



Federal Republic of Somalia
Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation

Terms of Reference for Consulting Services

for

Consultant to Support the Strengthening of Seed Certification System in Somalia

Ref No: *MoAI/DEP/HR,C&PR/119/2025*

Submission date: September 6th, 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Somali Agricultural Regulatory and Inspection Service (SARIS) is the national agency responsible for official controls on plant health, seed certification, and agricultural inputs under Law (No. 32/2024). SARIS has the legal mandate to regulate seed quality, certification, and varietal release in line with the Seed and Plant Variety Release Law (No. 35/2024), the Plant Protection and Quarantine Law (No. 34/2024), and the Agrochemicals Control Law (No. 33/2024).

A reliable seed certification system is essential to guarantee varietal purity, genetic identity, and seed quality, ensuring that farmers access improved and trustworthy seed. Somalia is currently in the early stages of implementing its certification system, requiring expert technical support to strengthen operational procedures for field inspections, seed sampling, documentation, and quality assurance.

1.2 Ugbaad The Ugbaad Project (GCF-Funded)

The Climate Resilient Agriculture in Somalia (Ugbaad) Project is a seven-year program (2024–2031), financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with a grant of USD 79.7 million and implemented by FAO in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia. Ugbaad is Somalia's first GCF-funded, single-country investment dedicated to strengthening agricultural resilience.

The project's development objective is to enhance climate-resilient livelihoods and food security through:

- Restoration of 40,000 hectares of productive landscapes.
- Rehabilitation of irrigation canals and rural access roads.
- Improved access to water for over 900,000 people.
- Climate information services reaching nearly 1 million farmers and pastoralists.
- Strengthened institutional capacity to deliver climate-smart agriculture and seed system reforms.

The seed supply initiative under this ToR falls within Ugbaad's component on sustainable input access and seed system strengthening, designed to ensure Somali farmers benefit directly from certified, climate-resilient seed varieties while building long-term demand for improved seed.

1.3 Rationale of Seed Certification Support

Seed certification ensures that seeds used by farmers is true-to-type, high quality, and free from major contaminants or diseases. Through inspections, sampling, and testing, the certification process protects farmers, strengthens food security, and builds trust in agricultural trade. It also enables Somalia to align with international obligations under ISTA, OECD, COMESA, IGAD and EAC harmonized seed regulations, which are prerequisites for integration into regional and global seed markets.

In 2021, Somalia developed a draft seed certification framework; however, it is now outdated and no longer aligned with recent legal and regional developments. With the passing of the Seed and Plant Variety Law and the establishment of SARIS as the national regulatory authority, there is an urgent need to review, update, and operationalize the certification framework to ensure consistency with the law and compliance with regional and international standards. Given that SARIS is a newly established institution with limited technical capacity, external support is essential to build credible systems and draw on best practices from neighboring countries with established certification regimes.

1.4 Purpose of this Terms of Reference (TOR)

This TOR defines the scope of work, deliverables, and qualifications required of a consultant who will support SARIS in strengthening and operationalizing the national seed certification system. The consultancy will focus on inspection, sampling, documentation, and quality assurance to strengthen Somalia's seed sector in compliance with international standards.

2. Objective of the Assignment

2.1 Overall Objective

To strengthen the seed certification framework for Somalia that meets regional and international standards and assures farmers with high-quality seeds.

2.2 Specific Objectives

- Review, develop and standardize SOPs for field inspection, seed sampling, and certification.
- Support documentation, reporting, and traceability of certified seed.
- Strengthen quality assurance mechanisms in line with ISTA and OECD.
- Build institutional and technical capacity within SARIS for sustainable implementation.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant, in collaboration with SARIS, will undertake the following tasks:

a) Policy and Institutional Review

- Review seed certification provisions in Somali laws and regulations and institutional framework.
- Benchmark certification procedures against ISTA, OECD, COMESA, and EAC standards.
- Identify institutional and human resource capacity gaps.

b) Field Inspection Framework

- Develop SOPs for inspection at key crop growth stages and align with OECD standards
- Define inspection criteria for (varietal purity, isolation distance, pest/disease tolerance, and crop condition).

c) Seed Sampling and Laboratory Testing

- Prepare SOPs for seed lot identification, sampling methods, and labeling.
- Provide technical guidance on sample handling and submission to SARIS labs.
- Align with ISTA seed testing rules (purity, germination, moisture, health).

d) Documentation and Certification

- Design standardized checklists, forms, and certificates for seed certification.
- Develop a user-friendly seed certification manual to guide inspector and stakeholders through procedures.
- Recommend integration with SARIS' digital systems for traceability.
- Train staff on record-keeping and reporting.

e) Quality Assurance

- Establish QA mechanisms including audits, monitoring, and corrective action protocols.
- Propose procedures for addressing non-compliance.

f) Capacity Building

- Develop and deliver training modules for SARIS inspectors and seed producers.
- Produce simple field manuals and user-friendly guides

4. Deliverables

Milestone	TIMELINE																								
	WEEK 1					WEEK 2					WEEK 3					WEEK 4					WEEK 5				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Inception Report with methodology and work plan.	■	■	■	■	■																				
SOPs for seed inspection, sampling, and certification.						■	■	■	■	■															
Templates for forms, certificates, and records.											■	■	■	■	■										
Final training manuals, field guides, and workshop materials to build SARIS technical capacity																■	■	■	■	■	■				
Final report including recommendations for institutionalizing certification and QA																					■	■	■	■	■

5. Duration

The consultancy will be conducted over 24 working days within one-month period.

6. Consultant Qualifications

The consultant must demonstrate:

- Minimum MSc in Seed Science, Agronomy, or related field.
- At least 7–10 years' experience in seed certification and quality assurance.
- Proven knowledge of EAC, ISTA, OECD, and regional harmonized seed standards.
- Demonstrated experience in field inspections, seed testing, and QA.
- Strong experience in training and institutional capacity building.
- Ability to work with regulatory authorities and development partners in fragile contexts.

7. Reporting and Supervision

The consultant will report to the Director General of SARIS and work with the Seed Certification & Variety Release Department. Coordination will also be maintained with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and relevant partners.

8. Payment Schedule

Payments will be made in installments based on the successful completion and approval of deliverables. Each milestone must be reviewed and accepted by **MoAI/SARIS** before payment is released.

Deliverable / Milestone (with Conditions)	Payment %
Inception Report – methodology, detailed work plan, and timeline. <i>Payment will be made upon submission and formal approval by MoAI/SARIS confirming completeness, clarity of methodology, and feasibility of the work plan.</i>	20%
Draft SOPs and Templates – submission of draft SOPs for seed inspection, sampling, and certification, along with templates for forms, certificates, and records. <i>Payment will be released upon submission of acceptable drafts of sufficient quality for MoAI/SARIS review.</i>	40%
Final Deliverables and Report – submission of final SOPs, templates, training manuals, field guides, and workshop materials, together with the final report including recommendations for institutionalizing certification and quality assurance. <i>Payment will be made after official acceptance by MoAI/SARIS confirming completeness, satisfactory quality, and incorporation of feedback.</i>	40%

NB: MoAI/SARIS may withhold or delay payments for late, incomplete, or substandard deliverables, while timely and satisfactory submissions may allow faster processing.

9. Application Procedure

Interested candidates/consulting firms are invited to submit:

- A cover letter expressing interest and suitability for the assignment.
- Technical proposal outlining methodology and work plan.
- Financial proposal indicating consultancy fees and related costs.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the lead consultant and team members (if applicable).
- Evidence of relevant assignments previously undertaken.

Applications should be submitted electronically to hr@moa.gov.so and CC: Projectcoordinator@ugbaadgcf.gov.so no later than **September 16, 2025**. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

10. Evaluation Criteria

10.1 Technical Proposal Evaluation

The Technical Proposal will carry a weight of 70% of the overall score and will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Understanding of the TOR and proposed methodology- 20 points
- Expertise and experience of the consultant- 20 points
- Consultant qualifications- 15 points
- Work plan and timeline- 15 points

10. 2 Financial Proposal Evaluation:

The Financial Proposal will carry a weight of 30–40% of the overall score. It will be evaluated based on competitiveness and value for money.

The lowest-priced, technically compliant bid will receive the maximum financial score, with other bids scored proportionally according to the following formula:

Financial Score = (Lowest Priced Bid ÷ Price of Bid Under Evaluation) × Maximum Financial Points.

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MoAI)
Somali Agricultural Regulatory and Inspection Services (SARIS)
Date: September 6, 2025