



Terms of Reference

## **EXTERNAL CONSULTANCY**

Veterinary / PCR Laboratory expert consultant

Consultant funded under:

Austrian Development Agency

Project:

Promoting integrated approaches to animal health and plant protection in Abkhazia

Location:

Abkhazia Georgia

## **1. BUDGET**

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Action Against Hunger (AAH) - Spain, as part of the Action Against Hunger International network, is a non-governmental, private, apolitical, non-confessional and non-profit organisation that fights hunger and its root causes worldwide. It has been operating in the South Caucasus region since 1994 and its current programmes focus on the following areas: Food Security, Livelihoods, Agriculture, Economic and Rural Development.

At this time, Action Against Hunger is looking to contract a consultant for the period of 12 days to provide a training course to laboratory technicians on PCR laboratory management and diagnostics within the framework of the AAH project "Promoting integrated approaches to animal health and plant protection in Abkhazia," financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) to take place within the laboratory in Sukhumi. The project aims to increase the technical capacity and upgrade the facilities and resources of the Veterinary Service Department (VSD) so that they may offer enhanced services to livestock farmers.

## **2. GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

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Action Against Hunger is seeking a veterinary/ PCR laboratory consultant to train two VSD staff members on the use of PCR equipment and arrangement of the laboratory. The equipment has recently been procured by Action Against Hunger to expand the operational and diagnostic capacity of the main veterinary laboratory in Abkhazia for identification and monitoring of animal diseases. The consultant will directly train two VSD employees on incorporating new PCR equipment into the daily operations of the Veterinary Clinic in Sukhumi. The specification of the PCR equipment that is in the laboratory is QuantStudio 5 Real-Time PCR System by Applied Biosystems/Thermo Fischer Scientific.

## **3. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The following tasks and responsibilities are expected to be accomplished over the 12-day consultancy. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and AAH expects inputs and ideas from the consultant that can be included in the TOR:

- ✚ Introduce the basic principles and requirements for setting up a PCR laboratory;
- ✚ Introduce the PCR method including theoretical presentation, diagnostic capabilities, best practices and risks;
- ✚ Provide practical training on how to use the PCR equipment including setting up, adjusting, calibrating, cleaning, maintaining, and troubleshooting;
- ✚ Provide training on how to prepare materials, media, buffers, and solutions;
- ✚ Demonstrate how to analyse blood and urine samples from animals to identify animal diseases using reagents and equipment, with emphasis on Lumpy Skin Disease Virus and Rabies;
- ✚ Introduce procedures associated with manual extraction of DNA from different starting materials (swabs, tissues, blood), and preparation and processing of different types of material;
- ✚ Create best practice protocols for daily lab operations, including lab organization and cleanliness, daily check lists;
- ✚ Emphasize best data recording procedures for baselines and database creation;
- ✚ Introduce best practice procedures for sample reception, recording and processing.

### **3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

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- The two newly-trained VSD employees will be able to demonstrate:
  - Proper steps for collecting and storing animal samples;
  - Expertise on PCR laboratory management
  - Technical knowledge on PRC equipment use to analyse samples to diagnose animal diseases;
  - Understanding of the importance of best practices for laboratory procedures and daily operations.
- A final short evaluation report to AAH on the achievement and challenges and future recommendations.

### **4. CONSULTANCY TIMEFRAME**

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The following is a tentative timeframe of the consultancy period:

12 days in Abkhazia with 10 days (Monday-Friday) of laboratory trainings and 2 days for report writing to be held in early/mid-February 2020.

### **5. QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

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- ✓ Graduate degree in Molecular Biology, Biochemistry Microbiology, Veterinary Medicine, or closely related field;
- ✓ Expertise in performing PCR assays and PCR laboratory best practices;
- ✓ Experience of conducting practical trainings in PCR operations and management;
- ✓ Presentation and communication skills;
- ✓ Either English or Russian language fluency essential.

### **6. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

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Required start date: Early/mid-February 2020

Duration of work: 12 consecutive days (10 days training and 2 days report writing).

Location of work: Sukhumi, Abkhazia.

Work Plan: The work plan will be created in consultation with Action Against Hunger prior to departure to Abkhazia.

Fees: The total amount for consultancy fees to be negotiated based on the proposition and experience of the consultant.

Per diem: The amount of requested per diem should be included within the consultancy fee.

Payment: 100% of the fees to be paid on completion and approval of consultancy

Travel: Travel to the mission and back will be paid directly by Action Against Hunger and all internal travel in country will be arranged and paid for by Action Against Hunger.

Accommodation: Hotel or guesthouse accommodation in Abkhazia will be arranged and covered by Action Against Hunger.

Rights: The ownership of the report documents will belong to Action Against Hunger Union exclusively. The document, or any publication related to it, will not be shared by the consultant to anybody prior to the delivery of the final document to the donor by Action Against Hunger.

Action Against Hunger may share the results of the report with the following groups:

- Donor(s)
- Key Stakeholders
- Various co-ordination bodies

Insurance: The consultant shall manage his/her own insurance and provide the details of coverage to Action Against Hunger before departure.

Other: Laboratory materials required to carry out the assigned consultancy (e.g. reagents) will be secured by the VSD in consultation with consultant. A mobile phone will be provided to the consultant by AAH. All other materials required by the consultant to carry out consultancy (e.g. laptop) will remain the responsibility of the consultant.

## **7. APPLICATION PROCESS**

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- Interested applicants should send their CV and a 2/3 page technical proposal (including training agenda) on proposed content for the 12 day consultancy.
- The letter should also include the proposed gross daily rate for remuneration (in Euros). This daily rate should include the consultancy fee and per diem separately. *Please note that international and internal travel, and accommodation costs will be covered by Action Against Hunger*
- Applications to be sent to the Action Against Hunger email address: [procurement@sc.acfspain.org](mailto:procurement@sc.acfspain.org) with the subject "PCR consultant" no later than January 12<sup>th</sup> 2019