**Term of Reference: Candlenut Oil Market Expert**

Type: Short-term, International (ARF B1)

Duration: Up to 12 days from October 2024 – April 2025

Location: Remote

Reports to: Market Development Adviser, Market Development Facility Timor-Leste



**About the Market Development Facility**

Australia’s Market Development Facility (MDF) helps countries in the Indo-Pacific region to grow through improved productivity, economic diversification, competitiveness and trade.

MDF helps business partners and government to identify markets that have high potential to grow, be profitable, and deliver social and environmental value.

MDF supports catalytic innovation in these markets by co-investing with local and international partners to reduce the costs and risks of early-stage commercial opportunities. This accelerates progress to profitability and scale.

Our aim is to do good by supporting good business. MDF supports business investment and innovation that reduces poverty, economically empowers women and combats climate change.

MDF currently operates in Fiji, Timor-Leste, Samoa, Vanuatu, Tonga and Sri Lanka.

MDF is funded by the Australian Government and co-funded by the New Zealand Government in Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. It is implemented by Palladium, in partnership with Swisscontact

In Timor-Leste (TL), MDF promotes economic diversification and poverty reduction through partnerships in agribusiness and tourism. The team also encourages entrepreneurship by providing financial and advisory support to innovative businesses.

**Background**

Around 70 per cent of Timorese households use agriculture as the primary livelihood strategy. Despite this, agriculture only accounts for 17 percent of non-oil GDP, and most of it is coffee. Candlenut (Tetun: makii, Indonesian: kemiri) is native to TL and mainly exported in raw form. In 2023, TL exported 2,718 tons of raw candlenut, while exporting only 52 tons of candlenut oil. The candlenut oil exported is certified as organic.

Selling candlenut supplements the household economy and provides a source of cash income. As the majority of candlenut is sold in raw form, farmers receive a low price and have minimal incentive to harvest candlenut in high volumes.

Candlenut oil, which is derived from the seeds of Aleurites trees, has become increasingly sought after in global markets due to its applications in skincare, haircare, and cosmetics. The global market for candlenut oil is projected to grow from USD 3.03 billion in 2017 to USD 5.47 billion by 2030, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.2%.

To capitalize on the market opportunity, MDF TL is seeking a Candlenut Oil Market Expert to assess the quality of candlenut oil in TL, identify potential markets and facilitate its export.

**Key Responsibilities**

Specific deliverables will be determined in consultation with the short-term adviser. The scope shall include the following:

* Assess samples of Timorese candlenut oil and develop a product profile. (3 days)
* Identify potential markets and buyers (contact list, volume, and quality requirement of buyers) that have a demand for the Timorese candlenut and rank them based on the ease of exporting from TL. (5 days)
* Initiate business connections between candlenut importers and TL candlenut exporters and facilitate export. (4 days)

**Duration and Location**

The technical expert will provide up to twelve (12) days of input. The actual number of days may be less, subject to the direction of MDF. Input days are likely to be split (not continuous) and subject to negotiation with MDF.

The assignment is remote-based, and no travel expenses are anticipated. Any other costs e.g., lab testing must be pre-approved by MDF.

**Required Selection Criteria**

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

* Minimum 7 years of experience in the candlenut sector in developing economies.
* Experience working with candlenut exporters or importers on market access, strategy and operations.
* Strong interpersonal skills with demonstrated capacity to constructively engage with the private and public sector, development partners.
* Ability to speak and write in English or Indonesian.
* Knowledge of and experience in TL is preferred.