Call for Africa Trade & Investment Partnerships

ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)

USAID AFRICA TRADE & INVESTMENT (ATI) PROGRAM

Funding Opportunity Title:	ATI Partnerships in Trade, Investment and Enabling Business Environment
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number:	APS-ATI-001
Issuance Date:	TBD
Deadline for Questions:	N/A – accepted on rolling basis
Closing Date Concept Papers:	September 23, 2022 5:00PM EDT
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Submit Questions on the following link:	ATI APS 001 Questions
Submit Concept Papers to:	Concept Papers must be uploaded to USAID Africa Trade and Investment Initial Plan
Addendum:	USAID Innovation, Technology, and Research (ITR) APS Addendum

Overview of ATI:

USAID established the Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) Program to mobilize enterprise-driven solutions that increase trade and investment and contribute to job creation in Africa. The USAID Innovation, Technology, and Research (ITR) Hub, in partnership with the USAID Africa Bureau (AFR) and the USAID Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (USAID/DRC), is currently inviting concepts covering specific priorities identified below within the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Overarching Priorities for USAID/ITR under ATI:
- Development of innovative solutions to pilot and expand telecommunications networks in rural and peri-urban areas through open radio access networks (O- RAN) to increase vendor diversity in the telecommunications sector and promote trade and investment within the region, continent, and with the U.S - building a more competitive, diversified set of telecommunications providers in the DRC market
- Increased access to capital and international marketplaces for local telecommunications vendors and service providers, particularly in rural and peri-urban communities across the DRC, to promote new job creation and scale business models.
- Creation of workforce development programs, in coordination with local business incubators, that provide training to telecommunications technical experts and university students on developing O-RAN business and technical skills required to test, deploy, and scale O-RAN.

Illustrative Interventions for USAID/ITR under ATI:
- Coordination with relevant regulatory bodies to establish and finance regulatory sandboxes to test, implement, and scale O-RAN technologies.

- Identification and expansion of scalable approaches to leverage existing energy and telecommunications infrastructure to promote innovations in open network architectures in order to enable more cost effective roll-out of telecommunications networks in rural and peri-urban areas through open radio access network (O- RAN) tests and trials.
- Private sector solutions to delivering higher quality, affordable, and sustainable connectivity to a greater number of Congolese, particularly through open network architectures.
- Expanding exports, local manufacturing and processing, and financing of telecommunication network components linked to U.S. buyers and markets in products including, but not limited to, Service Management and Orchestration Framework (SMO), RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC), O-RAN central unit (O-CU), O-RAN distributed unit (O-DU), O-RAN Radio unit (O-RU).
- Large scale vocational training partnerships with companies including, but not limited to, partnerships with firms in the ICT sector to promote increased employment opportunities (particularly for women and youth) in the telecommunications sector in the DRC.
- Expanded partnerships with higher education institutions, firms, and funds engaged in supporting improved vendor diversity curriculum development and execution for future telecommunications engineers.

Current Funding:

It is anticipated support awarded under this activity will be in the form of a sub-grant and range from $250,000 to $425,000, and the current ceiling for the funding associated with this addendum is $425,000. This ceiling figure will be updated via amendment when/if new funding is added to ATI.

Information on Applying:

To apply for funding interested applicants must submit a concept note via the ATI intake site. A concept note should include the technical details of the proposed project, an itemized budget estimate, and details on the applicant company and track record of performance. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. For more information and relevant deadlines, we encourage all interested applicants to visit the entire ATI Annual Program Statement (APS) here.