

# Call for proposals / local researcher(s)

Meaningful stakeholder engagement in supply chain due diligence

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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The European Union (EU) is developing a Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (the CSDDD). For the Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO) stakeholder engagement is a key element of good due diligence. Smallholder farmers and people/groups in a vulnerable position are especially important, as they are often overlooked. Smallholder farmers have not been consulted during the legislative process, however, the forthcoming directive will have an impact on their work. Meaningful stakeholder engagement must be gender sensitive and consider all potential grounds for discrimination to ensure the specific impacts on most vulnerable actors are captured by the due diligence process. Not a lot of field research has been done on how to best design meaningful engagement with smallholders. To fill this gap the FTAO is issuing the following request for proposals.

## 2 AIM AND OBJECTIVE

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The aim of this assignment is to deliver on-the-ground data on stakeholder engagement of smallholders in due diligence practices of companies. The findings will be used to write recommendations for companies and policy makers. The information can be based on either two commodities in one country/region or one commodity in different regions/countries, depending on the capacity of the researcher(s). The FTAO is particularly interested in the stakeholder engagement with farmers of the following commodities: cotton, cocoa, banana, coffee, and tea. However, we are not closed to hearing proposals on other commodities.

The research should focus on questions such as:

- How are smallholders currently included in due diligence procedures?
- What are the experiences of stakeholders with due diligence processes?
- What paths exist at the moment to address actual or potential human rights- or environmental risks caused by companies?
- What challenges do stakeholders face when asked to participate in stakeholder engagement?
- What are success factors for meaningful stakeholder engagement?

These questions should be answered through a gender lens. The final research questions will be developed in collaboration between FTAO and the researcher(s).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

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Data will be collected through stakeholder interviews, both one on one as well as group discussions. Researcher(s) will be responsible for locating, selecting and contacting representative stakeholders. Cultural sensitivity and trust are important success factors for this research, it is therefore important that researcher(s) know the local context and language. The data will be analysed by the researcher(s) and presented in a clear overview, giving a summary of the findings, adding the raw data and interview overviews in the annex.

## 4 DELIVERABLES

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The following deliverables are part of the assignment:

- A written report of +/- 20 pages, excluding annexes
- Presenting the report when published during a webinar or (offline) seminar

## 5 BUDGET

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A maximum of EUR 12.000 (including VAT and all expenses) has been made available for this research project.

## 6 SELECTION CRITERIA

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Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Past experience in similar research
- Knowledge and experience with smallholder farmers, due diligence and/or international supply chains
- Inclusiveness of the researchers and submission
- Quality of the submission (as described in point 7)
- Budget

## 7 SUBMISSION

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Interested parties are asked to present their submission before August 7 2023, including:

- Proposed approach, including:
  - o Country/countries interviews will take place
  - o Overview of stakeholder to be interviewed (how will they be reached and what is their field of work)
  - o Methodology (including a gender perspective)
- Table of content for the report
- Examples of similar work in the past
- Timeline of the research
- Profile of the researcher(s), including:
  - o Roles and proposed task division
  - o Past relevant experience
- Financial proposal in EUR, including (if applicable)
  - o personnel cost
  - o other direct costs (such as training and meeting costs, travel and accommodation)
  - o overhead
  - o VAT

## 8 TIMELINE

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The suggested timeline is as follows:

August	Kick-off meeting between FTAO and researcher(s)
September	Reaching out to stakeholders
Sept-Nov	Collecting data
December	Writing report
End January	Present report

## 9 CONTACT

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Expressions of interest should be sent to Tara Scally: [scally@fairtrade-advocacy.org](mailto:scally@fairtrade-advocacy.org) before August 7.

For inquiries, please contact Tara Scally: [scally@fairtrade-advocacy.org](mailto:scally@fairtrade-advocacy.org).