



Sustainable Transition to Entrepreneurial Production
in Agriculture through Upsgrading.



TERMS OF REFERENCE TO SUPPORT A MASTERS STUDENT PERSUE HIS RESEARCH PROJECT THROUGH THE STEP-UP PROJECT.



Leibniz Centre for
Agricultural Landscape Research
(ZALF)



1.0 INTRODUCTION

These Terms of Reference (TOR) are drawn for the STEP-UP Project demand to engage a masters student who intends to do his/her thesis in the field of Agriculture and food nutrition to support action research on documentation of Sustainable Intensification (SI) & Market Linkages (ML) innovations in the banana value chain in Isingiro and Bunyangabu Districts.

2.0 ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT¹

Environmental Alert was founded in **1988** and in the year **(2018)** marked **30 years** of contribution to improved livelihoods in Uganda through several interventions in sustainable agriculture, environment, natural resources management, water, sanitation and hygiene. Environmental Alert is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization, and incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. Environmental Alert is governed by an independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic including ensuring Environmental Alert's integrity as a voluntary service organization. Further information about Environmental Alert is available at: <http://envalert.org/>

Vision- *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing the environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

Mission – *'Environmental Alert exists to advocate for an enabling environment, sustainable natural resources management and food security for targeted communities through empowerment and policy engagement.'*

Environmental Alert seeks to support a Masters Student in his/her Research as he/she compiles the final year thesis who will be placed under the STEP-UP Project.

3.0 BACKGROUND (ABOUT THE STE-UP PROJECT)

Sustainable intensification of agriculture provides a potential pathway to meet the growing demands for food on a global level. However, in practice adoption of many promising SI solutions remains disappointing amongst others due to poor linkages to input and output markets and high investment risks. In the STEP-UP project, we aim to implement and assess sustainable intensification (SI) and market linkage (ML) strategies to enable small farm enterprises (SFEs) to step up towards food and nutrition security, sustainable development and income generation. The project focuses on banana and mango food value chains in Uganda and Kenya respectively. Uganda is the leading banana-producing country in Africa, with the East African highland banana (EAHB) cultivar a staple to an estimated 10 million Ugandans. The banana marketing relies on complex food value chains (FVC) and is challenged by poor infrastructure.

STEP-UP aims to identify and implement strategies to upgrade production, processing and marketing of cooking banana (matooke) in two districts of Uganda: Isingiro and Bunyangabu

Environmental Alert is implementing this project with other partners from Germany (ZALF), Netherlands (WUR), Kenya (JKUAT and NETFUND) and Uganda (NARO and Solidaridad Uganda) with financial support from The Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and The European Union through the Leap-Agriculture Programme. It combines research, development and outreach-oriented activities in five Work Packages (**WPs**), and implements sustainable intensification (SI) and market linkage (ML) strategies to enable small farm enterprises (SFEs) to step up towards food and

¹ More information about Environmental Alert is available in **Box 1**.

nutrition security, sustainable development and income generation. STEP-UP will use a participatory multi stake holder approach where new technologies in cultivation, processing and packaging will be implemented and assessed in mango and banana food value chains (FVC) in Kenya and Uganda respectively.

3.1 Objectives of the project

The overall aim is to contribute to food security and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa through equitable commercial relationships between SFEs and markets within the frame of sustainable agricultural production. The project² will focus on the heterogeneous groups of smallholder farmers with an entrepreneurial ambition. STEP-UP will support smallholder producers to access relevant technologies, innovations and management practices for the transition to commercialized production.

3.2 Specific objectives are:

- A. *Achieve sustainable intensification of SFEs and the transition of diverse farms to commercial enterprises that contribute to food and nutrition security while minimizing trade-offs in other sustainability dimensions;*
- B. *Provide key actor groups, local authorities and decision-makers with instruments and information for discussion and decision support based on participatory ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments;*
- C. *Inform policy implementation towards a supportive public-policy environment based on locally-relevant sustainability principles, criteria and indicators.*

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MASTERS STUDENT

Environmental Alert will facilitate the student to carry out action research for identification and documentation of SI & ML innovations in the banana value chain. Besides, the outputs from this internship should contribute towards the student's academic growth and development at the University. Thus, the internship should be linkage to the Students Master's research studies. The Student is expected to:

- a. *Engage banana value chain stakeholders to identify and document Sustainable Intensification & Market Linkages innovations in the banana value chain in selected project sites in Uganda;*
- b. *Participate in project field activities organized by Environmental Alert as of when required for purposes of getting them exposed to benefit from project management experience in the field;*
- c. *Compile an the following outputs for submission to Environmental Alert internship report, case study of identified innovations in respect to the SI & ML innovations along the banana value chain in selected project sites to Environmental Alert at the end of the project;*
- d. *Explore and pursue opportunities for publication of the results from this initiative in terms of a poster, journal article/paper, conference and seminar presentation.*

5.0 QUALIFICATIONS:

The support is only available for a continuing master's degree student in his/her year of thesis development and requires support to conduct the research. He/she must be pursuing his degree in the fields of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment, Food Security and any other relevant field. Their master's research study should be on the banana value chain, so that some of the results from the internship placement contributes to their master's thesis. Furthermore, his/her supervisor should be willing to support them in

² Further information about the project is available at: https://leap.iamb.it/?page_id=313

terms of providing technical guidance to ensure that the documentation of the SI & ML innovations for the banana value chain are part of the broader MSc research study for the student.

6.0 KEY COMPETENCIES:

- a) Strong spoken and written communications skills.
- b) Excellent observation and analytic skills;
- c) Computer software knowledge such as Microsoft Office, knowledge of statistical packages such as Excel, SPSS, STATA (knowledge of other statistical software is an added advantage) and general Internet and electronic communications;
- d) A good Interpersonal/human relation skills;
- e) Demonstrated skills for engaging with adults in development work.

7.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

- a) Manage, preserve and protect confidential and sensitive data with integrity;
- b) Maintain the confidentiality of personal information obtained as a result of carrying out the research.

8.0 TERMINATION

The Grant to the Student may be terminated on or before expiry of tenure under the following conditions:

- a) Incompetence or neglect of duty as determined by the Supervisor;
- b) Misconduct that is work-related as determined by the supervisor;
- c) Falsification of data
- d) Termination of the project contract

9.0 TERMS OF THE CONTRACT

The contract will run for a period of not more than 12months. EA will facilitate the student with a modest monthly stipend and costs associated with travel to the field to collect data. ***The grant does not pay for tuition or any other costs associated with studies at the University.***

Furthermore, both technical and administrative support will be provided to the successful candidate during the period they will spend at Environmental Alert to ensure that the expected outputs from this initiative are achieved successfully.

10.0 How to apply:

EA is an equal opportunity employer and the position is available for filling at the earliest possible Opportunity. Thus, qualified women and men are encouraged to apply.

Interested individuals should send their applications to the Project Coordinator via email: pa.enr1@envalert.org and a copy to The **Executive Director, Environmental Alert** via Email: ed@envalert.org. Or hand deliver at the Offices at Plot 3, Sonko Lane, Kabalagala (off Gaba Road), P.O.Box 11259, Kampala. Uganda. Tel: +256 414 510 547/ 215.

Applications should be delivered not later than **19th June, 2020**

The application should include: *an application letter describing what motivates you to apply for this grant (no more than two pages), a detailed CV, copy of Admission letter to the University, copies of academic testimonials, draft proposal submitted to the School, phone number, e-mail address and contacts of three*

referees (One should be your direct supervisor at the University) and recommendation by the Student's Supervisor.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted for an interactive interview.

Box 1: About Environmental Alert

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Environmental Alert (EA) was founded in **1988** and has developed and transitioned into a National Non-Governmental organization contributing to an enabling policy environment for sustainable agriculture and sound environment and natural resources management at community, local, national and international levels. EA is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization (NGO), incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. EA is governed by an Independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

EA is a **1st prize winner of the Energy globe award for environmental sustainability-2005 under the category, earth.**

EA is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

EA envisions, *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

EA's mission is to, 'Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management'

Program and institutional Components:

1. Environment and Natural resources management;
2. Food security and Nutrition;
3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene;
4. Finance and Administration;
5. Resource mobilization and Investment.

Scale of Implementation:

EA operates in selected districts for generation of evidence to inform policy engagements on agriculture, environment and natural resources at National and International levels. Currently EA's operations are in over 40 districts across the country. EA undertakes area wide targeted awareness on selected issues in agriculture, environment and natural resources engagements

EA is a Secretariat for following networks:

- a) The Network for Civil Society Organizations in Environment & Natural Resources Sector (ENR-CSO Network) - <http://enr-cso.org/>;
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group - <http://ufwg.entalert.org/>;
- c) The Standards Development Group (for promotion of Sustainable Forest Management in Uganda); and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network) - <http://www.prolinnova.net/uganda>;
- e) The Renewable Energy CSO Network.

Further information about Environmental Alert is available at: <http://entalert.org/>

