**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR CONSULTANCIES TO ASSIST LARGE OFF-TAKERS BUILD SUPPY CHAINS IN 13 AGRA FOCUS COUNTRIES**

**REF: FTRP/CFEOI 01/2019**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS ISSUED: 5TH SEPTEMBER 2019**

**EXPIRATION DATE: 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019; 17:00 Hrs. EAT (GMT +3)**

# **Background**

Founded in 2006, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), is an African-led African-based organization that seeks to catalyze Agriculture Transformation in Africa. AGRA is focused on putting smallholder farmers at the center of the continent’s growing economy by transforming agriculture from a solitary struggle to survive into farming as a business that thrives. As the sector that employs the majority of Africa’s people, nearly all of them small-scale farmers, AGRA recognizes that developing smallholder agriculture into a productive, efficient, and sustainable system is essential to ensuring food security, lifting millions out of poverty, and driving equitable growth across the continent.

AGRA is rolling out a new 5-year strategy to catalyze and sustain an Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa to increase incomes and improve food security for 30 million farmers. Under this strategy, AGRA will deliver through an approach that simultaneously catalyzes change at farmer level, strengthens input and output market systems and puts government at the center to enable and champion private-sector-led agricultural growth at national level.

One initiative within AGRA’s strategy is the Africa Food Trade and Resilience Program, which focuses on promoting regional food trade and food markets through policy predictability and market systems development across 14 countries[[1]](#footnote-1) and beyond in East, West, and Southern Africa to improve food security, generate more rural jobs, strengthen climate resilience, and increase income for farmers.

The Africa Food Trade and Resilience Program will include two primary strategic components:

1. Working with Government, business and civil society to stimulate Africa-specific solutions to improve the transparency and predictability of governments’ interventions to unlock investment and regional trade;
2. Working directly with private companies that source, process, and trade food in the region, to maximize investment, coordination and benefits to smallholder farmers.

In each component, AGRA collaborates closely with strategic partners who have major programs in these areas, as well as work to identify and support relevant strategic regional initiatives, with a view to maximize learning, coordination and impact.

# **Context**

Most off-takers, aggregators and agents show up in production communities at harvest season or wait for deliveries at the factory gates. They are not involved in production activities and do not provide services to farmers. They use ‘buy low, sell high’ business model, which has led to high capital investment in cleaners and dryers and has dis-incentivized farmers as they are not compensated for all the effort made to enhance the quality of their produce. Below is a summary of some of these issues which result in market failures that make food commodities less competitive:

1. System level issues: Misaligned incentives between off-takers, trader intermediaries and smallholder producers. The current incentives for traders embedded in the system are purely economic with less regard for climatic, nutrition and inclusiveness.
2. Government level issues: Policy and political economy risks affecting grain trade, measures to deal with real and perceived or apparent food shortage that are not trade friendly such as export ban;
3. Farmer level issues: Shortages of input and post-harvest credit facilities, knowledge/capacity, access to inputs and output markets as well as technologies, which in concert with other factors keep productivity low.

**Objective of Expression of Interest**

AGRA wishes to pre-qualify competent consulting firms or consultants in each country to support off takers with technical assistance and other de-risking instruments to tackle the challenges highlighted above and help them grow inclusive and resilient supply chains.

When these off takers request specific services in relation to the partnership with AGRA then 3 pre-qualified consulting firms or consultants will be invited to provide a work plan and financial offer which will then be evaluated. A service contract will be concluded with the most competitive offer with AGRA paying consulting fees and the large off-takers paying for daily sustenance, accommodation and travel expenses.

The TA will be tailor-made to meet the specific needs of these off takers in their context. Where it makes business sense for them (buyers), the consultants will explore the opportunity to link this initiative to other AGRA investments in country such as: blended finance instruments; local consortia of seed companies, agro-dealers, extension systems, aggregators and other service providers. The consultant will also channel feedback from anchor buyers about the operating environment to AGRA to feed into evidence generation for advocacy to improve the business environment.

Which off takers will be targeted?

All off takers working in the regional food value chains within the focus regions of AGRA and its Africa Regional Food Trade Initiative including southern, eastern, western and Sahel regions of Africa may stand to benefit from this call for expression of interest.

Which value chains will be targeted?

The call for expression of interest will be restricted to agricultural food commodities that are significantly traded across any pair of countries within the stipulated regions of AGRA.

For this Expression of Interest (EOI) we would like to know your daily fees inclusive of all taxes for different categories of staff.

The pre-qualification will be valid for 3 years (2019, 2020 and 2021).

**Implementation Tactics**

To solve the above-mentioned issues, AGRA proposes to use a “demand pull” approach and engage with the off takers engaged in regional value-chains in Africa to develop new ways of more directly linking incentives (economic, nutrition, climatic and inclusivity). Working with off takers to align incentives of all the participants in the supply chain will create sustainable opportunities for smallholder farmers and unlock finance to value chain players, such as working capital to the off-taker-linked food aggregators through structured trade.

Consultants/consulting firms will be expected to adopt these implementation tactics in their work:

1. Sustainability through catalytic interventions: This implies that the transactional relationships and systems facilitated by the consultant must not create donor dependency;
2. Ownership: Encourage off takers to take ownership of the change process so they continue to invest in upgrading over time;
3. Relationship: Build and strengthen relationships between the anchor buyer and local market actors, rather than establishing the consultant as the direct, long-term actor within the system.

**Eligibility Requirements**

AGRA is looking for firms (for profit or not for profit) or consultants that have a keen interest and experience in assisting off takers in building supply chains.

The firm or consultant should demonstrate that it has expertise with the following profile:

* Individuals with a relevant university degree and relevant Consultancy work experience in building inclusive supply chain management systems to agricultural off-takers.
* In depth understanding of mainstreaming approaches for climate resilience, nutrition sensitive agriculture and participation of vulnerable groups such as women and youth in regional value chains is required.
* Excellent understanding of business planning and management, financial analysis, human resources and governance, marketing and sales.
* Excellent understanding of agriculture systems in Africa.
* Excellent grasp of markets systems analysis and design of interventions that have the potential to sustainably capture large number of smallholder farmers.
* Experience in market linkages and structured trade practices related services to off takers specific requirements in such areas as: extension systems, Warehouse Receipt System, transparent and efficient settlement mechanisms, value chain financing; insurance products, quality standards; procurement systems that allow incentives to flow to farmers among others.
* Relevant experience in at least one market in each of the sub-regions of east, south, Sahel, and western Africa.
* Strong writing and communication skills.
* Language proficiency in English. Proficiency in French would be a plus.

The expression of interest should include the following:

* Short write-up (2 pages) showing a good understanding of the wider scope of work as presented above giving specific examples by country or value chain.
* Short write-up (1 page) on the relevant experience with specific off takers in your country.
* Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of the proposed experts in your firm and daily fee rates in USD plus taxes.
* Statutory documents listed under STEP 2 of the appraisal and selection process.

The consulting firm or consultant meeting the above eligibility criteria must furnish AGRA with their credentials and eligibility proving documentation while responding as part of the pre-qualification process.

**Appraisal and Selection Process**

Prequalification of consulting firms or consultants will be on a pass or fail basis and will be based on the following:

1. **Firm or Consultant’s profile:** access to several experts in the agricultural supply chain development and off-taker domain.
2. **Submission of firm’s statutory documents:** Namely registration documents, tax compliance certificate and certified audited reports for past three years
3. **Demonstrated experience in agricultural supply chain development** and off-taker advisory in the country the firm wants to qualify for.

When off takers request specific services in relation to the partnership with AGRA then 3 prequalified consulting firms or consultants will be invited to provide a work plan and financial offer which will then be evaluated. A service contract will be awarded to the most competitive offer with scoring based on the following criteria:

A. Specific experience of the firm relevant to the assignment and country: 30%

B. Financial Proposal and work plan: 40%

C. Key Experts proposed for the assignment: 30%

TOTAL SCORE................................................................................................................ 100%

**Language**

The EOI responses will be written in English

**Submission Details**

1. Interested parties are requested to submit their application indicating their pre-qualification for the assignment criteria.
2. The email subject must read “Expression of Interest to become Consultant in Supply Chain Building for Large Off-takers”. AGRA shall not be liable for not opening proposals that are submitted with a different subject.
3. Expression of interest MUST be submitted by September 18th, 2019 at 17:00 Hours East Africa Time (GMT +3) to rfcn@agra.org.

For more information on AGRA kindly visit the website: [www.agra.org](http://www.agra.org)

# Annex 1: Consulting firm or Consultant Profile

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| --- | --- |
| Full Legal Name (As per registration certificate) |  |
| Address |  |
| Office Telephone Number(s) |  |
| E-mail Address |  |
| Web Address |  |
| Name of CEO |  |
| CEO Contacts, email, Phone number |  |
| Contact Person, Title |  |
| Contact Person, E-mail address |  |
| Contact Person, Phone number |  |
| Year organization was registered |  |
| Legal status of the organization |  |
| Registration Number |  |
| TAX ID Number |  |
| Organization’sstatement/purpose and primary sectors of the organization’s operation |  |
| Country/Countries the firm wants to qualify for |  |
| Relevant Professional experiences details:(max *one-page summary*) |  |
| Expressing good understanding of the wider scope of work giving specific examples by country or value chain. (max two-page summary) |  |
| Short CV and Proof of Track Recordwith respect to the Proposed Roles and Responsibilities (max 2,000 characters with spaces) |  |

# We/I hereby certify that the information contained herein and attached hereto is complete and accurate to the best of our/my knowledge.

# Lead Consultant/ Head of Firm

# Signature Date

1. Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso; Ivory Coast, Togo [↑](#footnote-ref-1)