓ Report from the implemented activity

Expected workload i.e. time for delivery of the service

- The expert will be engaged for a total 25 working days within the period from 24 November until 30 December 2025.

Schedule of milestones and means of measurement/verification of their completion

Month	Milestone	Means of verification
24 November 2025	Engagement of expert	Contract with selected expert
24 November - 27 November 2025	Workshop programme developed	PP Presentation, workshop materials, worksheets
28 November- 15 December 2025	Facilitate 1 day in each of the 4 two-day workshops	Participant list, Photos
24 December 2025	Final report from facilitated training on standardization and export market qualification to the potential members of Producers groups	Report Time sheet

Reference project activities/budget lines:

Project activity

3.7	Expert for standardization and export market qualification
-----	--

Budget line:

4.2.1A.3.12	Expert for standardization and export market qualification
-------------	--

Expected duration of assignment/contract

The expert will be engaged for a total 25 working days within the period from 01 September 2025 until 31 December 2025.

III. Duty travel cost & accommodation & refreshment

Covered by the project budget.

IV. Coordination & reporting

The engaged expert will report directly to NFF Organizational Development Coordinator/Project manager indicating the number of working days during the engagement and tasks performed in the course of the engagement. The reporting schedule and other documentation are indicated in the table below.

24 November - 27 November 2025	Workshop programme developed	PP Presentation, workshop materials, worksheets
28 November- 15 December 2025	Facilitate 1 day in each of the 4 two-day workshops	Participant list, Photos
24 December 2025	Final report from facilitated training on standardization and export market qualification to the potential members of Producers groups	Report Time sheet

V. Qualification requirements

Mandatory technical criteria:

1. Education

- **University Degree:** The expert must possess a minimum of BSc/BA in a relevant field such as Business Administration, Marketing, Agricultural Economics, Food Science, Social Science or any other related discipline

2. Relevant Experience

- **At least 3 years of experience in standardization and export market qualification** (Standardization and export market qualification experience within the agricultural, food or related sector is a merit)
- **At least 3 years of experience in delivering capacity-building activities** such as workshops, training programs, or other forms of knowledge transfer, ideally targeting small-scale producers or food operators.
- Proven experience in implementing or monitoring food safety standards (e.g. HACCP, ISO 22000, GlobalG.A.P., or similar).

VI. Application procedure:

Interested candidates for this ToR should submit the following mandatory documents:

- Up to date CV clearly indicating the work on similar assignments (A detailed CV outlining the consultant's relevant experience, including specific examples of work related to standardization and export market qualification and list of assignments that demonstrate

expertise in delivering workshops, training programs, standardization and export market qualification, clearly reflecting compliance with the Mandatory Technical Criteria / Professional Experience)

- Financial offer, stating the gross daily fee and gross expert fee for all working days, expressed in MKD with personal tax included
- Declaration of relationships (signed)

Offers to be submitted on two email addresses at the same time, namely: vidanka.martinovska@nff.org.mk and nff@nff.org.mk **no later than 20.11.2025**

All questions you may have can be addressed on email vidanka.martinovska@nff.org.mk till **10.11.2025**.

VII. Evaluation of the offers:

Offers with incomplete documentation and/or offers received after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

The evaluation will allocate a total of maximum 100 points, with maximum 70 points for the expert's technical qualifications and experience and maximum 30 points for the financial offer.

Candidates must score at least 49 points in the technical evaluation (70% of the maximum available) to qualify for financial evaluation.

Evaluation criteria and scoring

Criteria	Scoring	
Technical Evaluation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University degree in Business Administration, Marketing, Agricultural Economics, Food Science, Social Science or any other related discipline 	BSc/BA	5 pts
	MSc/MA and above	10 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in standardization and export market qualification (Standardization and export market qualification experience within the agricultural, food, or related sector is a merit) 		
	3 years of experience	15 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in delivering capacity-building activities such as workshops, training programs, or other forms of knowledge transfer, ideally targeting small-scale producers or food operators. 	More than 3 year experience	20 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience in implementing or monitoring food safety standards (e.g. 	3 years of experience	25 pts
	More than 3 years of experience	30 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience in implementing or monitoring food safety standards (e.g. 	2 years of experience	5 pts

Criteria	Scoring	
Technical Evaluation		
HACCP, ISO 22000, GlobalG.A.P., or similar)	More than 2 years of experience	10 pts
Financial Evaluation		
• Price Offer	= 30% × $\frac{\text{Lowest Price}}{\text{Proposed Price}}$	Max 30 pts
Total		100 pts

VIII. Terms of payment

Fee for this engagement is indicated in the Section II-Objective of the assignment under the Reference project activities and budget lines.

Payment will be made upon completion of the total assignment and upon submission of expected deliverables. Once deliverables are submitted by the engaged expert as indicated in Section IV- Coordination and approved by the Project Manager-Organizational development coordinator, the payment of the total contracted fee will be paid.

IX. Declaration of relationships

The applicant shall describe if he/she have any business or personal relationships with closely associated party from NFF and We Effect, its Regional Office in Skopje, its governing bodies and employees or with similar bodies/persons of the Client. Applicants are strongly encouraged to **describe any present or past business or personal relationships** with NFF and We Effect, its employees and its Regional Office in Skopje, its governing bodies and employees or with similar bodies/persons of the Client.

A closely associated party (persons, physical or legal) is considered a person who has the possibility to exert control over, or significant influence on, the other person when it comes to financial and operative decision-making concerning an activity.

Business relationships do not refer solely to contracting arrangements but also to one-off engagements. Personal relationships do not refer solely to immediate family, but also to extended relatives, friends, and acquaintances.

The purpose of the Declaration is to disclose relationship information which makes the application and evaluation process more transparent and supports the bids in their relevance according to conditions on the open market.

Declaring any relationship shall NOT disqualify the Applicant from the procurement but rather contribute to more transparent evaluation process.

Closely associated party (persons, physical or legal) as per We Effect's definition is considered person who has the possibility to exert control over, or significant influence on, the other person when it comes to financial and operative decision-making concerning an activity. The purpose of the Declaration is to disclose such information which makes the application and evaluation process more transparent and supports the bids in its relevance according to conditions on the open market.