Terms of Reference (ToR)

Consultancy: Soil Sample Collection & Analysis
Location: Sheda Kebele, Bonga Zone, South-West Region, Ethiopia
Project Owner: Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)
Contract Type: Short-term individual consultancy
Fee (post-tax, all-inclusive): USD 1 500 (lump sum)

---

1. Background

OSSREA is implementing climate-smart interventions with smallholder coffee farmers in Sheda Kebele. Reliable baseline data on soil fertility and carbon content are required to guide agro-forestry planning and to feed into forthcoming carbon-credit verification. This ToR sets out the requirements for an experienced soil scientist to design and execute soil sampling and laboratory analysis.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

To provide high-quality, geo-referenced soil data and an interpretive report that will:

- establish baseline fertility and organic-carbon levels for target plots;
- identify soil constraints affecting coffee and shade-tree establishment;
- generate evidence for future carbon-credit monitoring.

3. Scope of Work

Phase	Key Tasks	Indicative Outputs
A. Preparatory work (max. 2 days)	• Review project documents and maps • Develop statistically sound sampling strategy (depths 0-15 cm & 15-30 cm at minimum 5 composite points per plot)• Prepare field forms & chain-of-custody labels	Approved sampling plan & checklist

B. Field sampling (max. 5 days)	• Mobilise and brief local guides/farmers• Collect composite samples from ~ X* target plots (exact number confirmed at contract start)• Record GPS, altitude, slope, land-use history for each sample	Clean, labelled soil samples; completed field logs & GPS shapefile
C. Laboratory analysis (max. 7 days)	• Deliver samples to an accredited Ethiopian lab• Oversee analysis for pH, EC, texture, SOM/organic C, total N, available P, exchangeable K, Ca, Mg, C:N ratio	Certified lab certificates in Excel & PDF
D. Reporting & hand-over (max. 4 days)	• Interpret results against coffee-production thresholds• Provide site-specific recommendations on soil management & carbon-sequestration potential• Conduct half-day debrief with OSSREA & local stakeholders	Final report (≤ 20 pp) including methodology, raw data, maps, graphs, recommendations & digital annexes

* Exact sample count will depend on the final list of participant plots; budget assumes ≤ 60 composite samples (120 depth-layers).

4. Deliverables & Schedule

Deliverable	Due	% Fee Linked
D1. Approved sampling plan & checklists	Day 3	20 %
D2. Clean field samples & field data sheets	Day 10	20 %
D3. Certified laboratory results	Day 17	20 %
D4. Draft interpretive report	Day 21	—
D5. Final report & debrief slide deck	Day 25	40 %

Total estimated level of effort: **~ 18–20 working days** to be completed within **one calendar month** of contract signature.

5. Consultant Profile

- M.Sc. or higher in Soil Science, Agronomy, Environmental Science, or related discipline.
- **Minimum 10 years** demonstrated experience in soil sampling design, lab analysis oversight, and interpretation for perennial crops—preferably coffee/agro-forestry systems in Eastern Africa.
- Proven familiarity with IPCC/FAO soil-carbon methodologies is an asset.
- Strong GIS/GPS skills and proficiency in data analysis (Excel, R or similar).
- Excellent written and spoken English; knowledge of Amharic desirable.
- Ability to work independently under rural field conditions.

6. Remuneration & Logistics

- **USD 1 500** lump-sum **after tax**—payable upon satisfactory completion of deliverables as per Section 4.
- The consultant **must supply all sampling equipment** (augers, trowels, sample bags, GPS, PPE, etc.).
- The fee is **all-inclusive**—covering transport to/from Sheda Kebele, local travel, accommodation, per diem, insurances, communication, equipment depreciation, and any other costs.
- OSSREA will provide: introductory letters to local authorities, plot lists, and coordination support.

7. Reporting & Management

The consultant reports to OSSREA's Project Manager (Carbon Finance in Coffee). Routine coordination will be through the Field Coordinator based in Bonga. All outputs must be submitted in editable electronic format (Word, Excel, shapefiles) plus PDF versions.

8. Ethical & Safety Considerations

The consultant shall follow OSSREA's field safety guidelines, obtain informed consent from farmers, and ensure samples are transported and stored according to Ethiopian biosafety regulations.

9. Application Procedure

Interested candidates should submit **by 22 May 2025**:

1. **Technical proposal** (max. 5 pages) outlining methodology, workplan, and equipment list.
2. **CV** (max. 3 pages) highlighting relevant assignments and three traceable references.
3. **Financial confirmation** accepting the all-inclusive lump sum of USD 1 500 net.

Emails should be sent to **info@ossrea.net; alemu@ossrea.net** with subject line **"Soil Sampling Consultancy – Sheda Kebele"**. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted.

OSSREA reserves the right to modify the schedule or sampling scope in consultation with the selected consultant.