

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Study on Financing Opportunities for Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Projects in Egypt

Commissioned by:	Dutch Greenhouse Delta
On behalf of:	Invest International
In collaboration with:	Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)
Total Budget:	Between € 20,000 and € 25,000 (excl. VAT)
Assignment Duration:	Approx. 10 - 12 weeks
Location:	Egypt / Remote

1. Background and Context

As part of a strategic collaboration between Dutch Greenhouse Delta, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), and Invest International, the Netherlands is accelerating its international horticulture engagement by leveraging public-private partnerships. This joint effort seeks to promote sustainable and scalable agri-horti solutions globally, focusing on knowledge exchange, private sector development, and impact finance.

Egypt is one of the focus countries for this collaboration. With increasing pressure on water resources, growing concerns around food security, and the urgency of agricultural modernization, Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) is emerging as a key area of innovation. Dutch companies offer a wide range of relevant CEA technologies, from high-tech greenhouse systems and climate control to mid-tech ag-tech, irrigation, and water reuse solutions.

The Egyptian context presents both opportunity and challenge. While there is strong policy interest in sustainable food production and private sector innovation, the implementation of high-tech horticulture remains limited by access to appropriate financing. Capital-intensive technologies like CEA require long-term investment horizons, risk-mitigation structures, and partnerships that align both local and international interests.

To support the uptake of Dutch CEA solutions, this study, commissioned by Dutch Greenhouse Delta on behalf of Invest International, aims to map the financing landscape in Egypt, identify key financial actors and instruments, and develop actionable financing models that enable project implementation. The findings will inform matchmaking efforts, unlock financing pathways, and help build viable Dutch-Egyptian partnerships around scalable CEA initiatives.

This assignment is part of the broader mission outlined in: [Three Partners, One Mission: Accelerating International Horticulture](#)

2. Objectives of the Assignment

The main objective of this research is to create an actionable overview of financial instruments, institutions, and models to support Dutch-Egyptian cooperation in CEA. This includes:

- Mapping public and private financing bodies (local and international) relevant to agriculture, water, energy, and sustainability;
- Identifying and profiling 5 - 10 potential Egyptian frontrunner clients aligned with Dutch CEA offerings;
- Analysing key barriers to agri-financing in Egypt (regulatory, institutional, risk-related);
- Recommending suitable financial institutions for collaboration (e.g. Invest International, DFIs, local banks) and identifying applicable and supporting public grant funding programs and schemes (national, regional, and international) that can complement or de-risk financing structures;
- Developing financing models and use cases to demonstrate feasibility and unlock investment;
- Enabling concrete matchmaking efforts and support for initial pilot project proposals.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will:

- *Mapping & Analysis*
 - Identify relevant financing institutions (DFIs, banks, donor funds, foundations, government schemes);
 - Clarify their mandates, target regions, and risk appetite;
 - Assess their involvement in agriculture, horticulture, energy, water, and sustainability;
 - Explore processes and key parameters (loan duration, interest, collateral, eligibility);
 - Determine gaps in available financing instruments (e.g. lack of agri-friendly terms or guarantees).
 - Clarify financing partners appetite to collaborate in funding future CEA projects in Egypt (Matchmaking)
 - Clarify existing forms of funding (equity, debt, mezzanine etc.), tenors, securities, average time needed for investment decision process, KYC etc.
- *Case Development & Feasibility*
 - Identify and develop 3-5 potential pilot cases, defined as concrete market entry or scale-up opportunities for Dutch companies. These may take several forms, including:
 - Pilot or feasibility initiatives to demonstrate viability and trigger scaling;
 - Concrete project implementations with local partners and potential co-funding from financial institutions;
 - Existing agri/horti operations seeking upgrades through Dutch technologies;
 - Public-private initiatives with both commercial and non-commercial components (e.g. involving public infrastructure).
 - For each case, assess financial readiness, alignment with national agri/climate/food policies, and potential financing structures (e.g. blended finance, co-lending, guarantees).
 - Evaluate bankability, scalability, and key risk factors.
 - Identify lessons learned from previous CEA financing experiences in Egypt. Facilitate matchmaking opportunities with Invest International and local funding actors.
- *Stakeholder Engagement*
 - Conduct interviews with financial and agri-sector stakeholders in Egypt and the Netherlands;
 - Facilitate early matchmaking discussions where possible with local financial institutions;
 - Identify synergies with ongoing Dutch programs in Egypt (e.g. PIB, RVO funding instruments).

4. Deliverables

Deliverables	Timeline	Description
Inception Note	Week 2	Methodology, stakeholder list, detailed work plan
Draft Report	Week 8	Interim findings, financing landscape, proposed cases
Presentation Materials	Week 9	Matchmaking deck and visuals
Final Report	Week 10-12	Full findings, recommendations, financing roadmap

Optional: Contribution to matchmaking events or bilateral workshops.



5. Methodology

The assignment will be awarded through a competitive process involving 3–5 parties. The final contractor will be selected based on quality, expertise, and approach.

- **Research Methods**

- Conduct qualitative desk research and stakeholder interviews in Egypt and where needed, the Netherlands;
- Map the local financial ecosystem and regulatory landscape;
- Compare Egypt's horticultural financing conditions (e.g. lending terms, risk management, collateral, investment decision timelines) with other industry sectors in Egypt to identify gaps and opportunities for alignment;
- Align findings with the actual needs and constraints of Dutch companies under the Netherlands public-private partnership on horticulture (PIB), and the financial instruments available via Invest International and other DFIs, to ensure the proposed models are both practical and implementable in the current market context.

- **Data Collection and Analysis**

- Qualitative insights drawn from semi-structured interviews;
- Cross-referencing policy, institutional, and regulatory sources;
- Alignment with business case development to ensure practicality.

6. Oversight and Coordination

This study will be implemented under the framework of the Dutch-Egyptian Partners for International Business (PIB) program. Oversight will be provided by:

- **Dutch Greenhouse Delta (DGD):** Lead commissioning and strategic direction;
- **Invest International:** Input on financing instruments and structuring;
- **RVO / Dutch Embassy Cairo:** Contextual support and stakeholder facilitation.

Weekly online stand-ups will be scheduled for progress monitoring and steering.

7. Consultant Profile

Open to individuals or consortia with:

- Proven experience in agri-finance, development finance, or investment mapping;
- Knowledge of Egyptian or MENA financial ecosystems;
- Familiarity with horticulture, CEA, ag-tech, or Dutch technology (strong advantage);
- Fluency in English; Arabic language skills are desirable.

8. Budget and Payment Schedule

Total Fee: €20,000 – €25,000 (excl. VAT)

- Includes research, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and presentation materials.
- Travel or event-related costs (if any) will be discussed separately.

Payment Milestones:

- 25% upon signing and approval of inception note
- 50% upon submission of draft report
- 25% upon approval of final report

9. Application Guidelines

Interested applicants should submit:

- A concise technical proposal (max. 5 pages), describing approach, methodology, and planning;
- Relevant CVs or firm portfolio;
- Budget breakdown (daily rates and total cost);
- Availability and proposed start date.