



**Women's  
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Finn Church Aid



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR WOMEN BANK SKILLS DONOR IN MYANMAR**

<b>Project Title:</b>	Breaking Barriers and Building Success in Myanmar (BBBS)
<b>Type of Assignment:</b>	Two assignments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To conduct a market research and create a market access strategy to support the development of women's beekeeping businesses.</li><li>2. To develop a branding and marketing strategy to ensure premium honey products' access local, regional, and international markets.</li></ol>
<b>Time of Assignment:</b>	2 months, earliest from February 2025 onwards
<b>Location:</b>	Distance support to Finn Church Aid (FCA) Myanmar (MYACO)

### **Introduction**

The Breaking Barriers and Building Success (BBBS) Project, funded by the Women's Bank, aims to uplift conflict-affected women in two sub-townships of Thandaunggyi Township, Northern Kayin State, and two townships in Kachin State, Myanmar. Spanning three years from January 2024 to December 2026, the project addresses the cycle of limited economic opportunities faced by these women. Without meaningful intervention, they remain trapped in prolonged economic hardships, further deepening gender inequalities and delaying empowerment. The BBBS project offers a comprehensive, multifaceted approach that directly tackles the underlying causes of these challenges, including social and cultural norms that restrict women's opportunities.

Leveraging insights from previous initiatives and aligning with both national and international gender equality goals, the BBBS project is a strategic and impactful initiative, well-positioned to drive economic empowerment for women in Kayin and Kachin States.

The project will significantly contribute to Main Objective 1 (People and Private Sector) of the Myanmar Country Programme Results Framework/FCA Global Programme: People can claim and enjoy their right to inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty eradication. The long-term goal is to enhance women's socio-economic empowerment by providing them with opportunities for training, establishing and expanding businesses and cooperatives, and taking on leadership roles in the development of their communities and country.

### **Project Objectives:**

The primary objective of the project is to empower women's groups (specifically women-led cooperatives) in Kayin and Kachin states, enabling them to operate independently with profitable

and sustainable businesses. By doing so, the project aims to contribute to the economic and social development of these regions.

#### Methodologies and Activities:

To address the key issues outlined in the Problem Statement, the project will focus on the following strategies:

Skills Enhancement Programs: Implement targeted skills training programs tailored to the specific needs identified in the problem statement. This will involve partnerships with local educational institutions and experienced trainers to ensure relevant and effective training in both states.

Resource Accessibility Initiatives: Enhance access to essential resources by empowering women through tailored financial support, including microfinance, grants, and asset provision. Women-led cooperative networks will be instrumental in resource sharing and collaboration, ensuring that businesses receive the necessary support to flourish and succeed.

Market Access Strategies: Develop comprehensive market access strategies that include networking events, online platforms, and partnerships with local businesses. The project will engage local CSOs, FBOs, and ESPs to create strong connections between women entrepreneurs and potential markets.

#### **Current challenges**

Thandaunggyi Township in Kayin State has traditionally relied on agriculture and livestock farming as the primary means of livelihood. Among these, traditional beekeeping, particularly the production of indigenous honeybees, has been a vital activity, deeply rooted in the community's way of life. Beekeeping not only provides a valuable source of income but also supports agricultural productivity by aiding in crop pollination, making it a key contributor to the success of farming in the region.

From October 2022 to May 2023, FCA implemented a pilot project in 5 villages and the initiatives involved beekeeping training and the provision of essential materials, resulting in notable successes, including an increase in household income, improved knowledge of beekeeping practices, and greater involvement of women in the business. These achievements have sparked further interest from neighboring villages in accessing similar opportunities for training and development.

BBBS also aims to support bee business model to empower women beekeepers, create sustainable economic opportunities, and promote environmental stewardship. By partnering

with smallholder farmers, the business will ensure a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach that celebrates the natural wealth of the region.

A major challenge facing beekeepers is the lack of access to markets that offer premium prices for high-quality honey and related products. The local market often undervalues these products, making it difficult for beekeepers to earn a fair income. Moreover, there is limited access to regional export markets, where demand for premium, organic honey is much higher. The absence of a well-developed market penetration strategy exacerbates this issue. Currently, beekeepers lack the necessary resources and knowledge to enter broader markets and effectively compete with larger producers. Furthermore, the 2021 coup significantly disrupted economic and developmental progress in the region, weakening the resilience and capacity of local communities.

To address these challenges, the project must formulate a comprehensive market penetration strategy that highlights the premium, organic quality of local honey, aiming to differentiate it and explore regional export opportunities.

### **Objective and scope of the assignment**

The overall objective of this assignment is to develop a comprehensive market penetration strategy for the bee business that will enable traditional beekeepers in Kayin State to access premium markets, both locally and regionally. The strategy will focus on positioning high-quality, organic honey and related products in markets that offer higher returns, thus empowering beekeepers economically and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The assignment will also explore opportunities to expand market reach beyond local buyers, tapping into regional export markets where demand for premium honey is higher.

To meet the overall project objective, this ToR aims at selecting two experts, each one to work in a specific assignment to reach the overall project objective, as detailed below. The two assignments can also be done by one person, if the expert qualifications for both positions are being met.

#### **1. Skills Donor 1: Market Research and Market Access**

- Analysis of local and regional markets
- Identification of potential opportunities for honey and related products
- Strategy designed to penetrate new markets, focusing on distribution channels, partnerships with local and regional buyers, and leveraging e-commerce platforms



**Women's  
Bank**  
Finn Church Aid



2. Skills Donor 2: Brand Development and Marketing targeting local and regional markets.

- Develop brand identity that highlights the unique, organic, and sustainable qualities of the honey produced by local beekeepers.
- Creation of product labeling, packaging designs, and promotional materials.

## Detailed activities

### 1. Skills Donor 1: Market Research and Market Access

Skills Donor will work with a local team in developing a market research report and market access strategy. The role of the Skills Donor is to provide expertise, guidance and facilitation support for the market research and market penetration strategy processes.

- **Market Research:**
- Working with a local team to identify key local and regional markets for premium honey, specifically focusing on organic, fair-trade, and eco-friendly segments.
  - The market research may include sections such as:
  - Consumer analysis of demand for organic honey and related products, identifying the top consumer preferences, price points, and purchase channels.
  - Market Evaluation of competitors' pricing strategies, and product offerings focusing on their strengths, weaknesses, and potential gaps and opportunities that can be exploited by local honey producers.
- **Market Penetration and Distribution Strategy:**
- Working with a local team to identify potential distribution channels, including local markets, retail partnerships, specialty organic stores, and online platforms (both local and regional).
  - Market access strategy development may include:
  - Supporting the local team in building relationships with potential buyers, regional exporters, wholesalers and e-commerce platforms in both local and regional markets.
  - Developing a strategic plan for entering premium regional markets, identifying partnerships with exporters and online sales platforms that specialize in organic products.
  - Propose detailed steps for establishing the necessary supply chain logistics.

### 2. Skills Donor 2: Brand Development and Marketing

Skills Donor will work with a local team to develop a Branding and Marketing Plan including product differentiation strategies, packaging designs, promotional materials, and certification recommendations.



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Bank**  
Finn Church Aid



- Working with a local team to research potential export markets and certification requirements for organic and premium products, such as fair trade or environmental certifications.
- Providing guidance to Branding and Product Differentiation.
- Develop branding strategies that emphasize the quality, organic production methods, and environmental sustainability of the honey.
- Participate in designing visually appealing packaging that aligns with local and international market expectations.
- Support the creation of promotional materials, including digital assets, brochures, and online content, that will be used to attract retailers and promote the honey brand in both local and regional markets.
- Provide recommendations for product labeling and compliance with international certification standards such as "organic," "fair trade," or "eco-friendly," where relevant.

## **Expected Deliverables**

### **1. Skills Donor 1: Market Research and Market Access**

- A comprehensive market research and value chain analysis (may include for example a desk review of existing reports and data on honey production, a literature review on global beekeeping trends, and case studies on premium honey markets).
- Market Penetration Strategy with recommendations for distribution channels, partnerships and e-commerce opportunities.

### **2. Skills Donor 2: Brand Development and Marketing**

- Branding and marketing strategies, including product differentiation, packaging designs, and promotional material development.
- A Branding and Marketing Plan that includes product differentiation, packaging designs, and promotional strategies.

### **Skills Donors 1 & 2:**

- Final report, including actionable recommendations for market penetration, branding, distribution, and scaling.



## **Qualifications of the Volunteer Expert(s)**

### **1. Skills Donor 1: Market Research and Market Access**

- Experience in conducting market research, value chain analysis and/or competitor and consumer analysis.
- Strong ability to conduct both qualitative and quantitative research.
- Familiarity with the requirements and dynamics of international and regional export markets, particularly for organic or sustainable products.
- Experience in creating market penetration strategies and/or distribution strategies.
- Understanding of beekeeping practices and/or environmentally sustainable agricultural practices is desirable.

### **2. Skills Donor 2: Brand Development and Marketing**

- Experience in branding and/or marketing strategy design.
- Experience in Brand Development, including creating brand identities that align with product attributes (organic, sustainable, premium).
- Understanding of Certification Requirements and familiarity with organic, fair-trade, and eco-friendly certification processes and labeling.
- Experience and interest in Packaging and Product Design. Ability to conceptualize and design packaging that is visually appealing, sustainable, and fits market expectations for premium products.

### **Skills Donors 1 & 2**

- Strong skills in using online tools and working remotely. Experience with virtual interviews and information gathering is an added advantage.
- Knowledge of Myanmar and/or Southeast Asia is an added advantage.

### **Division of Tasks and Responsibilities**

The expert (assignment 1) will work together with the local team to conduct market research and value chain analysis, including a desk review and virtual interviews with key stakeholders such as local beekeepers, cooperatives, and related stakeholders.

Building on the findings of the assignment 1, the expert in branding and marketing (assignment 2) will work together with the local team to develop effective branding and marketing strategies, ensuring premium honey products can access local, regional, and international markets.



Additionally, each expert will draft a final report with recommendations for improving production, expanding into premium markets, and enhancing local ownership.

FCA Country office will work closely with the experts and provide local context, data, and facilitate communication between the expert and local stakeholders, including providing translation. They will collect relevant information on beekeeping practices, market prices, and supply chain dynamics. FCA Country office will take ownership of implementing the expert's recommendations.

## Timeframe

The duration of each assignment supporting Myanmar Country Office via distance from Finland (or from another country) is two months. The assignment's exact timing and duration will be agreed upon selection, starting earliest in February 2025.

The distance support assignments will be arranged in a way that it is possible to do it alongside other full-time commitments. Distance support tasks may be done mainly during evenings and weekends with occasional meetings and workshops during the office hours.

Additionally, the Expert will partake in induction before the start of the assignment, commit in submitting the final report and sharing about the experience in Women's Bank's channels.

The table below gives a tentative breakdown of the tasks. Task details and schedule will be agreed between the Expert and the counterparts after selection.

Tasks	Time / days
<b>1. Preparatory phase</b>	Starting from January 2025
Start of contract and orientation at FCA's Helsinki office.	1 day
Liaison with FCA Country Office concerning the details of the programme and arrangements.  Orientation and introductions of Myanmar project staff.  Finalization of the assignment framework and plan, tools, and methodology with Country Office.	1 day
Desk review of relevant project and other documents and preliminary design of the assignment.	3 days



<p><b>2. Assignment supporting Myanmar Country Office via distance</b></p> <p>Including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Workshops/trainings/joint work with MYACO project staff</li> <li>• Independent work</li> <li>• Debriefing of FCA management and senior programme staff with recommendations on way forward</li> </ul> <p>See "Detailed activities" for more information</p>	<p><b>2 months, Duration and timing to be negotiated, earliest from February 2025 onwards</b></p>
<p>Report finalisation</p>	
<p><b>Information sharing in Finland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debriefing in Helsinki with FCA and Women's Bank</li> <li>- Communicating and sharing the results of the assignment and personal experiences in FCA, Women's Bank and other media, including one Women's Bank event</li> </ul>	<p>1 day 1 day</p>
<p><i>End of contract</i></p>	

**Remuneration**

This will be a voluntary assignment.

**Contact persons:**

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