



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP AGRA-US-1180

CONSULTANCY TO PROVIDE MARKET LINKAGE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR AVOCADO, CHILLI, BANANAS, POTATOES, ONIONS, TOMATOES AND GREEN VEGETABLES FORM RWANDA AND TANZANIA TO REGIONAL MARKETS

Disclaimer | AGRA reserves the right to determine the structure of the process, number of short-listed participants, the right to withdraw from the proposal process, the right to change this timetable at any time without notice and reserves the right to withdraw this tender at any time, without prior notice and without liability to compensate and/or reimburse any party.

Synopsis of the Request for Proposal

a) Solicitation Reference No.	RFP AGRA-US-1180
b) Title of Consultancy	Consultancy to Provide Market Linkage Technical Assistance for avocados, chilli, bananas, potato, onions, tomatoes and green vegetables, from Rwanda and Tanzania to Regional Markets
c) Eligibility	Open to all eligible Individual Consultants
d) Location of the assignment	Rwanda and Tanzania
e) Type of Consultant	Individual
f) Type of contract	Consultancy Agreement
g) Issuing Office & Address	AGRA, Nairobi West End Towers, 4th Floor Muthangari Drive, off Waiyaki Way Nairobi <u>Website: www.agra.org</u>
h) Point of contact for clarifications and questions	AGRA, General Procurement Email: Procurement@agra.org
i) Bid Submission	Electronically via the AGRA Oracle SCM System
j) Solicitation Issue Date	As per Open Date in AGRA's Oracle system
k) Deadline for submission of questions and clarifications	20 th October 2025
l) Deadline for Answering questions and clarifications	22 nd October 2025
m) Deadline for Submission of Proposals	As per Close Date in AGRA's Oracle System
n) Selection method	Individual Selection Method

1. Introduction

AGRA invites qualified individual consultants to submit proposals for a consultancy to Provide Market Linkage Technical Assistance for avocados, chilli, bananas, potato, onions, tomatoes and green vegetables, from Rwanda and Tanzania to Regional Markets. This document outlines the requirements and guidelines for the submission of proposals.

2. Background and Introduction

AGRA is an African-led alliance 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. Founded in 2006, at a time when agricultural development was emerging from a 20-year decline characterized by minimal growth and investment in the sector, AGRA's mission is to catalyze and sustain an agricultural transformation in Africa through innovation-driven productivity increases and access to markets and finance that improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. For more information about AGRA, please visit www.agra.org.

Regional food trade is increasingly recognized as a transformative force in Africa's agricultural landscape. It offers a strategic pathway to strengthen food systems, build resilience to economic and environmental shocks, and foster inclusive and competitive value chains. For Tanzania and Rwanda, agri-food trade is not only central to economic development but also vital for regional integration and food security.

In Tanzania, agriculture contributes between 26–30% of GDP and employs over 65% of the population. The sector generates more than USD 2 billion annually in foreign exchange earnings, driven by exports of commodities such as coffee, cashew nuts, and tea. Agriculture also plays a critical role in food security, inflation control, and poverty reduction. Tanzania's strategic location and infrastructure, particularly the Port of Dar es Salaam, make it a key gateway for regional trade, serving landlocked countries including Rwanda.

Tanzania has also made progress in aligning its trade policies with AfCFTA objectives. Its engagement in the STR with Malawi and Zambia facilitates small-scale trade through reduced tariffs and simplified procedures. The reopening of the maize trade corridor with Kenya, following interventions to address aflatoxin contamination, illustrates how targeted reforms can unlock regional trade potential. Tanzania is further investing in agro-industrial parks and special economic zones to attract investment in food processing and logistics.

Rwanda's economy remains largely agrarian as well, with agriculture accounting for about 24% of GDP and providing the primary source of income for 70% of the population. The sector is dominated by small-scale family farms yet holds significant untapped potential for domestic and export markets. Rwanda's Vision 2050 prioritizes a transition to modern, technology-driven agriculture and agroprocessing. The growing service sector, especially tourism, is also increasing demand for agricultural produce. Despite supportive policies, youth- and women-led MSMEs in Rwanda face challenges due to high informality, limited access to finance, and weak market linkages. These constraints hinder their ability to participate effectively in regional trade.

Despite these advances, small and medium agri-businesses in both countries continue to face barriers including non-tariff measures, high logistics costs, and limited export readiness. Value chains such as avocado, chilli, banana, potato, tomatoes, onions and green vegetables are particularly affected. With rising urbanization and incomes across Africa, demand for processed foods is growing. By addressing trade barriers and investing in agro-processing, Tanzania and Rwanda can better position themselves to meet this demand, create jobs, and enhance food security. Realizing the full potential of AfCFTA will require predictable, transparent, and harmonized food trade policies that incentivize innovation and investment across the continent.

This consultancy seeks to address these challenges by supporting selected businesses and value chain actors with special focus on youth especially young women to access regional markets, particularly in Kenya and Uganda, through targeted market linkage interventions.

3. Objectives of the Consultancy

The overarching objective of the consultancy is to strengthen the export readiness and regional market competitiveness of selected youth especially young women agri-SMEs in Rwanda and Tanzania.

Specific Objectives:

- a. Facilitate and strengthen market linkages between agri-SMEs and regional buyers, including through B2B matchmaking, trade missions, and buyer forums.
- b. Improve export preparedness of SMEs through targeted training, advisory services, and access to certification and aggregation mechanisms.
- c. Support advocacy and policy engagement to address NTBs and promote harmonized standards and trade procedures across the region.

4. Scope of Work

The consultant will provide targeted technical assistance in four key thematic areas to strengthen agri-food trade between Rwanda and Tanzania, focusing on market access, export readiness, aggregation models, and policy engagement. The assignment will be structured around the following key areas:

a. Market Linkage Facilitation

The consultant will identify and profile potential regional buyers in Kenya and Uganda for priority value chains including avocado, chilli, banana, potato, onions, tomatoes and green vegetables. This will involve mapping buyer requirements, preferences, and procurement cycles. The consultant will organize and facilitate business-to-business (B2B) meetings, trade missions, and regional buyer meetings to connect Agri-SMEs with off-takers and distributors. As part of this effort, the consultant will support 3-5 (preferably youth and young women) per country to negotiate and establish export partnerships or off-taker agreements, ensuring alignment with quality and delivery expectations.

b. Export Readiness Support

To enhance the competitiveness of selected youth and young women SMEs, the consultant will conduct tailored training sessions on key export requirements such as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) compliance, traceability systems, packaging standards, and export documentation. Advisory support will be provided to help SMEs access relevant certification schemes and shared post-harvest infrastructure, including cold storage and grading facilities. The consultant will also develop customized market entry plans for each business, outlining steps for accessing regional markets and meeting buyer specifications

c. Cluster and Aggregation Support

The consultant will facilitate the development of shared certification and aggregation hubs to support smallholder clusters (focus on youth and young women) in meeting export standards. This will include identifying suitable locations, operational models, and governance structures for these hubs. Pilot programs will be launched with 1–2 businesses per crop to test traceable, quality- assured export models, with the aim of scaling successful approaches across the region.

d. Policy and Advocacy Engagement

The consultant will identify key non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and policy bottlenecks that hinder cross border trade for Agri-SMEs for the select value chains. This will involve consultations with traders, SMEs, and relevant government agencies. The consultant will engage with regional bodies such as the East African Community (EAC), East African Grain Council (EAGC), and COLEACP to advocate for harmonized standards, streamlined trade procedures, and improved regulatory coherence. Recommendations will be documented and shared with stakeholders to inform ongoing policy dialogue and reform efforts.

5. Methodology

The consultant will adopt a participatory and results-oriented approach, combining desk research, stakeholder engagement, field-level facilitation, and capacity building. The assignment will begin with a rapid assessment to map existing market actors, trade flows, and policy bottlenecks across the selected value chains—avocado, chilli, banana, potato, onions, tomatoes and vegetables. The work will also

adopt and leverage on various studies already undertaken in Tanzania. This will be followed by targeted outreach to identify and profile potential buyers in Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, using both primary interviews and secondary data sources. B2B matchmaking and trade missions will be organized in collaboration with local trade promotion agencies and regional platforms. Export readiness support will be delivered through a mix of in-person and virtual training sessions, complemented by one-on-one advisory services tailored to the needs of selected SMEs. The consultant will work closely with farmer groups and cooperatives to design and pilot shared aggregation and certification models, ensuring traceability and compliance with regional standards. Policy engagement will be informed by consultations with SMEs, border officials, and trade associations, and will involve active participation in regional forums to advocate for harmonized standards and streamlined procedures. Throughout the assignment, the consultant will ensure strong coordination with relevant stakeholders and document lessons learned to inform future scale-up.

6. Deliverables

The consultant is expected to produce the following outputs over the course of the assignment:

No	Deliverable	Description of the Deliverable
1	An Inception Report	A detailed report outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, stakeholder mapping, and a time-bound work plan.
2	Market Linkage Strategy and Buyer Profiles	A comprehensive strategy document detailing approaches for strengthening market linkages, including profiles of identified buyers in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda for the selected value chain
3	Export Readiness Toolkit and Training Reports	Customized training materials covering SPS compliance, packaging, traceability, and documentation, along with reports summarizing training sessions conducted and SME participation.

No	Deliverable	Description of the Deliverable
4	B2B and Trade Mission Reports	Documentation of all B2B meetings, trade missions, and buyer forums facilitated, including outcomes, agreements initiated, and lessons learned.
5	Case Studies and Pilot Export Models	Case studies of supported SMEs, highlighting their journey through the programme, and documentation of pilot export models developed under shared certification or aggregation hubs.
6	Final Report and Recommendations	A comprehensive final report summarizing activities, results, challenges, and strategic recommendations for scaling successful interventions and ensuring sustainability.

7. Location and Nature of the Assignment

This assignment will be hybrid involving some amount of desk research and travels to Rwanda and Tanzania.

8. Duration and Level of Effort

The work will be conducted over a maximum period of 6 months, and the consultant shall explicitly indicate the level of effort needed for the tasks to be accomplished.

9. Reporting, Communication and Coordination

The consultant will be supervised directly by AGRA's Director of Inclusive Markets, Trade, and Finance, with day-to-day management by a designated program officer.

10. Qualifications and Experience

AGRA is looking for an individual with strong demonstrated knowledge and practical experience in market linkage and helping Agri-SMEs to be export-ready. The individual is expected to have a good understanding of the business and trade environment Rwanda and Tanzania. The ideal consultant should possess a strong blend of technical expertise, regional experience, and stakeholder engagement

capabilities to effectively deliver on the assignment. Specifically, the consultant should meet the following requirements:

- **Education:** Master's degree or higher in Horticulture, Agribusiness, Business Administration, International Trade, Development Economics, or related fields.
- **Experience:** Minimum of 15 years of progressive experience in agri-market development, value chain strengthening, and export promotion in East Africa.
- **Regional Expertise:** Proven experience working with SMEs and trade actors in Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. Strong familiarity with EAC and AfCFTA frameworks.
- **Technical Skills:** In-depth knowledge of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) compliance, Global G.A.P and other certification schemes, export logistics, and post-harvest management of Horticultural produce
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Proven ability to facilitate multi-stakeholder processes, including organizing B2B events, trade missions, and policy dialogues. Experience engaging with government agencies, trade associations, and regional bodies is highly desirable.
- **Analytical and Communication Skills:** Excellent analytical, facilitation, and report writing skills, with the ability to synthesize complex information into actionable insights and deliver high-quality outputs under tight timelines.

11. Evaluation Criteria

a. Mandatory Requirements

- Cover letter not exceeding 2 pages indicating the consultant's understanding of the assignment.
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae including at least 3 referees.
- Copy of academic certificate(s)

b. Technical Evaluation Criteria Summary

Interested individuals shall be evaluated against the following technical evaluation criteria:

a) General Qualifications (20%)

- General Educational background of the consultant, including relevant degrees or certifications.
- Specialized training that enhances the consultant's ability to perform the assignment.

b) Experience in Similar Assignments (50%)

- The consultant's experience matches the solicitation requirements, including similar projects in scope, complexity, and objectives.
- Demonstration of possession of technical and stakeholder engagement skills.

c) Consultant's Understanding of the assignment and proposed Work Plan (20%)

- Consultant's understanding of the assignment.
- Practicality, detail, and timelines of the proposed work plan.

d) Analytical and report writing skills (10%)

- Sample of relevant report to showcase expertise in report writing. Confidential information may be redacted as needed.

NB:

Only the candidate with the best technical proposal equal or above 75% shall be considered for financial negotiations.

12. Copyright

All materials / documents arising out of this consultancy work shall remain the property of AGRA.

13. Proposal Submission Requirements

a. Technical Proposal

- i. Detailed Curriculum Vitae. The CV should include presentation of the qualifications, expertise, and experience of the consultant.
- ii. Cover letter not exceeding 2 pages clearly outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment.
- iii. Proposed workplan to deliver on the project.

- iv. Sample of relevant report to show case report writing skills.

b. Financial Proposal

- Financial submission letter
- Detailed cost breakdown (including fees, taxes, etc.)
- Payment schedule based on deliverables or milestones.

14. Payments

a. Invoices

The consultant shall submit invoices to AGRA as per guidance provided in the contract. Payments are made upon AGRA's approval of deliverables, which must incorporate AGRA's comments.

b. Reimbursable costs

Reimbursable expenses must be invoiced with valid receipts. They will be paid with the consultancy fees if documentation is complete and satisfactory.

15. Proposal Submission Instructions

- i. Bidders shall use the bid submission forms that have been provided under Annex 1 & 2.
- ii. The proposals **SHALL** be submitted via oracle system by the deadline indicated on the **oracle system**.
- iii. The Proposals shall be prepared in **English**.
- iv. Late submissions will not be accepted, as the system is configured to automatically reject proposals after the deadline. To avoid any issues, especially for new users, bidders are strongly encouraged to submit proposals at least one day before the deadline.
- v. AGRA assures bidders that proposals cannot be accessed before the deadline provided by the system.
- vi. **VALIDITY** of the proposal shall be for a period of **90 days** from the date of bid closure.
- vii. The detailed financial proposal shall be uploaded under the lines section in oracle.
- viii. The financial proposal shall include all taxes. If the financial proposal is silent on taxes, AGRA shall assume that these are inclusive.
- ix. Prices must be quoted in USD (\$). Contracting will be in USD and bidders are encouraged to have a USD bank account.

- x. Please note that the oracle system will seal the financial proposals until the technical evaluation is completed.
- xi. All communications regarding the RFP should be directed to procurement@agra.org.

16. Contract template

Please refer to Annex 4 on the contract template.

17. Annexes

- i. **Annex 1: Technical proposal submission forms for Individuals:** [INDIVIDUAL-TECHNICAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM.docx](#)
- ii. **Annex 2: Individual Financial submission proposal form:** [INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT- FINANCIAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM.docx](#)
- iii. **Annex 3: AGRA Partner code of conduct:** [LINK](#)
- iv. **Annex 4- Contract template:** [US Consultancy Agreement \(individual\).pdf](#)