

## Franchise model of Aqqaponics system

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### What impact is intended?

Climate change has alarming consequences for agricultural sector & food security. Developing countries such as India face five the following problems:

- More than 55% of the population practice agriculture in climate sensitive areas.
- 53% of the area suffers from serious soil degradation.
- 30 million hectares experience reductions in water availability per person.
- Agriculture is dependent on rainfall.
- Farmers mostly produce one product to sell.

AQGRI+ offers a Business-in-a-Box franchise package for entrepreneurs that include:

- Development of several economic products to diversify income (vermi-compost, worms, compost tea, fish, vegetables).
- Resource-efficient & production methods for optimised output per m<sup>2</sup>.
- A solution that is buffered against climate variability.

### What financial leverage can be realised?

AQGRI+ franchise model, as a replication & expansion strategy:

- AQGRI+ Netherlands is the core for innovation & development of Business-in-a-Box. It receives income from annual licenses fees, a fraction from the Box fees & franchise income.
- Local AQGRI+ offices are responsible to select & train agro-entrepreneurs (Franchisees). They receive income from sales of Boxes & franchise income from franchisees.
- Standardisation is a key to scalability & profitability when working with the BoP markets.

Building on the knowledge that AQGRI+ has in the Netherlands, will set up a pilot to India. It will develop a business model for the system, packaged into a standardised 'Business in a Box' format. Under the franchise model, local offices such as AQGRI+ India Ltd will select, train and support Franchisees (agro-entrepreneurs). It will then continue to champion the franchise model, introduce the Box to other countries, fine-tune the model, and coordinate best practices among countries.

### **What are the strengths of this instrument?**

- It is a technology integrating Vermicomposting and Aquaponics in one system to maximise resources use efficiency and production per m<sup>2</sup>.
- It integrates an integrated hydroponics and vermicomposting system to generate Vermicompost, Worms, Compost tea, Fish, and Vegetables as end-products.
- It 90 % less water than soil agriculture, as it is a closed-loop system.
- It recycles organic waste to produce Vermicompost and compost tea in which their application improves soil fertility that reduces crop water demand and improves soil ability to uptake carbon for climate adaptation and mitigation in agriculture, respectively.
- It produces food under controlled environment, thus less vulnerable to climate variability and with very high production per sq-m, contributing to reduced land use pressure and related CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. emissions. It produces 40 tons of food per hectare while grass-fed beef produces 84 kg/ha).

### **What input is requested?**

AQGRI+ is looking for the following inputs to implement the Aqqripionics innovation:

- Access to climate finance: To run the R&D activities of Aqqripionics system in the Netherlands; to conduct intensive market research in India.
- Network: To gain network in the field of climate financing, sustainable agriculture, and sustainable waste management in India (or potentially other countries).
- Exposure: To obtain visibility for AQGRI+ innovation globally