

# TERMS OF REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

## (SHORT-TERM CONSULTANCY)

In the framework of the CIRCULAR project, financed by the European Union, Expertise France is looking for a consultancy firm to conduct a baseline study of the single-use plastics (SUP) value chain in the food sector in Colombo and Galle districts of Sri Lanka.

### I. General information

Assignment name	Conduct a baseline study of the single-use plastics (SUP) value chain in the food sector in Colombo and Galle districts, Sri Lanka.
Beneficiary	Actors in SUP value chain in the food sector and General public
Country	Sri Lanka
Total estimated duration of the contract	2 months
Expected starting date of the contract	01/09/2025

### II. Context and justification of the need

Plastic pollution in Sri Lanka has emerged as a pressing environmental, public health, and economic concern, casting a shadow over the island nation's natural beauty and cultural heritage. The mismanagement of plastic waste poses serious environmental, public health, and economic risks, affecting marine ecosystems, water quality, and key sectors like tourism and fishing that contributes significantly to the economy. The National Action Plan on Plastic Waste Management (2021) identifies packaging (30%), consumer products as one of the primary sources of plastic waste, with food-related SUP items, such as straws and packaging, being a major contributor. Addressing this issue requires raising awareness about SUP's environmental and health impacts, promoting behavioural changes among consumers, and encouraging producers/ businesses to adopt sustainable production practices and alternative or innovative packaging methods.

#### 1) Expertise France

Expertise France is the French Public Agency For International Technical Cooperation. As a subsidiary of the Agence Française de Développement Group (AFD Group), it designs and implements projects which aim to contribute to the balanced development of partner countries, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda and the priorities of France's external action.

The agency achieves this goal by implementing national- or regional-scale projects in major areas of public action:

- Democratic, economic and financial governance
- Peace, stability and security
- Climate, agriculture and sustainable development
- Health and human development.

Expertise France promotes international solidarity by facilitating the transfer of skills, fostering peer dialogue, and mobilising experts to support development cooperation aligned with the rule of law, human rights, and France's Official Development Assistance priorities.

For more information: [www.expertisefrance.fr](http://www.expertisefrance.fr)

### 2) CIRCULAR Project

“Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR)” project, is a three-year initiative funded by the European Union and partly co-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project is jointly implemented by Expertise France (EF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

CIRCULAR takes an integrated approach to promoting a circular economy in Sri Lanka’s food sector, focusing in particular on reducing food loss and waste, as well as limiting the use of Single-Use Plastics (SUP).

The overall objective of the project is to **promote a Circular economy approach in the food sector**, while increasing resilience to food crises and climate change.

The specific objectives (outcomes) of the project are twofold:

**Specific Objective 1 (SO1):** *to increase recovery, processing and supply of edible and safe food surplus and/or waste for the benefit of vulnerable consumers and/or food producers* (implemented by FAO).

**Specific Objective 2 (SO2):** *to enhance effectiveness of the sustainable production, distribution and consumption models related to food waste/loss and single-use plastic food packaging* (implemented by EF and GIZ).

Expertise France contributes under the following outputs:

- **Output 2.1:** Increased awareness (and behavioural change) among the general public, economic operators, consumers and civil society about public incentives, sustainable products, solutions and services on the market.

**Output 2.3:** MSME, startups, social enterprises, cooperatives have increased access to finance and BDS related to sustainable and gender sensitive business models and practices.

**Through Output 2.1**, Expertise France aims to advance a circular economy in Sri Lanka’s food sector, with a particular emphasis on reducing single-use plastic (SUP) waste. This will be achieved by fostering awareness and driving behaviour change among consumers, businesses, civil society, and the public. Under this output, Expertise France will implement targeted activities to generate evidence-based knowledge and influence consumer behaviour, policy frameworks, and regulatory measures, ultimately supporting the transition to more sustainable production and consumption practices.

**To achieve above, EF will implement following target activities;**

- 2.1.3: Awareness Raising (and Behaviour Change) of plastic importers and SUP manufacturers for SUP reduction
- 2.1.4: Awareness Raising (and Behaviour Change) of packaged food producers for SUP reduction
- 2.1.5: Awareness Raising (and Behaviour Change) of food distributors for SUP reduction and adoption of reuse models
- 2.1.6: Awareness Raising (and Behaviour Change) of food consumers for SUP reduction and adoption of reuse models
- 2.1.7: Awareness Raising (and Behaviour Change) of local authorities on Green Public Procurement
- 2.1.8: Capacity Building of Local Authorities to raise awareness for SUP reduction

Through **output 2.3**, EF will be taking a holistic approach to increasing access to finance for Circular Economy targeting growth and expansion firms requiring financing of \$500,000 to \$5 million and by working with Accounting firms, insurance companies, banks, NBFIs, DFIs and other key actors in improving the circular economy financing ecosystem.

### III. Objectives of the consultancy and desired results

#### 1) General objective

The objective of the assignment is to conduct a baseline survey of the single use plastic value chain in Colombo and Galle district of Sri Lanka. The baseline assessment will inform the development of a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for the CIRCULAR project (2024–2027), which seeks to promote circular economy practices in Sri Lanka’s food sector. It will provide a critical reference point for tracking progress, measuring impact, and guiding adaptive management throughout the project.

The study will conduct a comprehensive mapping of the single-use plastic (SUP) value chain within the food sector—covering plastic importers, packaging producers, food processors, distributors, retailers, and end consumers. It will pay special attention to identifying target groups, current SUP production and consumption patterns, and levels of awareness and motivation related to SUP reduction.

The assessment will also examine socio-economic and cultural factors influencing these practices, including urban-rural dynamics and differences in enterprise scale. Particular focus will be placed on identifying capacity gaps in sustainable practices and waste management along the food value chain.

Capturing the perspectives and experiences of local communities will help design culturally relevant and effective interventions. These interventions will address the specific needs and challenges faced by stakeholders—such as packaging manufacturers, food processors, distributors, and consumers—and will be refined over time through continuous monitoring and evaluation.

#### Development of Baseline Indicators

The study will establish baseline indicators aligned with the project’s objectives, serving as benchmarks for future assessments. These may include levels of awareness, adoption of sustainable practices, and disparities in income and access to resources. The data will be disaggregated by intervention type, geography (Colombo and Galle districts), and stakeholder profile.

By documenting current conditions across the value chain, the baseline will support performance tracking, inform project indicator refinement, and enable evidence-based decision-making for future scaling and learning.

#### Target Stakeholder Groups

The baseline will capture data from the following primary beneficiary groups:

- Plastic Importers and Single use plastic (SUP) packaging producers,
- Food Processors, manufactures, distributors and retailers
- Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes (HORECA)
- Food Consumers
- Financial Institutions (Banks, DFIs, etc.)

**The baseline survey should produce baseline data pertaining to below indicators**

Intervention Level	Intervention logic	Indicators	Baseline (incl. 2025)	Target groups
Outcome 2  To enhance effectiveness of the sustainable production, distribution and consumption models related to food waste/loss and single use plastic food packaging		Percentage of EU-supported businesses, disaggregated by business type, size, geography, SCP practice integrated into procurement, production, or distribution operations to reduce SUP food packaging	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plastic Importers and Single use plastic (SUP) packaging producers,</li> <li>• Food Processors, manufacturers, distributors and retailers</li> <li>• Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes (HORECA)</li> </ul>
		Percentage of individuals applying Sustainable Consumption practices to reduce SUP waste with EU support, disaggregated by, Gender, age, SCP	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Consumers in Colombo and in Galle District</li> </ul>

## 2) Proposed Methodology

A mixed method approach, consisting of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods should be accommodated in the study. However, more weight should be given to quantitative part to establish baseline values.

**1. Desk research and literature review:** the first task aims to establish a baseline understanding of the SUP problem. This will include analysing existing data and reports, reviewing national policies and international best practices, and quantifying SUP waste in the food sector in Sri Lanka (with a focus on the two Districts of Colombo and Galle).

**2. Field research:** this will take place in Galle and Colombo districts (size to be defined) and will include surveys and interviews with key actors across the SUP value chain. Importers, manufacturers, producers, distributors, retailers, consumers, will provide valuable insights into their, attitudes, and practices concerning SUP use.

**3. Sampling plan:** Define the strata for sampling based on geographic locations (Colombo vs. Galle, Urban vs. Rural). Within this stratification, a random sampling method will be used to select participants. This will ensure a representative sample that reflects the diversity of the population. Propose a suitable sampling frame based on the available secondary data.

- 1. Regional variation:** For improved accuracy and efficiency of field operations, grouping of provinces/districts by homogeneity of key characteristics pertaining to the parameters examined will be developed.
- 2. Urban and Rural Stratification:** Ensure that at least 50% of respondents come from rural areas and 50%

from urban settings.

#### 4. Quality control and data integration:

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the data:

1. **Cross-Validation:**  
After all data is collected, cross-validate the findings from different methods (surveys, interviews, desk research) to ensure consistency and robustness of the results.
2. **Final Reporting:**  
Compile the data into a comprehensive report, integrating both qualitative and quantitative findings. The report should highlight key insights, actionable recommendations, and any gaps in the data that may require further investigation.

### IV. Description of the assignment

It is expected that the Baseline Study to be finalized within 2 months of the initiation.

The proposed scope of work is the following:

#### Task I: Assignment preparation

1. Review the Reference Project documents (i.e.: DOA, Joint Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and tools and any other documents shared by the EF team) to obtain an overview of project scope, proposed activities and targeted audiences.
2. Organize a brainstorming session with Expertise France Technical team to gain a clear understanding of the scope of the assignment and expectations.
3. Develop a detailed workplan and methodology for conducting the baseline survey including a sampling plan.
4. Develop data collection tools incorporating questions to identify the current conditions of the selected beneficiaries and beneficiary types.
5. Present the data collection tools, to the project team (EF) for review and to incorporate necessary revisions.
6. Submit inception report including the methodology, sampling plan, study matrix, data collection tools, data collection plan and work plan, to be reviewed and validated by (EF).

#### Task II: Conduct a baseline survey to assess sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices aimed at reducing single-use plastics (SUP) among businesses within the SUP value chain in the food sector in Colombo and Galle districts.

- a) Assess the current sustainable consumption and production (SCP) of business & individuals, aimed at reducing Single use plastic in the food sector; 1) Colombo district and 2) Galle district.  
(Sample size to be determined in coordination with the EF technical team);
- b) Document consumers (Individuals) level of awareness, behaviour and motivation around SUP reduction;
- c) Document target businesses' level of awareness, behaviour and motivation around SUP reduction;
- d) Identify constraints and readiness of the targeted businesses to adopt SCP practice aimed at reducing SUP;
- e) Conduct baseline study data collection;
- f) Conduct data analysis and interpretation;
- g) Prepare and animate a debriefing meeting with Expertise France Technical Team to present the interim report and outcomes of the assessments conducted under task II. Submit meeting minutes and revised interim report incorporating necessary changes.
- h) Produce a Final Baseline Study Report (with data disaggregated by region, gender, stakeholder type, project output), to be reviewed and validated by (EF).

#### Expected deliverables and timeline

The service is broken down into several technical phases and expected deliverables described below:

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Deliverables	Estimated deadline
<b>Task I: Assignment preparation</b>	
1. Minutes of the brainstorming session with EF technical Team 2. List of identified targets groups 3. Inception report including detailed methodology, sampling plan, questionnaire, study matrix, data collection tools, data collection plan and work plan, to be reviewed and validated by (EF).	T0 + 1 week T0 + 2 weeks T0 + 2 weeks
<b>Task II: Conduct the baseline survey SUP value chain in the food sector in Colombo and Galle district of Sri Lanka</b>	
4. Execution of data collection in Colombo and Galle districts 5. Present data analysis and interpretation 6. Submit first draft baseline report for validation and feedback from EF 7. Incorporate feedback, revise and present final baseline study report (with data disaggregated by region, gender, stakeholder types, project output) for EF Acceptance.	T0 + 4 weeks T0 + 5 weeks T0 + 6 weeks T0 + 8 weeks

### V. Place, duration and Indicative schedule

1. **Deadline to apply:** 25/08/2025, 23h59 CEST
2. **Estimated start date:** 01 September 2025
3. **End date:** 31 October 2025
4. **Nature of the contract:** Individual expertise service contract with purchase orders
5. **Location:** Sri Lanka

### VI. Experience and skills required from applicants

We invite proposals from experienced consultancy firms with:

- A strong track record (minimum 10 years) in conducting baseline studies in sustainability, circular economy, or waste management.
- Proven experience with European Union funded projects.
- Proven skills in quantitative and qualitative research including surveys, interviews, and FGDs.
- Experience using digital data collection tools such as Kobo Toolbox.
- Field experience and contextual knowledge of Colombo and Galle districts, including stakeholder engagement.
- A multidisciplinary team with expertise in M&E, SCP, waste management, statistical analysis, and qualitative research, including field coordinators/enumerators, fluent in Sinhala and or Tamil.

### VII. How to apply

Interested firms should submit the following documents, by 25<sup>th</sup> August:

1. **A technical proposal outlining methodology, team composition, and relevant experience;**
2. **A financial proposal outlining the consultancy fees per expertise day (excluding taxes);**
3. **Company profile and CVs of key team members.**

### VIII. Contacts

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