

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

Pilot Project on Labour Rights and Decent Working Conditions for Agricultural Workers in Ghana, Brücke Le Pont

1. Background

Brücke Le Pont is a Swiss non-governmental development organisation, dedicated to long-term and systemic development in Latin America and Africa since 1956. The 'Decent work' programme combines the following three strategic priorities: income generation, vocational skills and labour market integration, and labour rights and works on strengthening civil society, gender equality, and disaster preparedness as transversal topics. At the moment, the West Africa programme is implemented in the agricultural sector in Togo and Benin.

For over 30 years, Brücke Le Pont has supported initiatives to improve labour rights, working conditions and the socio-economic position of actors along agricultural value chains in Togo and Benin. Since 2020, there has been an increased focus on improving the working conditions of field workers. Extensive work in Togo and Benin – consolidated in a recent capitalisation study – shows that improving labour conditions in agricultural value chains requires:

- engaging all market system actors (producers, intermediaries, cooperatives, employers, local authorities and government, private companies);
- strengthening workers' organisation and voice;
- addressing systemic constraints such as weak enforcement of labour norms, informality, gendered vulnerabilities and unequal bargaining power;
- developing sustainable mechanisms for co-financing and cost-sharing;
- establishing long-term change pathways beyond project cycles.

To extend this regional experience, Brücke Le Pont plans to extend its work and initiate a long-term engagement in Ghana. This Call for Proposals seeks a civil society organisation anchored in Ghana, with focus on local non-governmental organisations, capable of designing and implementing a one-year pilot project that can serve as the foundation for a 10-year project aligned with Brücke Le Pont's West Africa strategy and its partnership concept.

2. Objective of the Call

As part of Brücke Le Pont's strategic expansion assessment process, we aim to identify one local partner organisation that:

- works on labour rights, decent work, worker empowerment or labour conditions of field workers in agricultural value chains;
- is strongly anchored in target communities and recognised by relevant actors;
- is able to design a systemic intervention based on Market Systems Development (MSD);

- demonstrates potential for a long-term partnership aligned with Brücke Le Pont's partnership principles;
- can co-finance the initiative through internal contributions and contributions from market system actors.

At the end of the selection process, Brücke Le Pont will be able to decide with whom to enter an engagement for a one-year pilot phase. The selected organisation will implement a 12-month pilot phase and submit a conceptual framework for a 10-year project partnership.

3. Thematic Scope

Project proposals must focus on improving labour rights and decent working conditions for agricultural workers (formal or informal). Possible thematic areas include:

- labour rights awareness, enforcement and compliance;
- strengthening worker groups, cooperatives or associations;
- addressing systemic constraints like for example governance gaps, low bargaining power, weak occupational health and safety, limited professional skills and little training opportunities in order to improve product quality and adapt cultivating methods to climate change, limited access to investment funds, poor contractual arrangements, gender-specific risks, child labour risks, child care during working hours;
- multi-stakeholder dialogue with employers, umbrella organisations, private companies, and local and national authorities in order to strengthen social dialogue;
- Job placement with fair working conditions, reduction of modern slavery in agriculture
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4. Project Requirements

4.1 Duration and Budget

- Duration: 12 months (pilot phase).
- Maximum Brücke Le Pont contribution: CHF 50,000 / GHS 675'000 equals maximum 80% of the budget.
- Co-financing:
 - financial contribution from the applicant organisation is mandatory;
 - additional financial or in-kind contributions from market system actors (e.g., cooperatives, private companies, service providers, local authorities) are required and must be documented.

4.2 Approach

The proposed project must apply a systemic approach (Market Systems Development). This includes:

- a. Clear definition of the market system. Proposals must clearly describe:
 - the core transaction (e.g., labour hiring, seasonal work arrangements, contracting in specific crops);
 - relevant supporting functions (skills, supervision, occupational health & safety (OHS) services, recruitment channels, extension, dispute resolution, worker voice);

- relevant rules (labour norms, community bylaws, contracts, informal practices, gender norms);
 - key actors and their incentives.
- b. Root cause analysis.
- The project must distinguish clearly between symptoms (e.g., low wages, unsafe work, lack of contracts, child labour), and root causes (e.g., informality, weak enforcement, inequality in bargaining power, limited skills, cost structures of employers, weak supervision models, gender norms, absence of service markets).
 - Activities must target systemic constraints, not only symptoms.
- c. Facilitative role. Brücke Le Pont does not fund direct service delivery. Projects must show how the organisation will:
- facilitate new or improved practices among employers, cooperatives or intermediaries;
 - catalyse behaviour change, rather than substituting existing actors;
 - avoid direct provision of training, equipment, or services unless it is part of a short-term, cost-shared test of a new business model.
- d. Pilot interventions. Pilot interventions must:
- involve at least two types of market actors;
 - test new or improved ways of working (e.g., new hiring models, OHS solutions, grievance mechanisms, recruitment models, cost-sharing);
 - include adoption pathways specifying which actors will continue the innovation;
 - demonstrate co-financing from market actors.
- e. Sustainability and scale. Proposals must explain:
- how project results will continue beyond the 12-month pilot;
 - how additional actors may adopt or replicate the new practices (crowding-in);
 - how changes can be embedded in rules, norms, or services (mainstreaming);
 - commercial or institutional viability of the model.

4.3 Long-term Vision

Applicants must submit a 10-year development pathway for the partnership (3 x 3-year- phases), including:

- a Theory of Change linked to systemic changes;
- expected behaviour changes among actors;
- potential scaling mechanisms (crowding-in, mainstreaming, integration into governance or service structures);
- indicative resource projections and co-financing avenues;
- key elements of a phase-out strategy;
- milestones for institutional strengthening of the partner organisation.

5. Requirements for Applicant Organisations

Only organisations meeting all criteria will be considered.

5.1 Institutional Criteria

- Legally registered organisation in Ghana (min. 3 years).

- As an organisation, have an excellent reputation and an outstanding track record of transparency and accountability.
- Demonstrated experience in labour rights, decent work, worker empowerment, agricultural value chains, rural livelihoods or market systems for more than 5 years.
- Strong local presence and trusted relationships with communities and actors in the intervention region.
- Experience in project development and project management of projects similar in funding size as the submitted project proposal.
- Professional financial management (audited accounts preferred).
- Transparent governance and commitment to accountability.
- Alignment with Brücke Le Pont's values: equality, inclusion, non-discrimination, participation and empowerment.

5.2 Team Requirements

- Having qualified and relevant human resources.
- Project team must be fluent in the local languages of the intervention region and in English and at least one person of the project team must be fluent in French (for exchange with other partner organisations in West Africa).
- Demonstrated technical competence in labour rights, decent work, MSD, value chain development, or related fields, project management and conflict sensitive project management.
- Proven strong financial management skills.

6. Required Submission Documents

Submissions must not exceed 30 pages (excluding attachments) and must include:

6.1 Organisation Profile

- vision, mission, governance and key policies (e.g. child protection; prevention of sexual abuse and harassment);
- Key programmes and geographic areas;
- financial overview (last 2 years);
- overview of partnerships and networks (of the last 3 years).

6.2 Evidence of Relevant Experience

- summary of past and current projects related to labour rights, decent work or rural labour systems;
- lessons learned relevant to Ghana and the submitted project, drawing on insights similar to those highlighted in the Togo/Benin capitalisation (e.g., addressing power asymmetries, importance of multi-stakeholder governance).

6.3 Pilot Project Proposal (12 months)

- problem analysis with root causes and systemic constraints;
- stakeholder mapping (rules + functions + incentives);
- Theory of Change showing behaviour change at actor level;
- MSD strategy and systemic entry points;
- activities and timeline;
- monitoring indicators (outputs + systemic outcomes);
- risk analysis;

- sustainability strategy (adoption + scale);
- detailed budget in GHS in Excel format all taxes included and reflecting co-financing commitments (organisation + market actors).

6.4 10-Year Concept Note

- vision and expected systemic changes;
- scaling pathways;
- institutional strengthening plan;
- partnership expectations.

6.5 Team Profiles

- CVs;
- roles and responsibilities;
- proof of language competencies (local languages, EN + FR).

6.6 Administrative Documents

- registration certificate;
- organigram;
- latest audit report (if available);
- proof of financial management for a budget that corresponds to the project application;
- reference person from financing partner.

7. Evaluation and Selection

7.1 Exclusion Criteria

Proposals will be rejected if:

- the organisation is not registered in Ghana for at least 3 years;
- the organisation does not work in a relevant thematic field;
- the team lacks French and English language capacity;
- the MSD and systemic change approach is not clearly demonstrated;
- activities focus mainly on direct service delivery (trainings, sensitisation, PPE distribution) without system-level incentives;
- no co-financing is proposed;
- no 10-year vision is included;
- the demanded contribution from Brücke Le Pont exceeds GHS 675'000
- it is sent after the deadline and to another email address than indicated.

7.2 Evaluation Criteria

- Thematic expertise and relevance (20%)
- Quality of MSD/systemic approach (25%)
- Quality of the pilot project proposal (20%)
- Long-term vision (15%)
- Institutional capacity and governance (10%)
- Local anchoring and multi-stakeholder networks (10%)

7.3 Submission Modalities

- Language: English or French

- Deadline: 8.3.2026
- Submissions via email to: info@bruecke-lepont.ch with the following subject line “Project proposal Ghana”

8. Partnership Framework

The selected organisation will engage in a long-term partnership with Brücke Le Pont based on mutual accountability, transparency, capacity development, and shared commitment to sustainable impact. The partnership is based on shared responsibilities and roles. In summary the organisation will:

- Implement, manage and monitor the project and report on progress to Brücke Le Pont.
- Ensure responsible financial management, including audited financial reports.
- Provide timely narrative and financial reporting as agreed.
- Collaborate with Brücke Le Pont’s local coordination team and participate in programme learning and networking activities.
- Ensure proper visibility of Brücke Le Pont in line with communication guidelines.
- Plan and cover necessary organisational, administrative and capacity development costs to ensure long-term sustainability of the organisation.

Partnerships follow Brücke Le Pont’s model: pilot phase (1 year), multi-year phases (3 years each), and a maximum partnership duration of 12 years.

9. Next Steps

Following this Call:

- Pre-selection based on eligibility
- Detailed evaluation of eligible proposals
- Interviews and due diligence for shortlisted organisations
- Final selection
- Joint consolidation of the final project documents with Brücke Le Pont
- Start of pilot project

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