

Date: 20th November 2025

Request for Expression of Interest: Transitioning the Route to Food Initiative into a Community of Practice

1. Background

The Route to Food Initiative (RTFI) falls under the Agroecology and Food Rights Programme of the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF), Nairobi Office. Its mission is to advance the realisation of the right to food in Kenya by promoting public awareness, citizen engagement, and policy advocacy on issues affecting food systems. Over the years, RTFI has established a broad and diverse network of partners that includes civil society organisations, researchers, farmers, media practitioners, health experts, and consumers.

Despite this reach, engagement among these actors has remained largely project-based and episodic. Partners often work in silos, with limited opportunities for sustained collaboration or collective advocacy. Recognising this fragmentation, RTFI is transitioning from being primarily a programme-based initiative into a Community of Practice (CoP), working as both a network and a movement. As a network, it connects actors across disciplines, linking research, practice, policy, and advocacy to create shared understanding and cross-sectoral learning. As a movement, it mobilises those actors around shared values of justice, sustainability, and the constitutional right to adequate food.

2. Rationale for the Transition

This transition is grounded in our experience engaging multiple actors who share a common vision but operate independently. The CoP seeks to strengthen this ecosystem by creating a coherent structure for interaction, learning, and action.

3. Scope of Work and Responsibilities

The consultant will be expected to:

- a) Review and reframe the conceptual foundations of the CoP
 - Review the existing concept, design, and rationale of the Route to Food Initiative's transition into a Community of Practice (CoP).
 - Examine the *proposed* constituency framework to assess its relevance, coherence, and potential to facilitate collaboration and collective learning.
 - Identify opportunities to strengthen the conceptual framing of the CoP - including its purpose, value proposition, and membership logic, with a view of ensuring it remains **adaptive** (able to evolve with emerging contexts and learning), **inclusive** (embracing diverse actors, perspectives, and levels of engagement), and **impact-oriented** (focused on generating tangible outcomes for food rights and agroecology).
 - Recommend refinements to the overall theory of change and structural design of the CoP before moving into operational considerations.
- b) **Map Key Actors and Stakeholders**
 - Identify and map individuals, institutions, and networks that could participate in or contribute to the CoP constituencies in Kenya and Uganda.
 - Analyse their interests, motivations, and strengths, as well as how their mandates, priorities, and areas of expertise intersect with the right to food and agroecology.

- From this mapping, draw insights into the types of partnerships, synergies, and value propositions that would best sustain collective action.
- c) **Assess and Recommend the Most Suitable Organisational Structure for the CoP**
 - Using evidence gathered from stakeholder mapping, key informant interviews, focus groups, and desk research, assess which organisational model would be most effective for the CoP including but not limited to where RTFI serves as the convenor or where RTFI serves as a coordination hub.
 - Determine which model would best harness actor dynamics and produce tangible results in advancing the right to food.
 - Identify which food rights issues could provide the strongest unifying agenda for collective advocacy and policy coherence.
 - Recommend the most practical governance, coordination, and communication arrangements under the preferred model.
- d) **Review and Reorganise the RTF Alliance Structure**
 - Assess the current functioning, strengths, and limitations of the RTF Alliance.
 - Provide recommendations on whether, and if yes, how, it can be revitalised or reorganised to serve effectively as the regional grassroots arm (nodes) of the CoP using the Learning Pot Methodology (LPM).
 - Map regional food rights issues to guide the work of RTF Alliance regional nodes, ensuring that local priorities inform learning, advocacy, and action.
 - Clarify how county-level insights and experiences can connect back to national-level CoP coordination and influence.
- e) **Generate Practical Recommendations for Engagement and Sustainability**
 - Suggest concrete strategies for engaging current and potential CoP members to promote ownership, reciprocity, and sustained participation.
 - Provide options for governance, communication, and learning processes that maintain vibrancy, collaboration, and institutional memory within the CoP.
- f) **Synthesize Insights and Validation**
 - Validate existing ideas, assumptions, and proposed structures through comparative research on similar CoPs and consultations in a Focus Group of stakeholders.
 - Produce a synthesis report summarising findings, alignment areas, and evidence-based recommendations on how to move forward with implementation.

4. Expected Deliverables and Timeline

- a) Inception Report and Work Plan (by Day 5)
 A short report outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, key activities, and timelines. The plan will be discussed and agreed upon with RTFI/HBF before the main work begins.
- b) Interim Analytical Report – Stakeholder and Structural Review (by Day 20)
 A summary of initial findings from the review of the CoP concept and constituencies; stakeholder mapping and analysis; and proposed options for organisational and governance structures.
- c) Final Synthesis and Recommendations Report (by Day 40)
 A final report presenting consolidated findings, validated insights, and practical recommendations. It should include a refined framework for the CoP, proposed coordination and governance arrangements, and a suggested roadmap for the transition. The consultant will also present these findings to RTFI/HBF and key partners for validation.

5. **Duration.** The consultancy will be carried out over a period of 40 **working days**, beginning from the date of contract signing.

Tasks Phase	Period
Phase 1: Review the existing concept, design, and rationale of the Route to Food Initiative's transition into a Community of Practice (CoP)	Nov 2025 – December 2025 (5 days)
Phase 2: Stakeholder Mapping, Interviews and writing of the interim report	January – February 2026 (25 days)
Phase 3: Synthesis, Recommendations and Final Report	March 2026 (10 days)

6. Reporting and Coordination

The consultant will report to the Agroecology and Food Rights Programme team at the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) Nairobi Office. Regular check-ins will be scheduled to review progress, align on findings, and ensure coherence with RTFI's strategic direction

7. Qualification and Experience

- Advanced degree in social sciences, development studies, human rights, or a related field.
- Demonstrated experience in stakeholder mapping, institutional design, or network coordination.
- Proven understanding of food systems, rights-based frameworks, and agroecology.
- Strong analytical, facilitation, and writing skills.
- Experience working with multi-stakeholder initiatives or communities of practice will be an added advantage

8. Application Procedure

Interested consultants or firms should submit:

- A **cover letter** detailing relevant expertise and availability;
- A **CV (max 5 pages)** highlighting related assignments;
- A **brief summary (1–2 pages)** interpreting the Terms of Reference - highlighting how the applicant understands the role and proposed approach
- Daily consultancy rate in Kenya shillings
- Applications should be sent to Christine.Gatwiri@ke.boell.org with copy to Harun.Warui@ke.boell.org by **05.12.2025** with the subject line: "Consultant - Community of Practice"