



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)

For the Selection of a Private Partner for the Matru-Jong Oil Palm Project Under a Concession Agreement

Issued by: The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL)

Through: The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS)

REOI Reference Number: PPCP/MAFS/ICB/OP-001

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EOI Submission Deadline: April 6, 2026, at 12:30 PM GMT

1.0 Introduction

The Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (GoSL), through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), intends to engage the private sector to redevelop and operate and Manage the Matru-Jong Oil Palm Facility on a long-term basis under a proposed Concession Agreement.

This initiative is aligned with Government priorities to catalyse agribusiness growth, promote value addition, enhance rural livelihoods, and strengthen public-private partnerships as a pathway to sustainable economic transformation. The Matru-Jong Oil Palm facility, established through substantial public and development partner investments, now provides a viable foundation for scaled private-sector participation.

The overall objective of the engagement is to identify a qualified private investor or consortium with the technical expertise, operational experience, and financial capacity to **complete, lease, operate, manage, and further upgrade** the facility into a commercially competitive agro-industrial enterprise.

The Government seeks to achieve the following outcomes through the concession:

- Complete construction of the mill and replace the old plants.
- Efficient and commercially viable operation of the Matru-Jong Oil Palm Facility.
- Increased employment and inclusive economic opportunities for surrounding communities;
- Enhanced domestic production and market supply of edible oils and related products; and
- Sustainable financial and developmental returns to the State and participating communities.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) invites reputable agribusiness firms, consortia, and investors with relevant experience to express interest in operating and managing the government-owned oil palm facility, to identify capable private partners for the concession.

2.0 Project Background

The Matru-Jong Oil Palm Project is a flagship national agribusiness intervention implemented under the *Oil Palm Production Project in Sierra Leone within the Framework of Capacity Building (POPSLCB)*. The project was financed

through a partnership between the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Governments of Sierra Leone and Malaysia, with a total investment of approximately USD 15.9 million.

Situated in the Jong and Sogbini Chiefdoms of Bonthe District, the project directly benefits 21 surrounding communities. It contributes to Sierra Leone's broader objective of promoting food security, improving rural livelihoods, and strengthening the palm oil value chain as a priority national commodity.

The initial phase of the project successfully established key physical infrastructure, advanced plantation development, and created valuable community assets. Building on these achievements, the Government now seeks to transition the initiative into a fully sustainable commercial enterprise. This next stage will be undertaken through a Public–Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement to engage a qualified private operator with the requisite financial strength, technical expertise, and managerial competence to enhance efficiency, optimise performance, and sustainably expand the facility's operations.

The initial phase of the Project has successfully established a substantial asset base, including core physical infrastructure, plantation development, and community-level facilities. With these foundational investments now in place, the Government intends to transition the Project into a commercially viable, operationally efficient, and financially sustainable enterprise.

This next phase will be implemented through a structured Public–Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement designed to attract a qualified private operator with demonstrated financial strength, technical expertise, and proven managerial capacity. The selected partner will be expected to complete, rehabilitate, optimise, operate, and progressively expand the plantation and processing operations, leveraging private capital and operational efficiencies to unlock the Project's full commercial potential while safeguarding its socio-economic objectives.

The proposed concession is a key pillar of Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation strategy, offering private partners an opportunity to contribute to national economic growth and regional competitiveness.

3.0 Description of Existing Assets

Project Assets Available to the Concessionaire

The selected Concessionaire will assume responsibility to;

Complete the mill and upgrade the existing infrastructure. Key components include:

Land Resources

- Leasehold interest over approximately **7,022 acres (2,842 hectares)** of arable land designated for plantation development.
- Leasehold interest over an additional **300 acres** allocated for the mill site, administrative buildings, and staff residential facilities.

Plantation Estate

- Approximately **1,432 hectares** of mature oil palm plantation are already established.
- A combined plantation footprint of **3,002 hectares** representing a substantial production base.

Processing Infrastructure

- A **10-tonne-per-hour palm oil mill**, with procurement and installation at an advanced stage of completion, providing a strong foundation for commercial processing.

Built Infrastructure and Utilities

- Completed administrative offices, staff quarters, storage facilities, and ancillary buildings.
- Faulty Solar power installations, boreholes with solar-powered pumps, and piped water distribution systems supporting operational and residential needs.

Access and Community Infrastructure

- Approximately **40 km** of road to be rehabilitated and maintained within the estate, ensuring efficient in-estate mobility and evacuation of produce.
- Extensive social infrastructure across the **21 beneficiary communities**, including schools, community health units, potable water facilities, and market structures.

4.0 Scope of Work for the Private Partner

Under the proposed Concession Agreement, the selected Private Partner (the “Concessionaire”) shall assume full technical, operational, financial, and managerial responsibility for completing, rehabilitating, operating, optimising, and expanding the Matru-Jong Oil Palm Facility into a commercially competitive and socially inclusive agribusiness enterprise.

The scope of work shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

I. Completion and Commissioning of the Mill

The Concessionaire shall:

1. Assess the current status of the partially completed 10-tonne-per-hour (TPH) palm oil mill.
2. Complete all outstanding civil, mechanical, and electrical works.
3. Commission and operationalise the mill to full design capacity.
4. Establish appropriate quality control, safety, and environmental management systems.

II. Operational Management and Control

The Concessionaire shall assume complete control of all operational functions, including:

- A. Day-to-day management of plantation operations, milling activities, logistics, and estate services.
- B. Preventive and corrective maintenance of plantation assets, factory equipment, buildings, vehicles, and utilities.
- C. Deployment of qualified technical, managerial, and support personnel.
- D. Establishment of robust operational systems covering procurement, health and safety, quality control, and performance monitoring.

III. Rehabilitation and Replanting Programme

The Concessionaire shall rehabilitate and restore inherited assets in line with Best Management Practices (BMP) and industry standards, including:

- A. Establishment of approximately 1,570 hectares of new plantation to replace aged or underperforming stands.
- B. Rehabilitation and yield optimisation of the existing 1,432 hectares of mature oil palm plantation.
- C. Restoration of soil fertility, improved agronomic management, and enhanced harvesting systems.
- D. Upgrading of mill machinery, access roads, housing units, storage facilities, and administrative infrastructure.
- E. Maintenance of transferred social assets (schools, water systems, health facilities) to ensure continued functionality for beneficiary communities.

IV. Expansion of Plantation and Processing Capacity

To ensure long-term commercial viability, the Concessionaire shall implement a phased expansion programme, including:

- A. Expansion of the nucleus estate from the current developed area to at least 10,000 hectares within the concession period, subject to approved land-use plans and environmental assessments.
- B. Expansion of processing capacity from 10 TPH to a minimum of 20 TPH within the first five (5) years of commercial operation.
- C. Introduction of modern agronomic technologies, digital plantation management systems, and improved harvesting and evacuation logistics.

V. Development of an Inclusive Out-Grower Scheme

The Concessionaire shall design and implement a structured out-grower programme to integrate smallholder farmers into the value chain. This shall include:

- A. Establishment of an out-grower scheme covering a minimum of 1,000 hectares.
- B. Provision of HYV seedlings, farm inputs, technical training, and extension services.
- C. Transparent and predictable Fresh Fruit Bunch (FFB) pricing and purchase arrangements.
- D. Facilitation of access to credit and agricultural finance through partnerships with financial institutions and development partners.
- E. Ongoing monitoring, capacity building, and performance tracking of participating farmers.

VI. Capital Investment and Financial Management

The Concessionaire shall mobilise and manage all required capital and operational expenditures, including:

- A. Investment of an estimated USD 50 million over the concession term for rehabilitation, expansion, and modernisation.
- B. Implementation of transparent accounting, budgeting, and internal control systems.

- C. Compliance with internationally recognised financial reporting and auditing standards.
- D. Submission of periodic financial and operational reports to the Government.

VII. Environmental, Social, and Sustainability Compliance

The Concessionaire shall operate in accordance with national legislation and international best practices, including:

- A. Compliance with Environmental Protection Agency – Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) regulations and approved Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA).
- B. Alignment with international sustainability standards, including RSPO or equivalent frameworks.
- C. Implementation of a Community Development Action Plan (CDAP).
- D. Adoption of measures to prevent deforestation, protect biodiversity, and ensure responsible water and waste management.

VIII. Stakeholder Engagement and Community Relations

The Concessionaire shall maintain transparent and constructive stakeholder relations through:

- A. Continuous engagement with community leaders, landholding families, district authorities, and local institutions.
- B. Clear communication regarding employment, land use, and development initiatives.
- C. Establishment of an accessible grievance redress mechanism.
- D. Implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes aligned with community priorities.

IX. Financial Obligations to the Government

The Concessionaire shall meet all financial commitments under the Concession Agreement, including:

- A. Payment of Annual Concession Fees, royalties, lease payments, or revenue-sharing obligations as specified in the RFP and final contract.
- B. Payment of applicable taxes, duties, and statutory charges in accordance with the laws of Sierra Leone.
- C. Periodic reporting on production volumes, revenues, and concession compliance.

5.0 Eligibility and Qualification Requirements

Eligible firms or consortia are invited to submit Expressions of Interest demonstrating their capacity to undertake the concession. Interested Applicants must provide sufficient information to allow the Government of Sierra Leone to assess their legal standing, financial strength, technical competence, and relevant experience in accordance with international best practice.

Submissions shall include, at a minimum, the following:

A. Corporate Information

Applicants must provide:

- Legal name of the firm or consortium members, country of registration, and full contact details (address, telephone, email, and website).
- A concise company profile, including history, core business activities, and areas of specialisation.
- Ownership structure, indicating shareholders, parent companies (if any), and ultimate beneficial owners.
- For consortia, a consortium agreement or letter of intent specifying the roles and responsibilities of each member and identifying the lead partner.

B. Legal and Financial Documentation

Applicants must demonstrate sound legal standing and robust financial capacity by providing:

1. **Legal Documents**
 - Certificate of Incorporation/Registration.
 - Certified copies of Memorandum and Articles of Association or equivalent constitutional documents.
 - Evidence of authorisation to operate in relevant jurisdictions.
2. **Financial Capacity**
 - **Audited Financial Statements for the past three (3) fiscal years**, prepared in accordance with internationally accepted accounting standards.

- Evidence of financial capacity, including:
 - Proof of access to **a line of credit or financing** of at least **USD 2 million**; and
 - Demonstrated **average annual turnover of at least USD 1 million** over the past three years.
- Documentation showing the Applicant’s ability to mobilise capital for large-scale agribusiness investments.

C. Technical Capability and Relevant Experience

Applicants must demonstrate proven capability in agribusiness operations—specifically plantation management, processing operations, and inclusive value-chain development. Submissions shall include:

1. General Experience

- Record of participation in at least five (5) agricultural sector projects (as owner, operator, or contractor) within the past ten (10) years.

2. Specific Experience Requirements

Applicants must satisfy **either Option A or Option B**:

- **Option A:** Minimum of **ten (10) years** of successful ownership or operation of an oil palm plantation of comparable size and complexity; **or**
- **Option B:** Minimum of **(X) years** of successful ownership or operation of another commercial tree-crop plantation (e.g., rubber, cocoa, cashew, coconut).

3. Experience in Community and Out-Grower Models

- Demonstrated experience implementing multi-stakeholder agricultural programs involving local communities, farmer groups, or structured out-grower schemes.

4. Key Personnel

- Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of proposed key technical and managerial experts, including:
 - **Project Manager** with at least **15 years** of relevant professional experience;
 - **Plantation Manager** with a minimum of **10 years** of experience in estate crop management;
 - **Mill Engineer/Factory Manager** with at least **10 years** of experience managing palm oil milling operations.
- Evidence that proposed personnel possess appropriate qualifications, track records, and familiarity with international best practices.

6.0 Submission Details & Instructions

6.0 Submission of Expressions of Interest

Submission Deadline

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) must be submitted no later than 12:30 PM GMT on 6th April, 2026

Submission Address

**The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS)
1st & 2nd Floors, Youyi Building
Brookfield’s, Freetown
Sierra Leone**

Submission Requirements

Applicants shall submit their EOIs in accordance with the following instructions:

- EOIs must be submitted in one (1) original and two (2) hard copies, all placed in a sealed envelope.
- The sealed envelope must be clearly marked:
“Expression of Interest – Concession for Mattru-Jong Oil Palm Facility”
Reference No.: PPCP/MAFS/ICB/OP-001
- Electronic submissions will not be accepted at this stage of the procurement process.

Contents of the EOI Submission

The EOI shall contain, at a minimum, the following documents:

1. Cover Letter
A formal letter on the Applicant's official letterhead, signed by an authorised representative.
2. Company Profile and Ownership Information
A detailed overview of the firm (or consortium), including organisational structure and identification of shareholders and beneficial owners.
3. Legal Documents
 - Certificate of Incorporation/Registration
 - Memorandum and Articles of Association (or equivalent constitutional documents)
4. Financial Documentation
 - Audited Financial Statements for the last three (3) fiscal years
5. Statement of Qualifications
A comprehensive presentation demonstrating how the Applicant meets the Eligibility and Qualification Requirements outlined in Section 5.0, including:
 - Evidence of relevant project experience
 - Summary of technical capacity
 - Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of proposed key experts

7.0 Tentative Procurement Roadmap

The procurement process for selecting a Private Partner will follow the steps outlined below. The dates are indicative and may be adjusted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFS) as necessary. Any changes will be communicated to all participating firms in due course.

No.	Activity	Indicative Date
1	Publication of Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI)	6 March 2026
2	Deadline for Submission of EOIs	6 April 2026
3	Evaluation of EOIs and Shortlisting of Qualified Applicants	20 April 2026
4	Issuance of Request for Proposals (RFP) to Shortlisted Applicants	27 April 2026
5	Site Visit and Pre-Proposal Meetings for Shortlisted Bidders	To be confirmed in the RFP
6	Submission Deadline for Technical and Financial Proposals	25 May 2026
7	Evaluation of Technical and Financial Proposals	8 June 2026
8	Contract Negotiations and Notice of Award	9-16 June 2026

8.0 Requests for Clarification

All requests for clarification related to this Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) must be submitted in writing to the address below:

Email: johnlamin74@gmail.com

Clarification requests must be submitted no later than the date specified in the procurement schedule. Responses to all substantive queries will be shared with all Applicants, in line with standard procurement procedures.

9.0 Confidentiality and Disclaimer

All information submitted by Applicants will be handled in strict confidence and used solely for this pre-qualification process. Submission of an Expression of Interest does not constitute a commitment by the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to issue a subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP), to incur any financial obligations, or to award a contract.

GoS L reserves the right to:

- accept or reject any EOI,
- annul the procurement process in whole or in part,
- re-issue or modify this REOI,

without thereby incurring any liability or obligation to the affected Applicants.

