



MELCA-Ethiopia

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF ETHIOPIAN FOOD SYSTEM AND PRODUCTION OF POLICY AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

1. Introduction

1.1. Organizational Background

Movement for Ecological Learning and Community Action (MELCA-Ethiopia) is a non-profit making non-governmental organization founded in 2004, and it is re-registered in accordance with Organizations of Civil Societies Proclamation No. 1113/2019 with registration No. 0348. MELCA-Ethiopia envisions seeing healthy and prosperous people that conserve their bio-cultural diversity. Its mission is to working for healthy ecosystems, resilient communities and critical young generation through developing and institutionalizing innovative approaches. For the actualization of its vision and mission, MELCA-Ethiopia has designed four thematic programs, namely, Environmental governance, Agro-ecology, Youth and children empowerment and Eco-friendly livelihood improvement components. As part of its agroecology program, the organization engages in participatory variety selections for the restoration and revitalization of lost indigenous crop varieties, supports Community seed bank establishment and management, skill development in agroecological practices, mobilize communities in soils and water conservation, Farm level diversification. Furthermore, partake in agri-food system policy advocacy works. In its other program, supports communities through the promotion of eco-friendly livelihood options, focusing on women and other vulnerable groups.

1.2. Food System

Food systems are made up of all the people, institutions, environments, infrastructure and activities that relate to the production, processing, manufacturing, distribution, marketing, sale, preparation, affordability and consumption of food. Food systems are intrinsically related to health, environment, culture, politics (equity, right, empowerment and sovereignty), trade, investment, food aide, technology transfer, local ownership and economy. The food system also determines the right to make decision around where, how, when and what of food produced and distributed, etc, in the interest of meeting human right, environmental, health and socioeconomic objectives, collectively.

A sustainable food system (SFS) is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised. This means that: – It is profitable throughout (economic sustainability); – It has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability); and – It has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability).

A food systems approach is a way of thinking and doing that considers the food system in its totality, taking into account all the elements, their relationships and related effects. It is not confined to one single sector, sub-system (e.g. value chain, market) or discipline, and thus



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broadens the framing and analysis of a particular issue as the result of an intricate web of interlinked activities and feedbacks. It considers all relevant causal variables of a problem and all social, environmental, and economic impacts of the solutions to achieve transformational systemic changes. As such, the food systems approach addresses the limitations of many traditional approaches to improving food security and nutrition, which tend to be sectoral with either a narrowly defined focus that leads to technical fixes, which are subjected to the scope of one ministry or public agency, or which use systemic thinking to tackle objectives but are limited to sub-systems. Encouraging development practitioners and policymakers to see the bigger picture will also help facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration and policy coordination at different levels to promote a more balanced relationship and jointly address future challenges.

2. Background, Problem statement and Rational

Ethiopia is one of the mega diverse countries in the world and rich centre of origin, diversity and endemism as its territories covers two of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspot, i.e the Eastern Afromontane and the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia is one of the agrarian countries and agriculture contributes about \$27.5 billion (GDP 33%), 79% livelihood and export; however it is highly susceptible to climate change associated to unsustainable natural resources management and agricultural practice. It is also predicted that climate-related hazards may reduce Ethiopia's GDP by up to 10% by 2045 (World Bank 2010). Currently Ethiopia hosts more than 100 million people, by 2025 it will host nearly 126 million people 26% higher than today. According to government estimate current food production is 33 million ton, it will needs to increases by 125% to attain the target of 72 million ton by 2025 to be food secured.

The Problem

Despite the efforts made to transform Ethiopian agriculture over the years it remains unsustainable and fails to feed the current and increasing population in fairly accessible and nutritionally sensitive and environmentally and socioeconomically sound and empowering manner.

The major problems associated with our food system include but not limited to:

- Adoption and forceful promotion of industrial agriculture model among the wide smallholder farmers through subjugation of agricultural extension, education and research systems,
- Take no notice of indigenous crop varieties and animal breeds, but forcing a hybrid seeds varieties and animal breeds that works on intensive agrochemical application and use of large scale areas, at a loss of important biodiversity areas, over exploitation and displacement of communities,
- Disregard to local and traditional knowledge and practices, farmers seed system, agroecological specific conditions and limited investment in enhancing livelihood and contributions of smallholder farmer
- Take no notice of the diversity of Ethiopian food system, both in food types, culture and agroecological production zones but push for one fit for all model and promoting agro chemicals monoculture. This also disregards that Ethiopia has diverse food system, products and productions agroecological zones



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- Disregards for the need for participatory research and co-creation of knowledge, and multi-functionality and multi-sectoral objectives of agriculture and food system,
- Disregards to market factors and all value chain actors, especially, producers and consumers

As a result of misconception and wrong narratives and unsustainable agricultural and food system related practises, Ethiopia faces among other things, the following problems/challenges:

- Loss of biodiversity, weakened farmers seed system, erosion of traditional knowledge and practices,
- Weak investment to enhance the efforts of small holder farmers who feed the nation,
- Adoption of production and export oriented Industrial Agricultural (IA) system.
- A recent approval of commercial plantation of Bt. cotton, and confined field trials of Maize and Enset (*Ensete ventricosu*), that are strategic food crops, has even put the country at grave danger.
- Widespread support to advance mono cultural (focus on few crops Wheat and Barley) practices through advancing contract and cluster farming, use of external germ plasm and hybrid varieties. This resulting in narrowing food base and limiting knowledge diversity. This is an indication for looming challenges over national seed security and food sovereignty.
- Health wise, studies have shown that the prevalence of stunting (chronic malnutrition) among children 6-59 months old is 40% and the prevalence of wasting and underweight is recorded to be 9% and 23% respectively. Micronutrients deficiency is also pervasive and severe in the country. About 44% of under the age of five years children, 30% of adolescents, 22% of pregnant women, 17% of women of reproductive age are found to be anaemic. There are also indications that non communicable diseases such as type II diabetes, heart related disease are on the rise. All in all this shows growing concerns over national nutritional security.
- According to Ethiopian Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy (CRGE, 2011) agriculture is the major sources of GHG emission. Ethiopian agriculture is increasingly become a sources of adverse impacts and susceptible to climate change,
- This is associated with unhealthy agricultural production system, unregulated food import, school feeding programs and trade related problems,
- Likewise, poor incentives for healthy food production, lack of participatory research and education and public awareness contribute to the impending problems,
- Ethiopia has put in place a number of national food and nutrition policy and strategies related to food system governance. However, their discrete nature, absence of a legal framework and lack of accountability system, as well as lack of coherent food policy that addresses the multi functional and cross-sectoral nature of food governance underscores the observed failures and poor results in many counts,

The envisaged task of food system study is therefore aimed at identifying the root causes of the prevailing and impending multiple crises, craft a comprehensive enabling and guiding policy, generate knowledge products to change attitude and practices. The envisage food system policy is expected to take into account the multi functionality of agriculture and food, environment, trade,



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right to food, health, knowledge generation, ownership by small holders and meeting livelihood and rural development objectives and over all national development goal.

3. Objective

The key Objectives are:

- To generate knowledge products (policy briefs, review report, information package and recommendations for policy makers, educators, farmers, stakeholders and researchers) important to create understanding of the limitation of current food system and guides for sustainable food system practice and decision making,
- To draft comprehensive and transformative food system policy
- To create alliance for shaping the shared vision and goals of sustainable food system and lobbying the consideration and endorsement of Food System policy white paper by the appropriate government and all key stakeholders

4. Requirements for the consultant (s)

- A strong technical background in the fields of sustainable agriculture, environment, soil health, nutritional security , right to food, food sovereignty, and similar food system related subjects
- Sufficient work experience and deep understanding of national and international agreements, initiatives and best practices applicable to Ethiopian Agri-food system, including, access and benefits sharing, equity, diversity, knowledge system, governance arrangements and multi-functionality of food system, etc.
- Having experience in similar undertakings
- Have a renewed legal business license and paid current year government applicable taxes as applicable but individual consultants are also welcomed.
- Willing to submit technical and financial proposals in separate sealed envlops

5. Approach¹:

In undertaking the task the approach will include:

- Device methods to identify key institutions, stakeholders and individuals to collect important documents
- Device tools for data collection and engagement of informant groups or institutions
- Review and analysis of available data and information as well as concerns
- Draft report or deliverables, incorporate comments, present for key stakeholders and finalize the outputs and submit
- Use interdisciplinary team or use multiple relevant sources
- Engage MELCA-Ethiopia at each stages of undertaking the task

6. Key Undertakings

The following are major activities:

¹ The consultant can even elaborate the approach and come up with innovate methods to diversify the approach and broaden the scope



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- Review of applicable national and international policies, practices, studies, etc.
- Device methods to collect and analyze various data and information from different institutions and Key Informant Individuals,
- Mapping out different major food types and food production and conservation trends, systems, knowledge and agroecological production zones,
- Review national and international trends and concerns related to food systems and practices,
- Draft Knowledge products: Background document of the study findings, awareness material about sustainable food system and key findings and facts of Ethiopian food system, continental and international trends and concerns,
- Develop agroecological based food production zone maps by items such as roots, pulses, cereals spices, stimulants, animals, fruit trees, vegetables, honey
- Preparation of comprehensive food policy that gives guidance to sustainable and transformative food system in Ethiopia. This may include Policy background and policy rational, vision, goal, strategic objectives, sectoral and cross sectoral policies, institutional governance, resources mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, etc.
- Preparation of policy briefs: which gives a summarized informative notes to policy makers and key stakeholders

7. Outputs /Deliverables

The outputs of this work will include:

- National Food system policy white paper to be submitted to the government - 15-20 Pages
- Policy briefs, recommendations 5-10 pages
- Background Food system study document and knowledge products including food map-15 – 20 pages
- Proceeding of the Workshops

8. Indicative Timeframe: Timeframe: 1 month from the signing of the agreement.

9. Application Procedure: Interested applicants can collect the ToR from or consult with MELCA-Ethiopia head office in 5 working days from the date of this advertisement onwards during regular working hours, from Monday to Friday, at address mentioned below, and submit a technical and financial proposal in separately sealed envelope within 10 working days from the date of the appearance of this request for the proposal. MELCA-Ethiopia reserves the right to reject any or all bids.