

# Consultant for SOFF Baseline Study

## BASELINE SURVEY AND M & E RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SAFE & ORGANIC FOOD FINDER PLATFORM

VECO Vietnam is seeking a consultant to conduct a baseline study for the Safe & Organic Food Finder (SOFF) platform.

### 1. Background

VECO Vietnam is the Vietnamese country office of the Belgian INGO Vredeseilanden. VECO Vietnam's main focus lies in sustainable agriculture and food safety. Food safety is a pressing issue in the mind of the Vietnamese consumer but sales of safe and organic vegetables (S/OV) in Hanoi are still relatively low. Research shows that this is due to a number of reasons such as a lack of knowledge of the locations of stores that sell S/OV and a lack of knowledge about S/OV in general.

To help solve these issues, early 2016 VECO Vietnam developed and launched SOFF, the Safe & Organic Food Finder. The SOFF platform consists of a website ([www.soff.asia](http://www.soff.asia)) and an Android (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=vn.org.veco.soff>) and iPhone (<https://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewSoftware?id=10805...>) app. The platform allows consumers in Hanoi to find stores in their neighborhood that sell safe and organic vegetables.

In a nutshell, SOFF works as follows: three times per year VECO Vietnam, together with a consultant, conducts a survey of stores in Hanoi that claim to sell S/OV. Stores that can provide original and valid food safety certifications from a number of the most common certifications are included in the database and displayed on the platform. SOFF currently focuses on S/OV. In the future other product categories will be added to the platform.

The goals of the SOFF project are to increase sales and consumption of S/OV and increase consumer awareness of S/OV. This is done by providing a platform that aids consumers in finding stores that sell S/OV and that provides regular, interesting and educational information on safe food in Vietnam.

SOFF is currently funded by Vredeseilanden's Innovation Fund.

### 2. Objective

VECO Vietnam is seeking to engage a consultant to help develop the monitoring & evaluation system of the SOFF project and conduct a baseline study of the assumptions that underpin the SOFF concept. The study will provide baseline indicators against which success of the SOFF project can be measured.

### 3. Methodology

The consultant will decide on the most adequate baseline study methodology in consultation with relevant VECO Vietnam staff. VECO Vietnam requires the survey to be representative of the SOFF target audience. This group is defined as follows:

- Includes expats and Vietnamese;
- Based in urban Hanoi;
- Member of middle to high income families;

- Between the ages of 17 to 45;
- Regular user of the internet;
- Mostly female;

#### **4. Survey Topics**

Main points to be surveyed include the following:

- A) Awareness of SOFF;
- B) Level of worries about food safety;
- C) Safe food buying habits, if any, including consumers' safe food information sources;
- D) Knowledge and familiarity with different certifications (VietGAP, PGS, Mekor/Mekostar, Government certifications, organic, etc.);
- E) Level of trust in certifications;
- F) Familiarity with stores that sell S/OV;
- G) Level of trust in shops that sell S/OV;
- H) Willingness to pay for certified S/OV;
- I) Obstacles for increased S/OV purchases.

Other potential survey topics will be developed by the consultant in consultation with relevant VECO Vietnam staff.

#### **5. Geographic scope of work**

SOFF currently covers six Hanoi districts: Ba Dinh, Cau Giay, Dong Da, Hai Ba Trung, Hoan Kiem and Tay Ho. There are plans to expand SOFF to include all urban district of Hanoi. Therefore, the baseline study will need to be representative of urban Hanoi.

#### **6. Period of consultancy engagement**

The deadline for submission of the proposal is 10 June 2016. The planned starting date of the engagement is the signing date of the contract, 23 June 2016.

Around 16.5 person-days are foreseen for this consultancy, estimated as follows:

- Methodological design of survey & M&E: 2 days;
- Work plan presentation to VECO: 0.5 day;
- Execution of the survey/field work: 6 days;
- Survey report write-up: 2 days;e. M&E recommendations report: 2 days;
- Presentation of preliminary results to VECO: 1 day;
- Finalization of survey and M&E reports after preliminary presentation: 3 days

Subject to satisfaction of VECO Vietnam, the final report (containing the deliverables)'s deadline is close of business, Thursday 21 July 2016.

#### **7. Deliverables**

The consultant will provide VECO Vietnam with the following deliverables in English:

- A draft baseline report that presents relevant findings on the topics identified above;
- A work plan on how the survey will be carried out for VECO review;
- Practical recommendations on how to structure and operationalize the SOFF M&E system;
- A presentation to VECO Vietnam on preliminary findings for comments and inputs before preparation of the final report;
- A final report that presents the survey's main findings.

VECO Vietnam will be the sole owner of all the deliverables, methodology and the data generated through this survey.

### **8. Selection criteria**

- Relevant Master's degree;
- Extensive experience in data collection, consumer engagement, survey research, data entry;
- Excellent written and spoken Vietnamese and English;
- Experience in project management;
- Proficiency with current statistical tools such as SPSS, Stata, etc.;
- Experience with 'safe' and organic agriculture is an asset;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Ability to relay information and give direction to staff;
- Flexibility and adaptability.

### **9. Fees and payment**

The consultant will be paid in the following way:

- 50% at the signing of the contract;
  - 50% following the submission of the qualitative final report to VECO Vietnam.
10. Submission of proposal

Candidates shall submit the following documents in English:

- A proposal that sets out the work plan containing both technical and financial aspects;
- An up-to-date CV of the consultant. In case the applicant is an organization, add an up-to-date portfolio of the organization;
- Examples of previous work undertaken that relates to this project.

Deadline for submission of applications: close of business, Friday 10 June 2016. VECO Vietnam will contact shortlisted candidates for personal interviews to be held between 20 and 22 June 2016. Proposals must be addressed to VECO Vietnam Communication Officer, Ms. Charlotte Flechet, by sending an email to [charlotte@veco.org.vn](mailto:charlotte@veco.org.vn).