

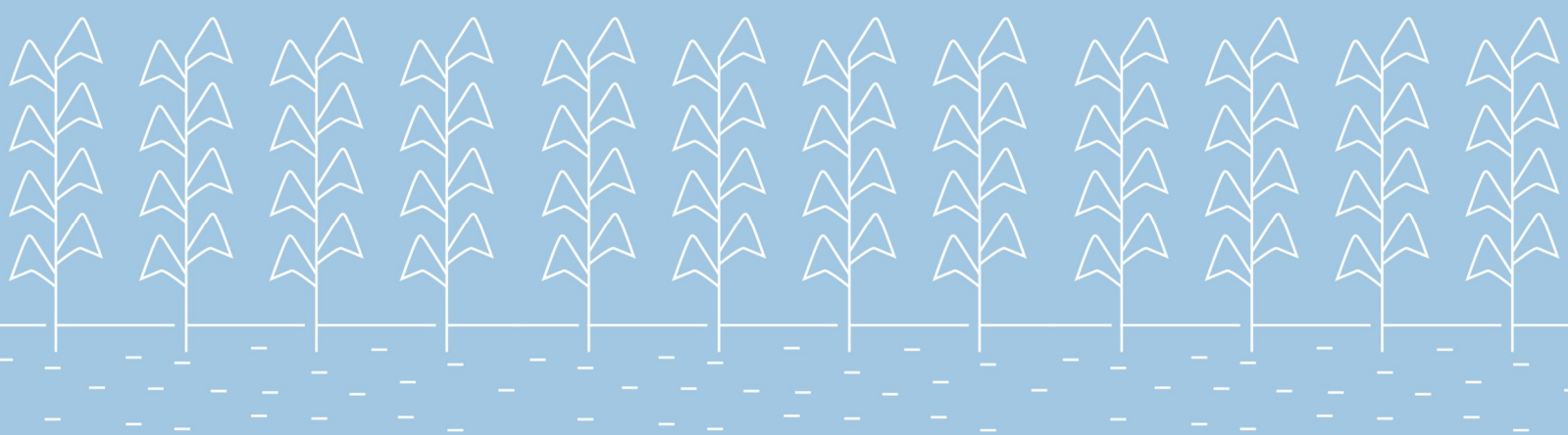


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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RFI-004 FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCE



USAID Africa Trade and Investment Program



ISSUE DATE: August 5, 2022

RESPONSE DATE: September 16, 2022

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RFI-004 FOR FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCE: USAID AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT (ATI) PROGRAM

Dear Prospective Partner:

Through the Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) seeks to bolster the U.S. Government's ability to boost trade and investment to, from, and within the African continent. The continent-wide program is USAID's flagship effort in support of the Prosper Africa initiative and will expand and accelerate two-way trade and investment between African nations and the United States.

In support of its efforts to work with the private sector to advance deals, promote market opportunities, and strengthen business and investment climates, USAID awarded the ATI contract to DAI in September 2021. Through ATI's flexible buy-in mechanisms, USAID Missions and Operating Units can access an expansive network of firms and individuals that have the range of technical expertise needed to identify opportunities and effectively mobilize private sector solutions to development priorities. ATI's large performance-based subcontracting and grants under contract facilities are designed to further support the needs and opportunities identified by USAID and the private sector.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, USAID has [redoubled](#) its commitment to development assistance by announcing more than \$750 million in new funding to address the global food security emergency, malnutrition, and agricultural development. Much of this funding will be provided to African nations, where price shocks and rampant inflation resulting from the Russia-Ukraine war are already having devastating effects on food security. Now USAID is seeking private-sector solutions to scale access to, and availability of, agricultural inputs, technologies, and food in response to the ongoing price and availability shocks resulting from the Russian war against Ukraine.

In support of USAID's objectives, ATI issued the [Annual Program Statement \(APS\) 02: Call for Africa Food Security and Resilience Partnerships](#) on July 19, 2022, to begin soliciting grant concepts to address these compounding crises. However, in accordance with its mandate, ATI is committed to identifying and deploying innovative private-sector solutions through a variety of partnering mechanisms (e.g., grants and subcontracts) to achieve its development objectives. Therefore, the intent of this RFI is to conduct market research to better understand the number of qualified and interested parties who can provide innovative solutions that build Africa's food security and resilience. This RFI will also help determine what innovative solutions and interventions are most likely to yield timely results to avoid a crisis. By analyzing the responses submitted, ATI will assess whether a procurement for subcontractor services is appropriate to meet

USAID's needs. Grants under the APS and subcontracts via procurement(s) may be issued simultaneously, and in some instances, may be linked to one another (e.g., technical assistance to business grantees).

Implementation Objectives

To counteract the Russia-Ukraine conflict's impacts on food security and resilience, African countries require innovative trade and investment solutions. In order to achieve increased food security and resilience of food systems, both investors and businesses need a deep understanding of the underlying food security challenges and how they have been compounded by the Russia-Ukraine conflict's impacts in Africa, as well as the associated implementation risks.

Using private-sector solutions, USAID seeks to address the following overarching challenges caused by Russia's war on Ukraine:

- Sharply higher food, fuel, and fertilizer prices are putting significant pressure on households—especially the poorest.
- Higher fuel prices are placing fiscal constraints on importers and exporters of key commodities.
- Slowed economic growth caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic is being further exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine.

Based on a market-driven, private sector-led approach, ATI has developed two priority objectives that include a host of entry points for private sector innovation.

The first objective, "Increased Food Security," is comprised of several target outcomes designed to leverage rapid private sector solutions to rising food insecurity at scale. These target outcomes are focused on increasing access to key agricultural inputs and food crops critical to nutrition via deal facilitation, novel partnerships, and/or support to established businesses. As the Russia-Ukraine conflict continues and imposes increased pressure on Africa's food systems, private sector solutions that can be implemented quickly and at scale are crucial for mitigating hunger and counteracting income loss caused by reduced agricultural imports, exports, and yields.

Some challenges to producing rapid trade deals and/or investment facilitation that proposed interventions may need to address or mitigate in order to increase food security include (but are not limited to):

- Rising energy prices have created additional barriers to the production, import, export, and/or transportation of key agricultural inputs.
- Higher global prices of energy, food, and raw materials have increased inflation and will likely reduce households' consumption, income, and savings.¹

¹ Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, 2022, The Impact of the War in Ukraine on Sustainable Development in Africa.

- Farmers lack access to technologies that can reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture, reduce post-harvest losses, increase the efficiency of chemical fertilizer use, and provide alternatives to chemical fertilizers.
- Resource-rich countries on the continent lack the capacity and/or financing to provide viable alternatives to over-dependence on limited international sources and/or accelerate the implementation of existing Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) export protocols.

The second objective, “Resilience of Food Systems,” also includes target outcomes that invite private sector innovation to address Africa’s medium and long-term supply chain sustainability and ecological resilience. In particular, the anticipated outcomes under Objective 2 are designed to support the development of climate-smart financing solutions to accelerate access to key inputs or food products (through either deal and transaction facilitation or by expanding farmers’ access to relevant technologies) and strengthen and optimize supply chains to respond to future resilience shocks.

The deployment of private-sector solutions to build greater resilience also faces several challenges that interventions should demonstrate awareness of and/or approaches to mitigate, including:

- The compounding crises of the COVID-19 global pandemic, extreme weather events, and rising inflation have exacerbated financing pressures across the continent, leaving many governments with unsustainable debt.
- The Ukraine crisis is likely to increase risk aversion among investors, triggering capital outflows from African countries.²
- Available financial instruments are limited and a mismatch exists between available capital and project risk/reward profiles.
- Given the relatively new nature of climate finance associated with climate-smart agriculture, there is a relatively low local institutional capacity in the countries and markets of greatest need.

ATI Engagement

Through ATI, USAID hopes to support interventions to help investors and development actors address food security and resilience in Africa caused by the Russia-Ukraine war.

ATI is requesting that interested parties respond with information about their ecosystems; their activities in the area of trade, transaction facilitation, and/or advisory services; and their ideas for where USAID could target its resources to best facilitate rapid, sustainable responses to food security and resilience challenges on the African continent (as outlined above). This is to assist USAID and its partners to better understand who is working in this space and ways to better inform and drive investment in areas critical to food security, nutrition, and resilience. USAID is interested in new

² Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, 2022, The Impact of the War in Ukraine on Sustainable Development in Africa.

ideas and approaches and in activities already underway that may be accelerated by USAID support, and/or what interventions could be catalyzed by USAID engagement.

The information gathered through this process will be used to:

- Understand the state of play and the key tensions between rapid food security interventions and long-term resilience development, as well as the factors that drive those tensions.
- Identify interventions and models that can resolve barriers and challenges in a way that protects food security and economic resilience for nations and their citizens, both in the current context and the long-term.
- Identify potential intervention points where USAID resources could have significant, timely impact.
- Identify markets in which these issues are most pressing currently.
- Identify potential partners that may play a role in future USAID-supported food security and resilience activities and interventions.

Note: USAID is open to hearing from organizations that may not have previous experience working with USAID.

Issuance of this RFI does not constitute a solicitation, commitment, award, or engagement on the part of DAI nor does it commit DAI to any future commitment, award, or engagement. However, we will use responses submitted to assess whether a procurement for technical services is appropriate to meet USAID's needs. Please note that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to or preclude any organization or individual from any solicitation that may be subsequently issued as any comments received will be strictly for information gathering purposes only.

Interested parties should submit answers to questions in Appendix A and any other comments in response to the requested information no later than 5:00PM EAT (10:00AM EDT) on September 16, 2022.

Responses and questions should be submitted via email to ATI_Procurement@dai.com copying Edwin Muli (Edwin_Muli@dai.com) and Julia DeCosse (Julia_DeCosse@dai.com) no later than the date and time shown above, with the subject line: "Response to RFI ATI-004." Please limit the responses to 10 pages/slides using 11-point font size. Graphics may be included so long as text is clearly legible. Submissions in PowerPoint, Word, or PDF are acceptable. PDF is preferred along with an accompanying PowerPoint/Word document.

Sincerely,
ATI Procurement and Partnerships Team

Appendix A: Response Requirements

We are seeking the following information from interested firms:

1. A brief synopsis of your organization's capabilities and activities that highlight your capacity and expertise to support or facilitate trade or investment solutions or interventions pertaining to food security and/or resilience.
2. A summary of the geography where your organization is most active. Understanding that regional or multilateral solutions are highly necessary to address food insecurity and resilience at scale, provide information on your organization's ability to work with clients within and outside of your specified geography.
3. The typical size of deals, transactions, or client profile for whom your organization typically performs work.
4. Responses to any or all of the following questions that highlight your firm's interest, expertise, knowledge, and creativity in addressing this kind of technical work:
 - a. Illustrative theories of change for how specific private sector interventions might drive responses to food security and resilience needs.
 - b. Real-world examples of trade and/or investment strategies that have been effective in combating food insecurity and/or support increased resilience.
 - c. Insights into how current research on food security and/or resilience can be used by either companies or investors to address immediate and long-term challenges.
 - d. Other private sector driven ideas, approaches, or applications that might be relevant to combating food insecurity and/or resilience.