

REQUEST FOR CONCEPT NOTES (RFCN)

ADVANCING FUNCTIONAL INPUT AND OUTPUT MARKETS AND TRADE TO DRIVE PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVE SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' RESILIENCE IN MOZAMBIQUE.

CONTENT

- A. Synopsis of the RFCN**
- B. Scope of work**
- C. Technical Evaluation Criteria**
- D. Eligibility Requirements**
- E. How to Apply**

A. SYNOPSIS OF THE RFCN

RFCN No.	Autogenerated
Issue date	Autogenerated
Title	Advancing functional input and output markets and trade to drive productivity and improve farmers' resilience in Mozambique
Issuing organization	AGRA – Sustainably growing Africa's Food Systems Head office: West End Towers, 4 th Floor Kanjata Road, off Muthangari Drive, Off Waiyaki Way P.O. Box 66773 Westlands, 00800 Nairobi, Kenya
Submission of questions & Concept Note application	We only accept online submission at AGRA's online portal AMIS https://agra.synisys.com/portfolio/requests
Deadline for Receipt of submissions	By 11 th August 2023, 11:59PM SA Time
Deadline for Responding to the questions (for AGRA)	By 10 th August 2023, 11:59PM SA Time
1st Deadline for Receipt of submissions	
2nd Deadline for Receipt of submissions	
Final Deadline for receipt of grant applications	11th August 2023, 11:59PM Southern Africa Time (SAST/CAT)

B. SCOPE OF WORK

1.0 Background

1.1 AGRA

AGRA was established in 2006 to work with partners to catalyze an inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa. It strives to transform smallholder farming from a solitary struggle to survive to a business that thrives in country's food systems. AGRA puts smallholder farmers first on the agenda, recognizing that no country has moved from low to middle income without agricultural and food systems transformation. Since its inception, AGRA has completed two important investment cycles. Through the current strategy (AGRA 2023-2027), AGRA intends to influence and leverage its partners to build a robust enabling environment where private sector thrives, and all smallholder farmers are empowered to produce sufficient and healthy food. To achieve its ambitious goal, AGRA seeks to contribute to three interrelated and interdependent strategic objectives that are to:

- i. Empower and build resilience of smallholder farmers
- ii. Support the development of inclusive markets to improve functional agricultural systems
- iii. Build state capability to sustain agricultural transformation.

In meeting the above objectives in the African Continent, AGRA will focus its work around four business lines: (i) Inclusive Markets and Trade, (ii) Seed Systems (iii) Sustainable Farming, and (iv) Policy and State Capability which fit together into an integrated whole and drive synergies with one another. Three selected cross-cutting areas which include Inclusivity (Women & Youth), Climate Change Adaptation and Nutrition shape AGRA work to ensure we are building sustainable food systems and delivering impact to farmers in an inclusive manner.

1.2 AGRA Mozambique Strategy

In AGRA Mozambique the strategy period of 2023 – 2027, AGRA aims to meet the strategic goal of: "Advancing functional input and output markets and trade to drive productivity and improve farmers' resilience". AGRA builds on its past investments to meet

the country's priorities and strategic objectives of transforming agriculture and food systems as stated in the Agriculture Sector Strategy (PEDSA 2030), and its National Investment Plan (PNISA 2022-2026). In response to diverse market dynamics in different regions of the country, as well as different crop value chain priorities, AGRA Mozambique will focus on different market and MSME types to enhance delivery and smallholder farmer's outreach. AGRA interventions focus on both food and cash crops (maize, soybean, and rice), with strong engagement of Micro and Medium-Large SMEs in the Beira and Nacala corridors, and Zambezi Valley, while strengthening the cassava value chain in geographies such as Pemba-Lichinga, Limpopo along the maize and soya crops.

With that context, AGRA Mozambique strategy intends to meet its goal through series of interventions that contribute to achieving the following three strategic objectives (SOs):

SO1: Increase smallholder farmers (SHF) access to input and output markets through strengthening of SMEs capacity for better services delivery and creation of work opportunities for women and youth.

Smallholder farmers in Mozambique have limited access to formal markets with a pull effect in driving production and productivity through farmers' use of quality inputs and adoption of good agricultural practices in response to signals from assured markets. In addition, smallholder farmers have limited access to financial resources. In smallholder farmers response, MSMEs play a critical role, particularly those owned by youth and women. Thus, building the capacity of these actors, and scaling the existing network will pave a way to enhancing work opportunities along the supported value chains. This objective aims to strengthen the input and output markets and facilitate financial services with a view towards achieving the following outcomes:

- Improved access to high quality agricultural inputs,
- Reduced post-harvest losses,
- Increased access to finance, and
- Increased SHF access to output markets.

SO2: Increase smallholder farmers' (SHFs) crop productivity and resilience through increased access to private led extension services for expanded women and youth work opportunities.

The crop yields in Mozambique remain low crop's yield compared to its neighboring countries. This is due to limited use of quality agricultural inputs, insufficient access to extension services by smallholder farmers and exposure to climatic shocks which affect crop productivity. This objective aims to address the root causes of low productivity and build smallholder farmer's capacity to respond to climatic shocks, nutrition shortfalls and market risks towards achieving the following outcomes:

- Increased access to extension services,
- Increased adoption of technologies and practices,
- Improved gender and youth inclusivity in agriculture,
- Increased crop yields, and
- Increased availability of climate smart and nutrient dense seed varieties.

SO3: Strengthen government capacity to coordinate, strategize, implement, deliver, monitor, and evaluate (i.e., programs, and policies) complying with Food Systems approach to enhance women and youth work opportunities.

In view of AGRA past investments, and engagement with government, AGRA has learnt that government capabilities for policy implementation/enforcement, agriculture stakeholders' engagement and coordination, lack of a robust M&E system, and effective policies, are some of the constraints to an effective participation of the private sector in the transformation of the agricultural sector and food systems in the country. This objective aims to strengthen government's capacity to lead, and coordinate sector policy dialogue, as it implements a series of policy reforms and action towards the following outcomes:

- Improved enabling policy environment,
- Improved Ag sector coordination and strategic institutional capacity,
- Strengthened policy implementation capacity,
- Strengthened Gov Ag M&E/KM systems, and
- Enhanced implementation of inclusive and well-resourced flagships.

2.0 AGRA Interventions' Rationale and Approaches

AGRA Mozambique recommends all interested applicants to read the full description of the AGRA Mozambique Strategy (2023-2027), that can be downloaded from AGRA website at the link: www.agra.org.

AGRA's rationale for market development-based interventions (SO1) is to increase the pool of market actors and build their capacity, solid linkages with other actors and be better prepared and able to access finance and markets. The interventions are co-created with AGRA Team and are expected to be implemented individually or jointly (consortia and platforms), considering the different technical specificities and needs for each value chain, inclusivity, and geography. With regard to SO2, the rationale for the interventions is to increase crop yield by increasing access to quality agricultural inputs and technologies that are climate smart, access to extension services that are more inclusive which shall also be implemented through stand alone or consortia applicants to address the root causes of low productivity and build farmer's capacity to respond to climatic shocks, nutrition shortfalls and market risks.

Finally, regarding SO3 while support to ongoing policy reforms continue with central government engagement, the rationale under the current call for concept notes is strengthening inter-sectorial coordination, and managerial capacity at provincial level (provincial sector coordination secretariats, farmer's forums and Provincial Farmer Unions, Women and Youth organizations/associations) to enhance policy advocacy for implementation of policies. Advocacy organizations and platforms are encouraged to forming consortia/coalition for integrated interventions.

3.0 Call for Concept Notes

The call for Concept Notes is a first step towards the development of specific proposals for interventions in AGRA geographies. To support in achieving AGRA's goal of contributing to the country's agriculture and food systems, AGRA Mozambique is seeking potential partners, to manage the necessary sub-awards, in the delivery of the above three Strategic Objectives (SOs) of its strategy 2023 - 2027.

AGRA invites submission of Concept Note applications from interested and qualified organizations/institutions operating in Mozambique's agricultural value chains that contribute to achieving AGRA's intended outcomes. Priority will be given to applicants that present integrated approaches to agriculture and food systems transformation and demonstrate strategic collaboration across the agriculture ecosystem. The potential partners will include, but not limited to, the following:

- Relevant departments/units of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and other agriculture sector lined ministries (e.g., Ministry of Commerce and Industry; State Secretariate for Youth and Employment, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Action), with respect to providing an enabling environment for agriculture and food systems, environment, land, market and trade, gender and youth, finance, related policies;
- National agriculture research and development, extension system, academia, and CGIAR institutions.
- Private sector operators along the entire target crop value chains such as private seed companies, service providers e.g., mechanization, irrigation, post-harvest, processing, off takers, etc., agro-dealers, farmer' organizations, women and youth organizations, and financial institutions.
- NGOs or private firms providing Business Development Services, and other consulting companies.

NB: Organizations/institutions with capability can submit individual applications. In addition, organizations are allowed to jointly (consortia) submit ideas and/or Concept Note applications. Where applicable after receipt of the application, AGRA reserves the right to recommend organizations/institutions to form partnerships with the purpose of strengthening implementation, at the conception and forward stages. Public-Private Partnerships are encouraged.

4.0 Period of Performance

For the approved ideas and concepts going into the development of proposals, the expected overall performance/implementation period for proposed interventions is 4 years' maximum, from September/October 2023 to September/October 2027.

5.0 Period of Grant Applications

This Request for Concept Notes (RFCN) will remain open for a period of 20 working days, from 17 July 2023 to 11th August 2023 closing by 11:59pm Southern Africa Time (SAST/CAT). The interested organizations/Institutions must submit before the final deadline. The Concept Notes submitted will be evaluated on a rolling basis as indicated above in the synopsis. Applications made after the final deadline 11th August 2023 will not be considered.

C. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criteria		Points
1.	Technical Approach: Description of the methodology and approach which meet or exceed the stated technical specifications or scope of work- in either one or a combination of the following, given your application for the following focus crops value chain: maize, rice, soybean, cassava and horticulture; and systems development (a) inclusive market and trade (b) sustainable farming (c) seed systems (d) policy and state capability (e) cross cutting issues (gender and youth, climate change resilience and nutrition)	50 Points
2.	Management approach: the grant application should describe how the proposed team members have the necessary experience and capabilities to carry out the scope of work (attach the team member's CVs).	30 Points
3.	Past Experience: Evidence of working experience in delivering assignments in Mozambique in the activities stated on the scope of work- in either one or a combination of the following given your submission for the following crops value chains: maize, rice, soybean and cassava; and systems (a) inclusive market and trade (b) sustainable farming (c) seed systems (d) policy and state capability (e) cross cutting issues (gender and youth, climate change resilience and nutrition)	20 points
Total		100 points

NB. For advancing to the next stage (technical and financial proposal development) the organization/institution idea/concept note must score 70 points and above.

D. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Organizations contemplating submission of applications in response to this request for concept note (RFCN) must determine whether they meet the following requirements to be eligible for AGRA's grant:

- a). Five (5) years demonstrable organizations working experience in either one or a combination of the following crops value chain: maize, rice, soybean, and cassava; in (a) inclusive market and trade (b) sustainable farming, (c) seed systems, (d) policy and state capability, and (e) cross cutting issues (gender and youth, climate change resilience and nutrition).
- b). Demonstrable grasp of inclusive market and trade issues in Mozambique
- c). Demonstrable grasp of seed systems in Mozambique
- d). Demonstrable grasp of sustainable farming in Mozambique
- e). Demonstrable grasp of policy environment issues in Mozambique
- f). Demonstrable working experience in programs supporting women and youth as stakeholders in implementation activities.
- g). A team with experience in seed system development in any of the following crop value chains maize, rice, soybean, and cassava
- h). The organization/Institution should have a valid company registration in Mozambique.
- i). Provide evidence of existing relationships working with the sector actors of market and trade, sustainable farming, seeds, and policies in Mozambique
- j). Provide CVs of key staff proposed for this assignment.

E. HOW TO APPLY

If eligible and interested in this Request for concept note Application, please provide the following via AGRA's online portal AMIS by/before, **11th August 2023, 11:59PM Southern Africa Time (SAST/CAT)**.

Additionally, applicants at proposal-stage once AGRA has communicated to the applicant of the approved concept, are expected to make submission of following documents (at AGRA AMIS online system for which applicant will be informed by AGRA);

1. Request a new account from here: <https://agra.synisys.com/>
2. Create an account as an applicant
3. Log in to the system with your credentials: <https://agra.synisys.com/portfolio/requests>
4. Choose the request and submit your application via Create New Response section of the form.
5. Details to be submitted via the portal include;
 - a). A copy of your organization's registration certificate
 - b). Detailed organization profile
 - c). Concept note (AGRA template provided) - stating an understanding of the scope of work and elaboration of the methodology including how each of the tasks will be executed. Also details;
 - **Past performance:** Demonstrated evidence of undertaking at least three similar assignments done. The information shall include the legal name and address of the organization for which services were provided, a description of services provided and a current contact phone number and email address of a responsible and knowledgeable representative of the organization
 - Demonstrate availability of appropriate skills among staff in sufficient numbers and experience in Mozambique and attach their CVs.
 - d). Budget Estimate
 - e). Two (2) years Audited financial statement (send a signed copy by the auditor).

