

Assignment name	Supporting Sustainable Cotton Value Chains in Turkey
Procurement ref:	
Business sector:	Agribusiness
Project number:	
Funding source	Shareholder Special Fund (SSF)
Type of contract	Consultancy Services
Type of notice	Invitation for Expressions of Interest
Issue date	24 April 2020
Closing date	11 May 2020

Project Description

The cotton sector in Turkey is well-established and plays a key role in the country's economy. Domestic production covers only ca. 50% of domestic consumption and the resulting gap of supply to demand is filled by cotton imports. Cotton is grown in three main areas in Turkey, the Aegean region, Çukurova (near Adana on the Southern Coast), and South-eastern Anatolia (GAP), however small amounts of cotton are also produced around Antalya. The geography of the region lends itself to cotton, with the Aegean cotton considered the best quality. In Turkey as well as globally the cotton sector counts for a large percentage of cultivated land and insecticide use. It also requires approximately 9,000 litres of water to produce 1kg of cotton, making it one of the most water intensive crops. Other sustainability issues include its impact on soil quality and biodiversity, as well as working conditions, health and safety, gender and child labour. The fragmented nature of cotton supply chains reduce the ability of retailers to address sustainability issues within the supply chain. Interest in purchasing cotton that is able to meet certain sustainability conditions has grown, especially as products marketed with sustainability labels grows.

In order to combat some of these issues and meet the demand, leading actors in the Turkish Cotton Sector approached Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) in 2011. BCI is a global non-profit organization fostering high standards in cotton farming and practices and has been promoting a better cotton standards system and better social and environmental practice in Turkey. BCI looks specifically at environmental indicators including pesticide, water, and synthetic and organic fertiliser use. It also accounts for economic indicators of yield and profit and promotes decent working conditions. The association "İyi Pamuk Uygulamaları Derneği" (the Good Cotton Practices Association) or "IPUD" was founded in September 2013 as the BCI strategic partner in Turkey.

The EBRD has been an active investor in Turkey's agricultural sector, with support exceeding €1.1 billion since the Bank started operations in Turkey in 2009. The Bank actively supports projects that achieve inclusive economic growth and deliver objectives of sustainable economic, social and environmental development. In this context the EBRD is proposing to support the Turkish cotton sector in gradually implementing higher sustainability standards, in line with the BCI.

The EBRD and IPUD will now collaborate on a Project to increase the efficiency of cotton farming in Turkey by developing and introducing best practices and a sustainable cotton standards system that meets the requirements of BCI-compliant cotton, thus overall improving the environmental, economic and social impact of cotton production in Turkey. The project will be implemented with 2 IPs in the western part of Turkey. Activities to support the adoption of Better Cotton Standard System (“BCSS”) among local stakeholders will align with all seven BCI principles, but will focus on the following five:

- Principle 1: BCI Farmers minimise the harmful impact of crop protection practices
- Principle 2: BCI Farmers promote water stewardship
- Principle 3: BCI Farmers care for the health of the soil
- Principle 4: BCI Farmers enhance biodiversity and use land responsibly
- Principle 5: BCI Farmers care for and preserve fibre quality

The EBRD now seeks to engage a consultant (the “Consultant”) to work with IPUD and other cotton sector stakeholders to develop and introduce best practices and a sustainable cotton standards system, in western Turkey, through providing technical expertise, training and skills sharing. The work will be designed with the objective of developing the capacities of Implementing Partners (IPs), field facilitators, farmers and ginners to improve the adoption of BCI standards and the efficiency of cotton farming in Turkey.

Assignment Description

Specifically, the Consultant will:

Before the training:

- Provide technical and agronomist advice and development of training materials to enable cotton farmers, ginners and trainers to meet and adhere to the Better Cotton Principles and Criteria. Materials will be web based so that they can be published online.
 - **Develop a farmer-training programme (“FTP”):** Develop Farmer Training modules and materials with both theoretical and practical components that are farmer friendly and serve capacity-building needs of the farmers. The training material will serve to explain the technical aspect of each BCI principle and also will focus on sustainable farm management activities for each related principle. The material will be adaptable to the local/regional differences, farm size and based on specific evidence for each farm. Materials may include, print, graphics, pictures, videos, etc. Training topics are to be identified and agreed jointly by project stakeholders, but tentatively include:
 - Principle 1: Cotton varieties, seed quality and correct seed selection, resistance management, herb management,

integrated pest management (IPM), alternative methods to pesticides, determining and understanding regional pests, beneficial insects and disease, toxicology of pesticides, correct pesticide label reading, proper preparation, timing, utilisation, storage and disposal of pesticides, maintenance of machinery, usage and management of personal protective equipment, etc.

- Principle 2: Understanding local/regional¹ water sources that affect cotton farmers and the concepts of water stewardship, water resources mapping, water quality management, water management, optimal water usage techniques, soil moisture management, etc.
 - Principle 3: Soil type mapping, reduced soil tillage, nutrients management, methods of increasing soil health and organic matter, crop rotation, cover crop, soil improvement methods for PH and salinity level and prevention of erosion techniques, etc.
 - Principle 4: Understanding regional biodiversity and ecosystem analysis, biodiversity mapping, biodiversity management, protection and improve biodiversity, determination and improvement of degraded areas, protection of wetlands, etc
 - Principle 5: Seed selection, harvest timing and harvest chemicals management, harvest machinery management, correct methods and materials for hand picking, plot cleaning and others.
- **Develop a training-of-trainers (“ToT”) programme:** A ToT programme will be prepared for IPs to ensure dissemination of the above-mentioned farmer trainings can be delivered by IPs after project completion, ensuring sustainability of the project objective.
 - Producing a ToT handbook where all relevant tools, training methods and materials are prepared for effective farmer training. Use of this handbook will be explained during the ToT and they will be used by PUMs and FFs during the field level training and to train new colleagues as relevant.
 - **Develop a ginners training programme,** modules and materials with both theoretical and practical components for knowledge transfer to ginners to enable ginners to meet and adhere to the BCSS, and improve their standards in terms of lint quality and health and safety. The following tentative topics should be covered:
 - Principle 5, care for and preserve fibre quality

¹ This refers to water sources at village, province and regional level in Turkey.

- Process management, Segregation and Chain of Custody and creating credible written segregation process to ensure the traceability and separate handling of Better Cotton (as opposed to conventional cotton)²
- Better Health and Safety practices in ginning facilities.
- Develop a survey method to measure the impact of the programmes
- Support IPs on developing pilot subjects and selection of demo plots in 4 farmer in 2 different villages
- Develop methodology on how to map agricultural resources, including water, biodiversity and soil
- Determining the sustainability hotspots in the regions where IPs work in to support them designing a Continuous Improvement Plan
- Assess ten ginners on Health & Safety, fibre quality related issues, process management, structural ginning improvement needs.

During the training period:

- Giving ToTs by carrying out training activities on each BCI principle for IP staff (eg. IP Manager, Project Coordinator, Producer Unit Manager (PU), Field Facilitator (FF)) Activities to include technical aspects of each principle and methods for delivery to farmers.
- Work with other stakeholders to set up demo farms and hold on-farm practical training to cover and demonstrate aspects good practice in cotton growing.
 - In order to include practical training on the field and showcase best practices, pilot farms and demo plots will be created for each subject of the farmer training programme (i.e. each of the principles). The subjects, pilots and farmers will be selected after the consultation with IPs. The aim is to select 2 farmers per village and one village per IP. Village based pilots may help to disseminate the results and learnings from the pilot to the rest of the village. This will also help to promote collective behaviour and partnership with other stakeholders within the village or the city. Some of the pilots may require a common area in the village (such as pesticide discharge area, beneficial pest production areas etc.). Thus, for the first year 4 farmers/demo plots will be selected in 2 different villages.
 - Create a model in pilot villages by mapping 4 pilot farmers' water, biodiversity and soil resources and support IPs on how to replicate the activity in other farms
- Hold a general recruiting and training event to raise awareness among ginners on relevant topics: Principle 5, care for and preservation of fibre quality, the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Guidelines and the Better

² This entails building the capacity of ginners to ensure Better Cotton can be traced back to licensed BCI farmers and is clearly separated from other (conventional) cotton at every stage of purchase, storage, processing, transport, and handling.

Cotton Standard System and how to use the on-line platform (Better Cotton Platform) to submit information on Better Cotton purchases and sales, Better Health and Safety practices in ginning facilities. The objective is to enable ginners to register as Better Cotton ginners and farmers to link with registered ginners. The training will include both more experienced BC ginners and those who are relatively new to the process.

- One-to-one advisory services for selected ten BC ginners (five ginners per IP) on implementation of the above topics, to share the benefits of structural ginning improvements (e.g. capex investments in new machinery, technology etc.) and to advise on ways to finance their improvements.
- One-to-one capacity building support to IPs on determining the sustainability hotspots in the regions they work in and designing a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) on training priorities to support adoption of more sustainable farming practices. Areas will be prioritised based on the most relevant challenges or opportunities for the specific producers/producer units. The CIP will include specific objectives, activities, criteria and indicators within a given Principle.

After the training:

- Report on the success of the pilot farms, ToT trainings, farmer trainings and ginner trainings;
- Deliver training materials to farmers, trainers, and ginners participating in the training, in coordination with IPUD and other technical consultants.

Project outputs will include:

- Project work plan (with timelines and deliverables) developed and submitted to the EBRD within two weeks of Assignment start;

A. Advisory for farmers:

- Farmer training modules and materials developed and accepted by the EBRD on five principles;
- A Training of Trainers program;
- ToT Handbook prepared and distributed to IPs;
- ToT Trainings delivered for two IPs in two regions for all IP Staff (at least 15 persons);
- Mapping methodology (water, soil and biodiversity) for IPs delivered and accepted by the EBRD;
- Set-up and operation of 4 pilot farms in 2 IPs. A report on the success of the pilots with recommendations of improvements
- A report completed with resources mapped in two pilot villages and four pilot farmers;
- A report on the success of the FT & ToT programme with recommendations for improvement;

B. Advisory for ginners

- Ginners training programme modules and materials developed and accepted by EBRD and IPUD;
- Assessment Report on Health & Safety, fibre quality related issues, process management conditions of ten ginners;
- Assessment Report on structural ginning improvement needs for ten ginners;
- Report on one-to-one advisory services provided to ten ginners (including note on required structural ginning improvements /capex investments and financing developed and discussed with ginners);
- Report on general advisory on ginner activities successes and improvement suggestions

C. Advisory for Implementing Partners

- Sustainability hotspots chosen and Continuous Improvement Programs (CIP) designed for two Project Unit managers (PUs) per IP; the total of four PUs will receive CIP; a report prepared for usability of CIP.

Status of Selection Process: Interested firms or groups of firms are hereby invited to submit expressions of interest.

Assignment Start Date and Duration: The Assignment is expected to start in Q2/2020 and has an estimated overall duration of 12 months.

Cost Estimate for the Assignment: EUR 41,000.00 (exclusive of VAT).
Extension is envisaged to this Assignment.

The Consultant must determine whether any VAT would be chargeable on the services and the basis for that determination, without taking into consideration the special status of the Bank as an IFI and state this to the Bank in their response to the Invitation for Expressions of Interest. To the extent that a Consultant incurs input VAT on goods and services purchased in connection with the provision of services (e.g. VAT on airline ticket) which is not otherwise recoverable by the consultant from the local tax authority, the gross cost to the consultant of such expenses shall be treated as a reimbursable expense.

Funding Source: It is expected that the Assignment will be funded by the EBRD's Shareholder Special Fund (SSF). Please note that selection and contracting will be subject to the availability of funding.

Eligibility: There are no eligibility restrictions.

Consultant Profile: Corporate services are required. The Consultant will be a firm or a group of firms with preferably previous project experience related to:

- development of training, knowledge resources and knowledge dissemination for farmers and trainers, particularly in sustainable cotton practices, best practices in cotton growing and picking techniques, irrigation, soil and water management, plant feeding and fertilisation, and integrated pest management;
- development of training, knowledge resources and knowledge dissemination for ginners and trainers, particularly in producing quality lint and health and safety;
- development of knowledge resources in methodologies around agricultural resource mapping
- working experience in design of project impact evaluation
- working experience with other training providers, in the context of assisting private sector agribusinesses.
- previous cooperation with the EBRD and other international financial institutions (IFIs) would be considered an advantage.

The Consultant's expert team is expected to cover the following expertise:

- Experience in curriculum design and delivery, and developing knowledge resources specifically for farmers, ginners and/or agribusinesses, including awareness of current international best practices in sustainable farming and ginning practices;
- Experience in developing and delivering training programmes for the private sector, and other training providers;
- An ability to effectively assess, evaluate and scale-up training programmes
- Experience in working in the agricultural sector in collaborating and partnership experience with implementing partners
- Experience in agricultural resource mapping
- Experience in sustainability issues in cotton production in western Turkey
- Written and oral fluency in English and Turkish

Submission Requirements. In order to determine the capability and experience of Consultants seeking to be shortlisted for this Assignment, the information submitted should include the following:

1. Company/group of firms' profile, organisation and staffing (max. 2-4 pages).
2. Details of previous project experience or similar assignments particularly undertaken in the previous five years, including information on contract value, contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration (mm/yy to mm/yy), expert months provided (if different from duration) , main activities, objectives.
3. CVs of key experts who could carry out the Assignment detailing qualifications, experience in similar assignments, particularly assignments undertaken in the previous five years, including information on contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration (mm/yy to mm/yy), expert months provided, assignment budget, main activities, objectives.

4. Completed Consultant Declaration Form and Contact Sheet, the template for which is available from the following web-link:

http://www.ebrd.com/pages/workingwithus/procurement/notices/csu/contact_sheet.doc.

The above information shall not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs, Consultant Declaration and Contact Sheet).

The complete expression of interest (including CVs, Consultant Declaration and Contact Sheet) should be submitted, in English electronically through e-Selection, to reach the Bank not later than the closing date. The expression of interest shall be one file (pdf). The EBRD reserves the right to reject applications of firms submitting more than one file. Only if the permissible file size is exceeded (4MB), the Consultant may split the expression of interest into further files.

Bank Contact Person:

Notes:

The selection will normally be made from responses to this notification only. Consultants will **not** be asked to submit a proposal. The highest-ranked Consultant will be selected from a shortlist and be invited to negotiate the contract, subject to availability of funding.

The shortlist criteria are:

- Firm's previous experience in development of training, knowledge resources and knowledge dissemination for farmers and trainers, particularly in sustainable cotton practices, best practices in cotton growing and picking techniques, irrigation, soil and water management, plant feeding and fertilisation, and integrated pest management (50%).
- Composition and CVs of expert team (50%).