

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHORT TERM CONSULTANCY

I. General information

Title of the Assignment	Providing technical consultancy for the design and development of “The Circular Food Business Handbook: Replicable Circular Economy models for profitability and sustainability” under the Access to Finance component of the CIRCULAR project.
Name of the project	Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR)
Country	Sri Lanka
Maximum estimated number of days	29 working days

II. Context and justification of the need

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, please visit the website - 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.

Via **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, certification bodies, insurance companies, banks, NBFIs, DFIs and other key actors in improving the circular economy financing ecosystem.

III. Objectives and desired results

a) General objective of the consultancy

The overall objective of this consultancy is to design and develop *The Circular Food Business Handbook: Replicable Circular Economy Models for Profitability and Sustainability*. This handbook will compile a curated list of **30-40 circular economy business models or initiatives** across the food sector value chain, detailing:

- the problem addressed,
- circular practice(s) applied,
- scalability and replication potential,
- cost and financing considerations,
- impact metrics (environmental, economic, and social).

The final output will be a **user friendly, visually engaging reference document** to help businesses and investors identify, adapt, and implement practical circular economy solutions. It will also serve as an evidence-based advocacy tool to build awareness and confidence among food businesses, financial institutions, and policymakers in adopting and investing in circular economy practices

b) Specific objectives of the consultancy

Expertise France is seeking a qualified consultant or organisation with proven expertise in sustainable food systems and circular economy models to deliver the handbook. Specifically, the consultant will:

- Identify and select successful, profitable circular economy business models in the food sector in Sri Lanka, across all stages of the value chain - farm level, processing, packaging, distribution and logistics, retail, consumption and waste management.
- Analyse enabling factors, constraints, and lessons learned from these business models to provide evidence-based insights on their sustainability and profitability.
- Illustrate financial viability, scalability, and feasibility of circular approaches, supported by metrics such as cost of investment, break-even, ROI, and payback periods.

- Provide real-life, practical, accessible, and context-specific examples tailored to both businesses and financial institutions.
- Highlight success stories of MSMEs, women-led businesses, and community-based initiatives where possible.
- Ensure the handbook can be used effectively as a tool for advocacy, capacity building, and mobilisation of investments in circular economy initiatives.

IV. Description of the assignment

The consultant will achieve the objective of this assignment through the following activities:

1. Review of circular business models in the food sector

The consultant will begin by conducting a thorough review of existing circular economy initiatives in Sri Lanka's food sector, with a focus on the full value chain from sourcing, production, processing, packaging, distribution, to end-of-life management. The review will synthesise existing literature, reports, and market data to identify potential business models suitable for development of the handbook. The consultant will consider existing business practices that reflect circular economy principles, even if not recognised as such, and translate them into structured models to promote awareness and uptake. This will also involve identifying lessons from past failures and understanding challenges faced in different stages of the value chain.

2. Selection and validation of examples of circular economy business models

The consultant will identify and validate a set of circular economy business models in consultation with the CIRCULAR team, development partners, and relevant stakeholders including businesses, industry associations, financial institutions, and academics. The selection will prioritise models that demonstrate economic viability, scalability, and practical implementation across different stages of the value chain. The consultant will be responsible for engaging with the businesses for information and receiving consent for publication. The content of the handbook will also include actionable recommendations for risk mitigation and investment planning by suggesting strategies for leveraging partnerships, innovations, and technologies to reduce barriers for adopting circular practices. Where possible successes of small businesses and women owned businesses should be done.

3. Handbook development

The consultant will develop a handbook that is designed to build confidence among businesses and financial institutions in circular economy investments:

- Operational approach and circular practices at different stages of the value chain
- Financing methods used (e.g., loans, grants, blended finance), payback period and how these supported business adoptions
- Financial metrics including break-even analysis, ROI, cost of investment, and other relevant KPIs
- Economic, social and environmental benefits generated for the business and the broader community
- Failures, challenges, and lessons learnt to provide realistic insights for replication
- Where possible, the handbook should highlight the successful adoption of circular economy practices by small businesses and women-owned businesses
- Well-drafted communication friendly summaries with visual aids to facilitate stakeholder understanding. A designer will be contracted separately by EF to finalise the handbook.

4. Finalisation and delivery of report

The consultant will integrate feedback from the CIRCULAR team to finalise the handbook. The output will be a report no less than 50 pages that has a set of validated, comprehensive, and well-documented

handbook that serve as advocacy tools to build confidence of the respective stakeholders and to promote further adoption of circular economy practices across the food sector.

The proposed scope of work is the following:

Scope of work	Deliverables	Timeline
Desk review of existing literature, reports, and data on circular economy business models in the food sector in Sri Lanka with emphasis on the value chain	Inception report outlining methodology, selection criteria for examples and work plan	3 days
Identification and validation of potential business models in consultation with Circular team and other stakeholders. Obtain consent of selected businesses/model to illustrate them as examples on the handbook.	Stakeholder validated list containing examples of Circular Economy business models to be showcased	10 days
Development of handbook representing a food value chain analysis, solutions, financing methods, cost of investment, break-even, ROI, KPIs, economic benefits, failures, and lessons learnt	Draft handbook with financial and operational analysis and documentation of success/failure factors	10 days
Submission of handbook for feedback from Circular team and the respective stakeholders	Stakeholder feedback report	
Finalisation of handbook by incorporating feedback from stakeholders and project team	Final handbook in publishable format	6 days

V. Place, Duration and Indicative Timeline

1. **Estimated start date:** 06 October 2025
2. **End date:** 31 March 2026
3. **Effective duration:** Maximum 29 working days
4. **Location:** Sri Lanka

VI. Required Expertise and profiles

The applicant can be an individual consultant or an organisation.

Education and training

A degree in Environmental science, Sustainable development, Economics, Finance or related field.

Professional experience

- Minimum 7 years of professional experience in sustainable finance, agricultural value chains, circular economy, monitoring and evaluation or in public relations
- Proven experience in compiling and designing similar knowledge products, ideally for multilateral or donor-funded programs and for the financial sector
- Strong understanding of circular economy business models in the Food sector in the Global South

- Proven experience in consulting and collaborating with Sri Lankan government agencies, business chambers, and financial institutions, would be a strong asset

Skills

- Excellent knowledge of Sri Lankan state, non-state actors (institutions and individuals) and international development partners involved in circular economy in the food sector
- Excellent research, analytical and writing skills. The use of AI-assisted research and editing tools is permitted; however, the consultant is expected to apply their own judgement and writing style to ensure the final product is accurate, engaging and consistent.

VII. Application

The applications must be submitted on Expertise France platform through the following link and e-mailed to: amila.bogahawatta@expertisefrance.fr

CC: habbipriya.karthigesan@expertisefrance.fr

Link to access online application:

https://expertise-france.gestmax.fr/13959/1/consultancy-opportunity-sri-lanka-circular-food-business-handbook-h-f/en_US

All applications must include:

- A technical offer (maximum 1 page) detailing the suitability and interest to engage on this assignment
- The consultant CV / consultancy firm profile
- The financial offer including a daily rate excluding VAT

VIII. CONTACTS

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