

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF A CONSULTING FIRM TO CONDUCT THE FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PRIVATE SEED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT (PSSD2) PROJECT IN BURUNDI

I. Background and Objectives of the PSSD-2 Project

The International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) was established in 1974 in the U.S. state of Alabama as an independent, public, non-profit organization. Since its creation, the organization has played a critical role in global food security, reducing hunger and poverty, protecting the environment, and promoting economic development and self-sufficiency.

IFDC began its activities in Burundi in 2006, focusing on soil fertility, land management, seed sector development, market access, and value chain development. Through its interventions in Burundi (2006–2024), IFDC has contributed to increased agricultural productivity and production, driven by improved farm management and enhanced availability and access to quality agricultural inputs.

Funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Burundi, the Private Seed Sector Development Project (PSSD-2) is an extension of PSSD I, implemented from November 2018 to June 2024. During the first phase, significant results were achieved in terms of increased adoption and use of certified seeds by farming households, thanks to effective implementation strategies and the introduction of improved varieties. A total of 390,784 farming households gained access to certified seeds, representing approximately 22.4% of all farming households in Burundi.

Building on these achievements, IFDC Burundi secured a second phase lasting 2.5 years (July 2024 – December 2026). This phase aims to scale up the achievements of the first phase and accelerate the development of a sustainable, competitive, and innovative seed sector, supported by a favorable regulatory environment and a dynamic private sector.

The second phase aims to deliver tangible results for 220,500 new households: 31,500 will strengthen their resilience and capacity to use quality seeds, while 189,000 will gain indirect access to certified seeds through support to seed entrepreneurs. The initiative targets 50% women and 30% youth. Overall, 90,300 households are expected to improve their agricultural productivity, and 64,500 are expected to double their productivity and income.

These results will be achieved through the implementation of activities structured around four components:

- Scaling up and industrialization of the private seed sector;
- Improvement of the enabling business environment;

- Strengthening household resilience and the seed market system;
- Collaboration with other agricultural projects, particularly those aligned with seed demand.

In addition to the three target crops from the first phase (potato, maize, and beans), PSSD-2 will also improve the availability and access to seeds for other crops such as vegetables and cassava.

To achieve these results, IFDC has established public-private partnership agreements with institutions such as ISABU, ONCCS, DPFAPFNL, ADPR, SETRACO, NASECO, COPROSEBU, TWITEZIMBERE, ERB, and UCODE for project implementation.

Furthermore, the project has developed co-financing partnerships with private seed entrepreneurs to support:

- Infrastructure and storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses;
- Tractors and mechanization to lower production costs and address labor shortages;
- Hillside irrigation systems to respond to climate change;
- Organization of mini seed fairs to promote seed commercialization in remote areas;
- Tricycles to facilitate the distribution of agricultural inputs.

As the project approaches its completion, it is essential to conduct an independent external final evaluation. This evaluation will assess, among other criteria, the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the project.

The final evaluation of PSSD-2 should provide a comprehensive assessment of the implementation status of all project activities, particularly those under public-private partnerships, using indicators from the monitoring and evaluation framework and considering the required levels of disaggregation.

Specifically, the evaluation will analyze the key factors (both positive and negative) that have influenced the project's achievements, including implementation strategy, duration, resources mobilized (human and material), partnerships, and external opportunities and threats.

The evaluation will also include a comparative impact analysis between two groups of households:

- (i) those who purchased and used certified seeds; and
- (ii) those who used non-certified seeds.

II. Objectives and Expected Results

Overall Objective

The objective of this evaluation is to conduct a comprehensive final assessment of the project's effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, and to generate lessons learned and recommendations to inform future programming potentially funded by other donors.

Specific Objectives

- Measure results against outcome and impact indicators in the monitoring and evaluation framework, particularly the Dutch Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) outcome indicators;
- Assess the effectiveness of new components introduced in PSSD-2 and determine their added value;
- Evaluate the efficiency of resource use (financial, time, human, and material) relative to achieved results;
- Assess the sustainability of project outcomes;
- Evaluate the impact, particularly of components carried over from PSSD I;
- Identify lessons learned and propose strategic orientations to guide future interventions with other donors.

Expected Results

- Food and nutrition security indicators are updated with their status;
- Project results and implementation approaches are analyzed, including the contribution of strategies to achieving results;
- The efficiency of achieved results is demonstrated;
- The sustainability of results is assessed;
- Key lessons learned from PSSD-2 are documented;
- The project's impact across its various components is evaluated and documented;
- Recommendations are formulated for potential future projects with other donors.

III. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation will cover the period from July 2024 to the present. The target population includes all stakeholders involved in the seed sector in Burundi, including:

- Seed users (farming households, cooperatives, NGOs, agricultural projects, etc.);
- Seed producers (multipliers/seed companies, COPROSEBU, innovative production firms such as ADPR and SETRACO);
- Market actors (agro-dealers, fair organizers, retail outlets, e-platform managers such as Auxfin/UMVA, WHH);
- Technical support services (MINEAGRI institutions such as ISABU, ONCCS, DPFAPFNL, and other intermediary services);
- Local implementing organizations (TWITEZIMBERE, UCODE-AMR, ERB);
- Households using non-certified seeds for comparison;
- Development partners (FAO, Embassy of the Netherlands, AfDB, World Bank, etc.).

IV. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The key evaluation questions, aligned with the criteria above, include:

Effectiveness

1. To what extent has the project increased production, access, and adoption of certified seeds (beans, potatoes, maize)? What constraints remain?
2. To what extent has the project improved access to certified vegetable seeds?
3. How effective were pre-order and bulk purchasing mechanisms?
4. How effective were co-financing mechanisms in irrigation and mechanization?
5. To what extent has the project strengthened market linkages?
6. How have regulatory reforms improved the formal seed system?
7. To what extent were gender and youth inclusion objectives achieved?

Efficiency

8. Were resources used optimally relative to results?
9. How effective was the partnership approach?

Sustainability

10. To what extent have stakeholders adopted project approaches?
11. Are supported businesses economically viable?

12. Are regulatory improvements institutionalized?
13. Do local institutions have capacity to sustain outcomes?

Impact

14. Has the use of certified seeds improved productivity and incomes?
15. Has the project strengthened household resilience?
16. Has public-private collaboration strengthened the seed industry?
17. Has COPROSEBU's capacity improved?
18. Has the project improved the enabling environment for a private-led seed sector?

V. Evaluation of Methodology

The methodology will combine qualitative and quantitative approaches and will be developed by the selected consulting firm. It should include:

- Study design;
- Data collection and analysis methods;
- Sampling strategies;
- Quality assurance mechanisms;
- Data collection tools;
- Enumerator training plans;
- Data triangulation methods;
- Ethical considerations, including confidentiality and respondent protection.

The methodology must be clearly justified in the technical proposal and include:

- Inception meetings with IFDC;
- Consultations with the donor (Embassy of the Netherlands);
- Desk review of key project documents (PSSD I & II reports, M&E framework, theory of change, etc.).

VI. Expected Deliverables

The consulting firm will produce:

1. An inception report (methodology, tools, work plan);
2. A draft evaluation report with preliminary findings;

3. A final evaluation report incorporating feedback;
4. Raw quantitative and qualitative datasets.

VII. Evaluation Steering Committee

A technical committee composed of IFDC MELS staff, representatives of the Netherlands (Embassy and The Hague), and operational partners will oversee the evaluation process and ensure quality by reviewing key deliverables.

VIII. Tentative Timeline

The evaluation is expected to be conducted over a period of three (3) months, in line with the planned activities.

N°	Main Activities	April 2026				May 2026				June 2026				July 2026			
		week1	W2	week3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	W3	W4
1	Preparation of the Terms of Reference (ToR) and submission to the Embassy																
2	Approval of the Terms of Reference																
3	Publication of the Terms of Reference and recruitment of the consulting firm																
4	Contracting of the consulting firm																
5	Preparation and validation of the																

- At least 10 years of experience in the design of agricultural projects, including the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks (indicators, annual targets, logical frameworks, or theory of change)
- Strong knowledge of the regulatory and policy context of the seed sector in Burundi and the sub-region
- Proven experience in conducting at least five (5) similar studies using mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative)
- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills
- Full proficiency in French; knowledge of English is an asset

2. Statistician

- At least a master's degree in statistics or a related field
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in conducting project evaluations
- 3. National Economist or Agro-economist with the following qualifications:
- Master's degree in agricultural economics, rural development, or rural economics
- At least 7 years of experience in rural development projects and market systems development
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting socio-economic impact studies
- Proven knowledge of the institutional context and implementation of agricultural policies in Burundi
- Excellent command of written and spoken French; knowledge of English is an asset
- Strong report writing skills
- Ability to work in a team and facilitate dialogue among stakeholders

X. Submission of Proposals

- The technical and financial proposals must be submitted separately with the following labels:
- *“Technical Proposal for the Final Evaluation of PSSD-2”*
- *“Financial Proposal for the Final Evaluation of PSSD-2”*

a) Technical Proposal

The technical proposal shall be included in the following order:

- A PDF document describing the understanding of the assignment, detailed methodology, and activity schedule
- Detailed CVs of the proposed consultants
- Certified copies of academic diplomas

- Certificates, references, and professional contacts for similar assignments
- Legal documents confirming the status of the consulting firm
- Physical and electronic address of the consulting firm

b) Financial Proposal

The financial proposal must be as detailed as possible, including the costs of team members and their level of effort based on the activity schedule. It must also include applicable taxes and be expressed in USD.

XI. Evaluation of Proposals

- The evaluation of submitted proposals will be conducted by a committee appointed by IFDC management. Proposals will be assessed based on the following main criteria:
- The firm must be an international consulting firm
- The proposal must be submitted within the deadline
- The evaluation process will be conducted in two stages:
- The committee will first assess the technical proposals
- Bidders who meet the prequalification criteria and obtain a minimum score of 70% in the technical evaluation will proceed to the financial evaluation stage

Technical evaluation criteria (to be detailed)

NO	Criteria	Mark /100
1	Qualifications of the Consulting Team	20
	Certified true copy of the original diploma of the Lead Consultant with the above-mentioned qualifications	5
	Certified true copies of the original diplomas of the other assigned consultants meeting the required profiles (2.5 points per compliant diploma)	5
	Detailed CVs of the assigned consultants (5 points for the Team Leader and 2.5 points for each secondary consultant)	10
2	Understanding of the Terms of Reference and methodology	50
	Note describing the understanding of the assignment	10
	Note on the development of the methodological approach to be used for the evaluation	35
	Work plan and implementation schedule of activities	5
3	Experience of the consulting firm in conducting similar evaluations	30
	Document certifying the legal status of the consulting firm (6 points); Certificates of completion, references, and professional contacts for similar assignments (1 point per service certificate, up to a maximum of 8 certificates, i.e., 24 points maximum)	30

For candidates who obtain a score equal to or higher than 70%, their financial proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

N0	Criteria	Mark /30
1	Quality of the offer	5
	The detailed financial proposal, including the costs of team members and their respective input periods based on the activity schedule. It must also consider applicable taxes and duties.	5
2	Tax compliance	5
3	Certificate of non-indebtedness	
	Tax Identification Number (TIN) certificate	
	Business registration certificate (Trade Register document)	
	Efficiency (cost/results ratio)	20

Note:

- The technical score will be weighted to a maximum of 70 points.
- Tax compliance is mandatory; failure to provide any of the three required documents will result in disqualification of the bid.
- The most cost-efficient offer (i.e., the lowest cost-to-results ratio score) will receive 20 points. Other offers will be scored proportionally against the best-performing offer.
- All logistical expenses related to the conduct of the evaluation will be borne by the selected consulting firm.
- The selected consulting firm will be responsible for obtaining all necessary fieldwork authorizations, including statistical clearance/visa and any other required permits.

How to apply: Interested applicants can fill out the submission form online at:

<https://ifdc.org/2026/04/28/request-for-proposals-evaluation-pssd-2/>

If you have questions, please direct them to: ifdcburundi@ifdc.org, gubhanza@ifdc.org, and mbeun@ifdc.org.

Deadline for applications: May 8 CoB UTC.

Any applications submitted after the specified deadline will not be considered for evaluation.