SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
ZERO HUNGER TRUST FUND

Terms of Reference

Title:	Technical Expert (Ecological School Gardens & Climate-Smart Agriculture)
Organization:	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Zero Hunger Trust Fund
Project Name:	**EU-CaN- Cultivating Futures: Empowering Youths for a Food Secure Region**
Country:	Regional – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica, and Saint Lucia
Contract Type	Part-time, (service contract)
Reporting to	Project Manager (CEO, ZHTF)
Working Relationships	Works Closely With: Project Coordinator, National Coordinating Facilitators (NCFs), School Focal Points, and Technical Support Personnel
Expected Start Date of Assignment:	22nd June 2026 **Duration:** 12 Months

I. BACKGROUND

A. About the Project

The *EU-CaN – Cultivating Futures: Empowering Youths for a Food Secure Region Project* addresses food security, climate resilience, and youth engagement challenges in Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. These Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face high vulnerability to natural disasters, fragile agricultural systems, and rising food import dependence. Schools are a vital safety net for nutrition and learning, yet many lack resources to integrate sustainable feeding models

The project seeks to:

1. Strengthen food security and child nutrition by expanding the climate-resilient Resilient and Sustainable School Feeding Programme.
2. Establish and integrate ecological school gardens in 10 primary schools to provide daily access to fresh, nutritious meals while serving as living classrooms for sustainable agriculture.
3. Engage approximately 16,000 students, teachers, and cooks in hands-on garden-based learning, teamwork, and climate-smart farming practices.
4. Build institutional capacity by training teachers, cooks, and school administrators in garden management, nutrition, and sustainable practices.

By combining school-based food production, nutrition, and climate education, the project will reduce the financial burden on vulnerable households, improve children's learning outcomes, and foster resilience. Importantly, the initiative will create replicable models for national and regional scaling, aligned with CELAC's Food Security Plan, OECS FAST Strategy, and FAO-supported school feeding policies.

The project is both a humanitarian and developmental investment: reducing hunger and malnutrition in vulnerable communities while cultivating the next generation of environmentally conscious, food-secure citizens.

B. About the Implementing Organisation

The Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Zero Hunger Trust Fund (ZHTF) is a statutory, non-profit organisation established in 2016 to lead the national response to hunger and food insecurity. It is the first institution of its kind in the Eastern Caribbean, mandated to ensure equitable access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. ZHTF's programmes have supported national school feeding, household food production, and emergency responses. ZHTF is governed by a multi-sectoral board, financed primarily through a dedicated telecommunications levy, and functions as the Secretariat for the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger (SVG Chapter). It has a proven track record in managing donor-funded projects and is recognised regionally as a credible mechanism for food and nutrition security governance. The ZHTF would be supported by National Facilitating Agency in each country.

C. Implementation Structure

The project will be implemented through a regional coordination model, led by the Zero Hunger Trust Fund (ZHTF) as the Programme Management Team (PMT), in collaboration with:

- National Coordinating Facilitator (NCFs) in each participating country
- Relevant Ministries (Education, Agriculture, Health)
- Schools and community stakeholders

ZHTF will provide:

- Strategic oversight
- Regional coordination
- Financial management and EU compliance
- Consolidated monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

NCFs will be responsible for:

- In-country implementation
- School-level coordination
- Data collection and reporting

II. OBJECTIVE

The consultancy is to provide technical leadership and capacity building for the design, establishment, and management of ecological school gardens, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices into both school feeding and educational curricula.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

A. General

The Technical Expert will ensure that all technical aspects of school garden establishment and training are implemented to a high standard, aligned with climate-smart agriculture principles, project objectives, and national school feeding strategies.

B. Specific

1. **Technical Design and Garden Establishment**
   - Conduct site visits and support needs assessments for 10 selected schools.
   - Provide technical guidance and advisory support to NCFs, School Focal Points, and national stakeholders involved in project implementation.
   - Provide designs for ecological school gardens, incorporating climate-smart features such as composting systems, raised beds, integrated pest management, renewable energy, irrigation, and rainwater harvesting.
   - Identify technical and environmental risks affecting school garden establishment and recommend adaptive and climate-resilient mitigation measures.
   - Develop technical specifications and recommendations for tools, seeds, starter kits, irrigation systems, and other agricultural inputs in support of procurement processes managed by ZHTF.

2. **Training and Capacity Building**
   - Develop training modules and materials on ecological gardening, sustainable agriculture, and garden-to-lunch integration.
   - Train 40 teachers, cooks, and administrators on sustainable agricultural practices and school garden management.
   - Provide technical support and practical content recommendations to facilitate integration of garden-based learning into Science, HFLE, Social Studies, and related curricula in collaboration with schools and relevant ministries.
   - Mentor School Garden Committees and provide ongoing advisory support.

3. **Garden-to-Lunch Integration**
   - Advise schools on crop selection, harvest planning, and safe handling procedures to ensure fresh produce contributes to daily meals.
   - Support the development of the Garden-to-Lunch Integration Toolkit and provide technical content.
   - Support schools and stakeholders in developing sustainability and maintenance plans to ensure continued operation and upkeep of school gardens beyond the project lifecycle.

4. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Knowledge Sharing**
   - Work collaboratively with the MEAL Team to develop and refine technical indicators related to garden productivity, sustainability, participation, climate resilience, and educational integration
   - Prepare technical reports documenting lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations for scale-up.
   - Support regional knowledge-sharing and cross-country learning by documenting replicable models, innovative practices, and lessons applicable to Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
   - Document lessons learned and best practices for scaling regionally.

IV. ETHICS, SAFEGUARDING AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The Technical Expert shall:

1. Uphold principles of professionalism, integrity, inclusion, and respect in all interactions with students, teachers, school staff, and stakeholders.
2. Adhere to all applicable safeguarding and child protection policies established by ZHTF, schools, ministries, and project partners
3. Ensure that all activities are conducted in a safe, inclusive, gender-responsive, and culturally appropriate manner.
4. Refrain from any conduct that could place children or other vulnerable persons at risk.

V. DELIVERABLES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Technical Expert is expected to deliver the following:

1. School garden technical designs and plans for 10 schools (Month 3–5).
2. Procurement specifications for tools, seeds, and materials (Month 1–5).
3. Training modules and toolkits (at least 4 modules) on ecological gardening, composting, water management, and curriculum integration (Month 4–6).
4. At least 4 training sessions delivered to teachers, cooks, and administrators, with attendance lists and reports (Month 5–12).
5. Technical support reports for each school, including site visit notes, recommendations, and follow-up actions (Quarterly).
6. Garden-to-Lunch Integration Toolkit (technical contributions, crop calendars, safety guidelines) (Month 6).
7. Two thematic technical briefs (e.g., best practices in school garden management, climate-resilient agriculture in SIDS) for regional sharing (Midline & Endline).
8. Final consultancy report summarizing achievements, lessons learned, and recommendations for sustainability (Month 12).

VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in Agronomy, Sustainable Agriculture, Food Science, Environmental Science, Education for Sustainable Development, or related field. Advanced degrees considered an asset
- At least 7 years' experience in ecological/organic farming, climate-smart agriculture, agroecology, school garden projects, or related technical fields.
- Demonstrated experience in capacity building and training, particularly for teachers, youth, and community stakeholders.
- Proven track record in designing and supporting smallholder, community, or educational agriculture initiatives.
- Demonstrated understanding of agroecological approaches, climate adaptation, and sustainable food systems within Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Experience working with schools, educational institutions, or youth-focused programmes is highly desirable.
- Experience supporting school feeding programmes, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, or food systems education initiatives would be an asset.

- Experience working on regional or multi-country development projects is highly desirable.
- Experience working within donor-funded programme environments, including EU-funded projects, is considered a strong asset.

Competencies

- Technical Expertise: Advanced knowledge of sustainable and climate-smart agriculture practices.
- Capacity Building: Ability to train non-technical stakeholders in simple, practical ways.
- Innovation: Skills in designing cost-effective, resilient garden models for schools.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Ability to adapt techniques across different Caribbean contexts.
- Teamwork: Collaborative approach with project staff, schools, and ministries.
- Excellent facilitation, communication, technical writing, and reporting skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with ministries, schools, community stakeholders, and implementing partners across diverse Caribbean contexts.

VII. DURATION AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

- Contract Duration: 12 months (input spread across project life cycle).
- Level of Effort: Estimated 110 working days.

VIII. REMUNERATION

- The Technical Expert will be engaged under a professional service contract for an estimated level of effort of approximately 110 working days over the consultancy period.
- Compensation shall be commensurate with qualifications, expertise, and experience and aligned with donor-funded regional consultancy standards.
- Approved travel, accommodation, and per diem expenses incurred for project-related missions will be covered in accordance with ZHTF policies and approved project budgets.