



Federal Republic of Somalia
Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation

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Terms of Reference for Consulting Services

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Terms of Reference (TOR) Consultant for Seed Certification and Verification

Ref No: WB&W/HR/041/2026

Submission date: 26 April 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Somali Agricultural Regulatory and Inspection Service (SARIS) is the national authority mandated to regulate plant health, seed systems, and agricultural inputs in Somalia under the relevant national legislation, including the Seed and Plant Variety Release Law (No. 35/2024), Plant Protection and Quarantine Law (No. 34/2024), and Agrochemicals Control Law (No. 33/2024).

As part of its institutional development, SARIS is operationalizing a national seed system to ensure seed quality, varietal identity, and compliance with international standards.

To ensure technical consistency, quality assurance, and alignment with international frameworks, SARIS requires a consultant to provide technical guidance, quality assurance, and validation of all technical outputs related to seed certification and verification.

1.2 Rationale

Seed certification is a critical regulatory function that ensures the integrity, quality, and reliability of seeds used in agricultural production, including genetic purity, varietal identity, and compliance with national and international standards.

The effective implementation of this system requires strong institutional capacity, harmonized procedures, and robust quality assurance mechanisms. In this context, the consultant will support SARIS in operationalizing its seed certification functions effectively by providing technical guidance, strengthening systems and procedures, and building the capacity of junior staff to implement certification activities in a consistent and sustainable manner.

The assignment will further ensure alignment with international systems such as the International Seed Testing Association and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, as well as regional frameworks including Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community, and Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

2. Objective of the Assignment

2.1 Overall Objective

To support the Somali Agricultural Regulatory and Inspection Service (SARIS) in effectively implementing and operationalizing the national seed certification and verification system through technical guidance, quality assurance, and capacity building, in alignment with national regulations and international standards.

2.2 Specific Objectives

- Ensure the technical quality, consistency, and coherence of all seed certification and verification outputs
- Align all technical deliverables with international standards, including those of the International Seed Testing Association and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of SARIS through hands-on training and mentoring of junior staff
- Provide technical guidance on field inspection, seed sampling, laboratory testing, certification procedures, and documentation systems
- Support the establishment and harmonization of quality assurance mechanisms across the certification process
- Contribute to the sustainable operationalization of the national seed certification and verification system

3. Scope of Work

The Consultant will undertake the following:

a) Technical support

- Review all technical outputs produced by seed certification officers
- Ensure harmonization of methodologies, SOPs, and tools
- Provide technical guidance and corrective recommendations

b) Quality Assurance and Standardization

- Ensure all outputs align with:
 - ISTA seed testing rules.
 - OECD certification schemes
 - Regional harmonized seed regulations
 - Establish quality benchmarks and compliance criteria

c) Review of SOPs and Technical Tools

- Review SOPs for:
 - Field inspection
 - Seed sampling
 - Laboratory testing

- Certification procedures

Ensure clarity, practicality, and regulatory compliance

d) **System Integration and Traceability**

- Guide the integration of certification processes into SARIS systems
- Ensure traceability mechanisms for:
 - Seed lots
 - Inspection records
 - Certification documentation

e) **Risk Management and Compliance**

- Identify gaps, risks, and inconsistencies in implementation
- Recommend corrective actions and improvement measures

The Consultant shall ensure continuous alignment of all technical outputs with national regulatory frameworks and international best practices.

4. Deliverables

The Consultant will be responsible for producing the following deliverables:

1. **Quarterly Progress Reports:** Providing a summary of activities undertaken, technical outputs reviewed, key findings, challenges encountered, and recommendations for improvement.
2. **Technical Review Reports:** Documenting the assessment and validation of technical outputs produced by seed certification officers, including identified gaps and corrective recommendations.
3. **Revised SOPs and Technical Tools:** Delivering reviewed and endorsed procedures for field inspection, seed sampling, laboratory testing, and certification processes.
4. **Quality Assurance Framework:** Developing a comprehensive framework outlining standards, audit procedures, and compliance mechanisms for the seed certification system.
5. **Final Report:** Providing a consolidated report capturing key findings, system gaps, lessons learned, and strategic recommendations for the sustainable implementation and strengthening of the national seed certification and verification system.

5. Duration of Assignment

The consultant will be engaged for an initial period of twelve (12) months, with the possibility of annual renewal based on satisfactory performance, project needs, and availability of funding, for the duration of the Ugbaad Project.

6. Consultant Qualifications

The Consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- A minimum of a Master’s degree (MSc) in Agricultural Science, Seed Technology, Agronomy, Plant Science, or a closely related field
- At least 10 years of proven professional experience in seed certification systems, seed regulation, or related areas
- Demonstrated expertise in international seed certification standards, including those of the International Seed Testing Association and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- Strong technical experience in seed inspection, sampling, laboratory testing, and certification procedures
- Proven experience in establishing and implementing quality assurance and regulatory compliance systems
- Experience in institutional capacity building, including training and mentoring of technical staff
- Prior experience working in developing countries, particularly in fragile or emerging regulatory environments, is an added advantage

7. Reporting and Supervision

The Consultant will report to the Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection Department of SARIS and will work under the overall guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MoAI). The Consultant will collaborate closely with relevant technical departments within SARIS and ministry to ensure effective coordination, implementation, and delivery of the assignment.

8. Payment Schedule

Payments will be made on a monthly basis, subject to satisfactory performance and submission of agreed deliverables, as certified by MoAI.

9. Evaluation Criteria

9.1 Technical Proposal Evaluation (70%)

Criteria	Point
Understanding of the ToR and proposed methodology	20
Relevant experience and technical expertise	20
Qualifications of the consultant	15
Work plan and timeline	15

9.2 Financial Proposal Evaluation (30%)

Financial proposals will be evaluated based on cost-effectiveness using the following formula:

$$\text{Financial Score} = (\text{Lowest Price} \div \text{Bid Price}) \times \text{Maximum Score}$$

10. Submission of Applications

Interested candidates are invited to submit **both technical and financial proposals** in line with these Terms of Reference.

Applications should include:

- Technical proposal (methodology, approach, and work plan)
- Financial proposal (monthly professional fee)
- Updated CV

Applications must be submitted via email to: projectcoordinator@ubgaadgcf.gov.so with a copy (CC) to: hr@moa.gov.so

Deadline for submission: 26 April 2026

Late submissions will not be considered.