

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

**IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL TRADE BY HARMONIZING STANDARDS, PROVIDING MARKET INFORMATION, ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGE, AND ENABLING ACCESS TO FINANCE BY PROMOTING WAREHOUSE RECEIPT FINANCING AND E-VOUCHER**

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## 1. SYNOPSIS OF THE RFP

RFCN No.	<b>PD/RFP 016/2023</b>						
Issue date	<b>28/Jul/2023</b>						
Title	IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL TRADE BY HARMONIZING STANDARDS, PROVIDING MARKET INFORMATION, ESTABLISHING MARKET LINKAGE, AND ENABLING ACCESS TO FINANCE BY PROMOTING WAREHOUSE RECEIPT FINANCING AND E-VOUCHER						
Region	Eastern Africa						
Country	Ethiopia						
Timeline of Proposal Development:	Lot No:	Deadline	Concepts Review	Notification of successful Grant concepts	Development of Proposals	Review, Internal/ External approval of Proposals	Fund Approval, Award and Inception meetings
	1	27/Sep/2023	21/Oct/2023	23/Oct/2023	25/Oct/2023	27/Oct/2023	01/Nov/2023
Issuing organization	AGRA – Sustainably growing Africa's Food Systems Head office: West End Towers, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Kanjata Road, off Muthangari Drive, Off Waiyaki Way P.O. Box 66773 Westlands, 00800 Nairobi, Kenya						

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 AGRA

Established in 2006, AGRA is an African-led and Africa-based institution that puts 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. Together with our partners, we are working to sustainably grow Africa's food systems.

AGRA strengthens seed systems, develops and promotes sustainable farming practices, helps unlock trade and markets, and supports governments who lead their countries' development. We work with farmers to adapt to climate change, increase soil health, and protect the environment. AGRA believes deeply in the urgency of reducing the inequality that women face in agriculture, and to unlocking the power and innovation of youth. More information: <https://agra.org/>

### 2.2 Country/Region or Unit Strategy of AGRA

AGRA Ethiopia Strategy (2023-2027) will be implemented using a mix of delivery approaches partnering with in-country technical partners, national government institutions, the private sector as well as a consortium of service providers with experience of effectively supporting agriculture and food system transformation in Ethiopia. AGRA aims to reach 2.2 million smallholder farmers in Ethiopia under its 2023-2027 strategy period of which at least 30% are women.

Interventions will be implemented through the following four complementary and integrated business lines: Seed Systems, Sustainable Farming, Inclusive Markets and Trade, and Policy and State Capability.

### 3. THE GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

#### 3.1 Grant Intervention Areas

This is a call for proposals for projects addressing:

**Business Line:** IMT: Inclusive Markets and Trade

The call is open to implementing organizations in:

Region	Country
Eastern Africa	Ethiopia

AGRA invites submission of grant proposals from interested and qualified organizations operating in the agricultural value chain for projects that contribute to the achievement of AGRA's stated intended outcomes. Priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate Trade & Inclusive markets, Digital, Policy & State capability.

#### Grant Funding Opportunity Description

##### IMT 1. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A DIGITAL MARKET LINKAGE PLATFORM TO FACILITATE MARKET ACCESS FOR PRODUCERS BY DIRECTLY LINKING THEM WITH POTENTIAL BUYERS.

The general goal of the digital market linkage platform is to provide producers within the farmers' production cluster (FPC) with directly connecting with the right potential buyers via the platform, allowing them to explore new market opportunities and obtain better prices for their products. Its specific objectives are:-

- Connect sellers with the right buyers digitally and no need for farmers to bring their produce to market addresses the existing transportation bottlenecks and associated costs.
- Remove the role of intermediaries or brokers, direct connect buyers, and enhances the share of farmers from the final price.
- Enhance awareness of market prices (market information) and helps sellers and buyers to locate commodity availability from various markets in the county and help them to sell their products.
- Avail the required information on warehouse and transportation services for both buyers and sellers.
- Reduce the costs and risks of handling cash and increase the ease of conducting transactions by implementing a digital payment system.

This entails (i) Creating a functional digital output market platform to connect farmers and buyers; (ii) Strengthening the digital payment system and market information dissemination to reduce risks and costs of handling cash at the individual level; (iii) Strengthening enabling environment, with focus on strong legal framework and supporting market institutions

##### IMT 2. SUSTAINING AND SCALING UP THE SUCCESS OF THE NATIONAL WAREHOUSE SYSTEM TO SERVE COOPERATIVES, UNIONS, AND OFFTAKES

The general goal of CCF is to enable smallholder farmers to escape distress sales during the post-harvest season and hold food back to the lean season thereby improving rural household income and contributing to food security. The system also plays a key role in minimizing post-harvest loss (currently estimated at 30% in Ethiopia) by providing secure and sound warehousing services and facilitating the adoption of uniform grading and measurement standards. Its specific objectives are:-

- Increased access to credit based on the pledging of agricultural commodities stored securely in a warehouse
- Strengthen producers and their association's negotiation power in the market
- Improve the quality of the goods stored under better conditions.
- Increase local food processing capacity.

##### IMT 3. AUTOMATION OF INPUT VOUCHER SYSTEM(EVOUCHER) PHASE II – SCALING UP THE SUCCESSES OF THE PILOT PROGRAM IN ETHIOPIA

The eVoucher system is designed to automate the enrollment, issuance, redemption, reconciliation, loan collection, and reporting processes of the paper-based input voucher system (IVS). IVS is a paper-based system that uses triplicate vouchers which must be aggregated and reconciled by Multi-purpose Cooperatives, Unions, and MFIs or RuSACCOs. The general goal of the e-Voucher project is to improve access to financial services related to input provision and increase access to credit by smallholder farmers. Its specific objectives are:-

- Improve service delivery to smallholder farmers.
- Reduce transaction costs for Financial Institutions (FI) and multipurpose cooperatives resulting reduction in the price of inputs.
- Facilitate complex reconciliation accounts of FIs and cooperatives.
- Prevent fraud and ensure integrity.
- Provide real-time information on input sales helping to make informed decisions.

Note: Organizations can submit individual proposals. In addition, organizations are allowed to jointly submit grant proposals. Where applicable after receipt of proposals, AGRA has a chance to ask the organizations to jointly implement at award stage.

Grant applications made after the final deadline of 27/Sep/2023 will not be considered.

#### 3.2 Special Conditions under the RFP

Applications should be in line with the following: **No Data**

#### 3.3 Award Distribution

Award Distribution is not applicable

### 3.4 Period of Grant performance

The maximum Grant period of performance is 48 months from 01/Nov/2023 to 31/Oct/2027. Each grant concept application should be contextualized given the solution(s) being proposed.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Type of Organization

The potential project partners are:

- a). Five (5) years of demonstrable organization working experience in market Systems interventions
- b). Demonstrable experience working with the Federal and Regional Government in Ethiopia.
- c). Demonstrable working experience in programs supporting women and youth as stakeholders in implementation activities.
- d). Demonstrated working experience, staffing and logistics in priority regions. A team with experience in integrated value chain development in any of the following value chains of crops; maize, beans, soybean, rice
- e). The organization should have a legal presence and article of establishment in Ethiopia
- f). Provide CVs of key staff proposed for this assignment.

### 4.2 Partner capacity

No Data

AGRA therefore invites submission of grant applications from interested and qualified organizations operating in agriculture and or related sectors. Organizations contemplating submission of applications in response to this Request for Proposal (RFP) must determine whether they meet the following requirements to be eligible for AGRA grant award:

1. List of technical capacity is required
2. Provide CVs of key staff proposed for this assignment.

If an institution or organization meets the above eligibility criteria, AGRA may request additional documentation to be submitted as part of pre-award process. Organizations are advised that any funds made available are subject to AGRA's and donors' accountability and audit requirements.

## 5. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criteria	Value Chains	
Technical Approach	(a) Innovative market system solutions (b) innovative lead firm engagement (c) Advocacy and policy engagement (d) Introduction of digital solutions	50.0
Management approach	The 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).	30.0
Past Experience	Evidence of working experience in delivering assignments in Ethiopia in the activities stated on the Scope of work ; in either one or a combination of the following given your application; (a) supporting farmers to increase productivity and incomes (b) Engaging lead firms by showcasing opportunities for backward integrations of supply chains (c) Engagement of government to develop and enabling environment for sustainable food production and private sector investment (d) Industry member engagement to develop self-regulation and innovations to support and engage smallholder farmers	20.0

## 6. HOW TO APPLY

If eligible and interested in this Request for Concept Note, please submit your application by following the steps:

- 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 by 27/Sep/2023
- 5) Ensure you submit your CN /Proposal by using the submit prompt in the Action button

The following must be presented with your submission:

- 1) A copy of your organization's registration certificate
- 2) Detailed organization profile
- 3) Most recent Audited Financial statement

**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 and adequacy of staff and experience in the specific region and technical area and attach their CVs.