

Request for Proposal

Consultancy: “Improvement of Agriculture Techniques and Food Security for Alalapadu”

Conservation International Suriname (CIS) is seeking a qualified independent consultant with the relevant expertise to execute an assignment aimed at improving agricultural practices and food security in the community of Alalapadu, for a period of 9.5 months.

Background

Since 2016 CIS is working very closely with the community of Alalapadu for the protection of 235.000 hectares of pristine forests. Alalapadu is running a community owned business enterprise with the help of CIS under the name of Stichting Tuhka, where they make products from a Non-Timber-Forest-Product (NTFP), the Brazil Nuts (*Bertholletia excelsa*). The products that are manufactured are the Tuhka oil and Tuhka roasted nuts. CIS is continuously in the process of investing in the Indigenous people of Alalapadu to enhance their capacities to protect the forest and to safeguard the quality of the products being manufactured. Apart from supporting the community to strengthen its capacities to run the livelihood project, CIS also focuses on the village's socio-cultural elements of the village.

Alalapadu is a Trio Indigenous village in the South of Suriname, close to the border of Brazil. The village is located along the Wiumi Creek, which flows into the Curuni River and consists of approximately 160 inhabitants divided over 32 households. On education, this village has a primary school up to the eighth grade. The village is mostly accessible by air transportation and takes approximately one-hour 45minutes of travel time. In Alalapadu, the inhabitants speak the Trio language. Electricity is scarce, and satellite Wi-Fi is present to connect with outsiders. There is no infrastructure and access to clean potable water and mobile network connection. With revenues from the factory, the village has managed to set up its own supermarket, that sells basic groceries in the community.

In the past year, it emerged that this village has been exposed to the effects of climate change, as the village experienced an extreme drought, leading to the destroying of residents' crops. Since the community relies heavily on crop cultivation for their food supply, this period of the drought presented significant challenges. Insect infestations (especially ants), and infertile soil types damage most crops, forcing villagers to travel long distances to prepare new agricultural plots. After 2-3 planting cycles on the same plot and due to soil depletion, the community members must search for new areas. As a result, especially the women who are traditionally in charge harvesting of the crops such as cassava, need to carry their crops over greater distances. The community has expressed these challenges to CIS and their desire to learn about vegetable farming to diversify their diet (and help prevent chronic diseases), as they currently lack the necessary and appropriate skills to do so. Considering this, CIS is seeking a qualified independent consultant with the relevant expertise to execute an assignment aimed at improving agricultural practices and food security in the community of Alalapadu, with a particular focus on cassava as main means of subsistence and vegetable farming.

Objectives

This consultancy aims to enhance food security and resilience to the effects of climate change in Alalapadu by improving existing and introducing new sustainable agricultural practices for crop farming, of at least 32 inhabitants (1 member per household), through hands-on training sessions and increase the number of planting cycles on the same plot.

The following specific activities can be listed for this consultancy:

1. Conduct an analysis of current agricultural practices in Alalapadu and identify opportunities for renewed agricultural practices.
2. Determine which vegetables the community wants to grow in order to teach them the specific skills needed to grow them.
3. Collect soil samples in Alalapadu to determine soil structures and nutrient levels.
4. Create water drainage or irrigation systems in the agricultural plots considering the response to climate change.
5. Develop a community training program, a training manual and supporting visuals to train and guide men and women (including youth) in improved and renewed climate smart agricultural practices. Training topics should include:
 - i. Soil types and soil fertility;
 - ii. Biological fertilization methods;
 - iii. Techniques on how to cultivate “vegetable gardens”, which crops to combine and what planting distances to determine;
 - iv. Use of biological control agents and ways to combat diseases and pests, preferably control agents that can be developed on site to ensure sustainability;
 - v. Methods to increase the planting cycles on agricultural plots;
Techniques of composting with local organic waste (e.g. Tuha nut shells) that can be used for crops.
6. Facilitate two (2) theoretical and hands-on training sessions in Alalapadu based on the abovementioned topics.
7. Monitoring of acquired agricultural practices by community members of Alalapadu.
8. Compile a final report of the training and guidance provided during the consultancy and propose next steps for improvement.

Timeline & Deliverables

No.	Activity	Deliverables	Acceptance Criteria	Due dates
1.	-Prepare a Workplan -Desktop research	Workplan	The workplan must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>): - A timeline - Proposed methodology (<i>cutural appropriate</i>) - A research & training plan/program with clearly defined objectives and day to day activities - Questionnaire to determine current agricultural practices & challenges - A design for certificates of completion	February 03, 2025
2.	-Review of current agricultural practices during field trip Alalapadu -Conduct household surveys -Soil sampling Field trip 1: 1 st week March 2025	Field Report	The field report must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>): - The current agricultural practices - Results of household interviews - Pictures of the agricultural plots and field trip activities - Soil research results - Challenges of field trip 1 - Recommendations on basis of gathered data and for field trip 2	March 17, 2025
3.	-Prepare Training material - Desktop research on feasible and workable approaches on existing agricultural practices	Training Manual	Training manual (<i>in Dutch</i>) must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>) topics mentioned in specific activity number 5 under section “objectives”.	April 15, 2025
			Training Manual (<i>in Trio</i>)	June 02, 2025
4.	Prepare & Conduct training 1 in Alalapadu Field trip 2: 2 nd week of June 2025	Training Report 1	Training Report must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>): - Results of each training session - Observations from the field - At least two (2) participants’ highlights - Challenges of field trip 2 - Pictures and attendance list of training sessions - Recommendations for field trip 3	June 23, 2025
5.	- Prepare & Conduct training 2 in Alalapadu - Monitor results of training 1 Field trip 3: 4 th week of July 2025	Training Report 2	Training Report must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>): - Results of the training sessions - Observations from the field - Results & progress of training 2 - Challenges of field trip 3 - Pictures and attendance list of training sessions	August 11, 2025
6.	-Evaluation of the project - Prepare Final Report	Final report	Final report must contain (<i>but not limited to</i>): - Final agenda of the training - Summary of the subjects - Overall field work results - Highlights of the training - At least two (2) participants’ testimonials - Challenges during the training - Lessons learned and recommendations for improvement - Monitoring plan for CIS for the sustainability of the project	September 8, 2025

Note: due dates and field trip dates are subject to change due to weather conditions of next year.

Location of Task/Applicable Trips/Arrangements

- Field activities will be performed on-site in Alalapadu;
- Housing in Alalapadu will be arranged by CIS, however with limited access to running water and electricity;
- Food provision is brought in from Paramaribo;
- Field supplies (such as: cooking stove, utensils) will be provided in consultation with CIS;
- Consultant will arrange the following, *in coordination with CIS*:
 - a. Printing of training material
 - b. Trio translation and payment of training documents

Requirements

Applicant should meet the following requirements:

- At least a BSc. in Agricultural Sciences or related field of education.
- At least five (5) years of work experience in the agriculture sector or active involvement in carrying out agricultural activities.
- Proven work and training experience with NGO's and local communities.
Dutch and English proficiency, in speaking and writing, (reports to be submitted in English)
Excellent knowledge of Sranan Tongo

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

In evaluating proposals, CIS will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and financial proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation criteria	Score (max 100 pts.)
Quality of motivation letter and CV, Education Requirement and English proficiency.	5
Proven work experience of the minimum years of requirement.	10
Experience in agricultural processes and similar project of the bidder and proposed personnel, including the ability to teach adults/others and deliver technical information.	25
Understanding of the challenges and cultural background of Indigenous communities demonstrating an appropriate approach and methodology to the assignment.	10
Strong technical proposal on how to conduct the training in improved agricultural practices and food security in Alalapadu, with a clear structure and logical & realistic sequence of activities and planning to guarantee efficient implementation.	25
Reasonable and realistic proposed costs, reflecting a solid understanding of the assignment.	25

Interested?

Applications should be sent, **in Dutch or English**, to procurementsr@conservation.org on or before January 22, 2025, by 4 PM. Please specify "Consultant Improvement of Agriculture Techniques and Food Security for Alalapadu + Your Name" in the subject line.

Applications should include:

A resume of the applicant providing detailed information on the requirements and criteria listed in the "requirements" and "evaluation and selection criteria" sections of the RFP.

Questions and clarifications regarding the consultancy may be addressed no later than January 17, 2025, to procurementsr@conservation.org.