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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST EOI-001 FOR CO-CREATION OF FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCE CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS



USAID Africa Trade and Investment Program



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FROM: Procurement and Partnerships Team, USAID Africa Trade and Investment Project (ATI); Implemented by DAI Global LLC

SUBJECT: Expressions of Interest (EOI) -001 for Co-Creation of Food Security and Resilience Corporate Partnerships

DUE: October 17, 2022

ORIGINAL SOLICITATION: [Expressions of Interest \(EOI\) 001 for Co-Creation of Food Security and Resilience Corporate Partnerships](#)

AMENDMENTED SECTIONS: Objectives of the EOI, Selection Criteria

Dear Prospective Partner:

Through this Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI), ATI aims to identify private sector partners to participate in a co-creation effort with other private sector actors and USAID to develop innovative concepts that catalyze private-sector trade and investment solutions to food security and resilience challenges across Africa, particularly in response to the impacts of Russia’s war in Ukraine. The goal of co-creation is to bring together a diverse set of stakeholders who are well-positioned to address these challenges and collaboratively design activities that lead to more innovative solutions and enduring results.

- I. Submission of Questions – Questions must be submitted no later than 5 PM EST on September 22, 2022 via email to ATI_Procurement@dai.com.
- II. Submission of EOIs – EOIs must be submitted no later than 1 PM EST on October 17, 2022 via email to ATI_Procurement@dai.com, ATI_Procurement@dai.com copying Edwin Muli (Edwin_Muli@dai.com) and Jula DeCosse (Jula_DeCosse@dai.com). The subject line of the email should be your organization name, followed by “Submission under EOI ATI-001 for Food Security and Resilience Corporate Co-Creation Partnerships” Please limit file submissions to 10 megabytes or less.
- III. Co-Creation Event – On or about November 4, 2022 (This event will be hybrid in format. Invited participants are strongly encouraged to be physically present in the Washington, D.C. area, and virtual connectivity will be arranged for invited participants who cannot physically attend).

Introduction

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recognizes that as the world’s development challenges become more complex, many can only be solved

through market-based solutions. In support of these efforts, the USAID Africa Bureau, Africa Regional Missions, and the Middle East Bureau jointly established the Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program and awarded the contract to DAI Global, LLC in September 2021.

Driven by market demand, the USAID ATI program seeks to mobilize enterprise-driven solutions that increase trade and investment in Africa; strengthens Africa's markets by developing new trade and investment relationships, particularly between the US and Africa; and achieve development outcomes across all sectors in line with USAID's [Private Sector Engagement Policy](#) and the U.S. Government's (USG) [Prosper Africa](#) initiative.

Through ATI's flexible buy-in mechanisms, USAID Missions and Operating Units (OUs) 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.

Food Security and Resilience Partnerships Background

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 sparked food, fuel, and fertilizer shortages around the world. On the African continent, decreasing access to key food and commodity imports from the warring nations has exacerbated the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-related shocks. In response to these converging crises, USAID is driving global efforts to alleviate the immediate challenges of hunger and food insecurity as well as their medium- and long-term impacts. USAID has a long history of leadership in international agricultural development, economic growth, nutrition and water security, sanitation, and hygiene. Through its Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) and leadership of initiatives like the USG's [Feed the Future](#), USAID works with a host of partners to advance inclusive agriculture-led growth, strengthen the resilience of communities to shocks, and reduce hunger.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, USAID engaged ATI to facilitate private-sector partnerships that could rapidly scale access to, and availability of, agricultural inputs, technologies, and food in response to ongoing price and availability shocks across Africa. ATI has a three-pronged approach to identify partners and ideas that accomplish this goal:

- [Annual Program Statement \(APS\) 02: Call for Africa Food Security and Resilience Partnerships](#): ATI issued this APS to solicit grant concepts between \$500,000 - \$5 million to rapidly address food insecurity and food systems resilience challenges on the African continent.
- [Request for Information \(RFI\) 04: Food Security and Resilience](#): ATI issued this RFI to better understand what innovative solutions and interventions are most

likely to avoid a crisis and the ecosystem of qualified and interested parties who can execute these activities.

- Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) 01: Food Security and Resilience Corporate Co-Creation Partnerships. This EOI is distinct in that its purpose is to identify participants for a co-creation workshop, with the goal of facilitating corporate partnerships that maximize food security and resilience impact through strengthened or innovative coalition-building.

Objectives of the EOI

ATI is seeking qualified partners to participate in a co-creation effort with other private sector actors, and USAID, to develop innovative solutions that scale access to, and availability of, agricultural inputs, technologies, and food, in direct response to the food security and resilience impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine.

USAID is specifically interested in partners with the capacity to work towards one or more of the following overarching objectives and related target outcomes below. The examples of interventions and outcomes are illustrative, and other approaches will also be considered in support of the overarching objectives.

Objective 1: Increased Food Security

- Support to established businesses, farming associations, and sourcing partnerships that can rapidly scale access to key inputs such as seeds and fertilizers
- Partnerships with companies to scale production of food crops critical to food security and nutrition across multiple markets
- Export deals for key inputs and food commodities and products to food insecure regions
- Facilitate trade deals that deliver food from regions of surplus to those of scarcity, including supporting relevant transport infrastructure on intra-African trade corridors.

Objective One Anticipated Outcomes: Increased trade and export of key agricultural products (grains, pulses, edible oils, seed, and fertilizers) to key markets in Africa at risk due to the Russia-Ukraine war; improved access to key value chain crops critical to nutrition and food security

Objective 2: Resilience of Food Systems

- Transaction identification, facilitation, and deal structuring pertaining to Africa's resilience and food security
- Design and implementation of financing solutions addressing issues of Africa's resilience and food security in order to accelerate access to key inputs or food products and scale production of essential value chains
- Expansion of farmers' access to technologies that reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture, reduce post-harvest loss, and reduce/replace use of diesel/fuel

- Strengthening and optimization of supply chains through the use of technology and data to drive decision making and respond to new resilience shocks

Objective Two Anticipated Outcomes: Increased or improved access to essential inputs (e.g. financial and agricultural) for farmers and businesses, increased investment in Africa’s near and long-term resilience, and new solutions created or scaled to address barriers tied to increased resilience

Additional cross-cutting objectives and outcomes:

- Creation of private sector jobs
- Empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable communities
- More resilient, inclusive economic ecosystems across countries, regions and the continent
- Value chain activities that span countries and crowd in various enterprises
- Fostering private sector-led response to food security and building market based productive capacities

Examples of illustrative activities that USAID may consider funding under the respective objectives include but are not limited to:

Illustrative Examples under Objective 1: Increased Food Security

- Cost-shared partnerships working with buyers and suppliers (e.g. farmers and cooperatives) to quickly scale production and export products to key African markets at risk of food insecurity
- De-risk corporate opportunities to build out African supply chains that are immediately tied to food insecurity and malnutrition on the African continent
- Support for African exporters, especially those increasing intra-Africa trade, to meet export requirements and/or accelerate the implementation of the existing Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) export protocols such as trade in goods, trade in services, e-commerce, etc.
- Strategic/sector-level technical assistance to overcome transaction challenges for businesses working in value chains critical to food security and nutrition (e.g. wheat, soya, etc.)

Illustrative Examples under Objective 2: Resilience of Food Systems

- Development or scaling of new financial approaches, products, and structures, that accelerate access to finance for businesses and agricultural institutions critical to building resilience
- Transaction facilitation and deal structuring for a fertilizer company to expand its production, buy more inputs or enhance its technological capabilities to increase yields
- Catalytic funding to mobilize investment and/or de-risk transaction opportunities tied to the resilience of food systems and markets on the African continent

- Interventions providing lower cost food alternatives, thus reducing reliance on imported food products or inputs

Interested partners should submit concepts that include novel ideas and innovative business models related to food security, food systems resilience and other support services. Innovative ideas that combine the various objectives in a manner that also deliver increased trade and investment as a package are encouraged.

Priority may be given to those concepts able to achieve results on a timeline and scale that directly address the food security and resilience risks outlined above, and in the prioritized geographic regions of Southern Africa, Eastern Africa, the Sahel region, Kenya, and Uganda (see more details under Criteria). Activities with the potential to engage women, youth or vulnerable populations are also priorities. Concepts for opportunities that would have significant negative impact on US exports or US jobs are likely to be deemed ineligible.

ATI may use learning from USAID and Prosper Africa's previous and existing programming to further develop concepts during this co-creation process to combat the effects of high food, fuel, and fertilizer prices caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Who May Apply

The USAID Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program hopes to invite stakeholders from different parts of the trade and investment ecosystem based locally (in Africa) or internationally (outside of Africa), including financial institutions, investors, businesses, business service organizations, industry/sector organizations, trade or other private sector associations to collectively discuss the challenge and opportunities for addressing the food security and resilience impacts in Africa of Russia's war against Ukraine. Applicants may, but are not limited to, submit EOIs with ideas for partnership with other organizations.

Those who express interest must participate in a co-creation workshop (physical presence in Washington, D.C. strongly encouraged) where they will share their concepts and think about how strategic alignment with other participants in the event may bring about impact in support of the food system strengthening and resilience building. By bringing the ecosystem together, ATI looks to create innovative, market-driven models, products, or services and identify new models for partnership between USAID and the private-sector that address the above objectives.

Expressions of Interest may come from:

- Private sector companies – both local (within Africa) and international (outside of Africa).
- Foreign Organizations (referred to as non-U.S. NGOs), either nonprofit or for-profit organizations that meet the definition in 2 CFR 200.47.
- Non-profit Organizations: Organizations that meet the definition of 2 CFR200.70.
- U.S. Organizations

Funding Restrictions: Any agreements that are awarded as a result of this EOI's co-creation event may be limited by the type of contracting mechanism most appropriate for the enterprise it intends to fund—for example, U.S. organizations (both not-for-profits or for-profits) may not receive grant funding above \$250,000 under any grant type.

Prior experience with USAID or other US Government entities is not required. DAI encourages concepts from potential new partners.

Ineligible Applicants:

- Any organization not legally organized under the laws of the country in which it has its principal place of business or operations in;
- Any entity unable to obtain a Unique Entity ID (SAM);¹
- Any entity excluded in the US Government System for Award Management;
- Any Government Entity;
- Any Public International Organization (PIO);
- Any entity affiliated with DAI or ATI directors, officers, or employees;
- Any projects involving involuntary resettlement, child labor, significant environmental impacts;
- Any military organization;
- Any political party organization;
- Any entity focused solely on religious activities;
- Any labor unions; and,
- Any individuals.

Submission and Formatting Instructions

Expressions of Interest should illustrate the submitting organization's interest, capabilities, and/or experience in providing solutions to the objectives above. Submissions should highlight an organization's approach to achieving the objective(s) within a country or countries and the sector(s) of focus, and the organization's capabilities and qualifications to implement the proposed activity(-ies).

Expressions of Interest must be submitted no later than 1 PM EST on October 17, 2022. Submissions should:

- Be in English;
- Be submitted electronically to the following e-mail addresses
- Be no more than six (6) PowerPoint slides in length with 12-point Times New Roman font
- Include a title slide (not counted against slide limit) with the following information: Respondent Name/Group; Contact Information; and Response Title

¹ Applicants can register for a UEI number by accessing the following website: <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

- Include two submissions attachments in email, one in .ppt and one in .pdf format

Budget: EOI submissions should include a total budget estimate to accomplish the proposed concept, as well as an expected leverage ratio (i.e. the amount of financing and investment leveraged by the work as it relates to the budget amount requested). ATI recommends that EOI submissions in response to one or more of the objectives above remain within a \$1 million-\$3 million range. Offerors are encouraged to propose the range that best fits their technical approach, recognizing that ATI expects to make multiple awards at various amounts within this range.

Timeframe: EOI submissions should present concepts with an implementation timeframe of no longer than 24 months. Please indicate in your submission an estimated timeline for completing the proposed activities. Priority will be given to activities that are expected to be completed in 12 months or less.

Concept: In your Expression of Interest, please describe your organization's idea/approach to how USAID can use its resources to catalyze trade and investment activities that address food insecurity and resilience challenges in Africa, including:

- Your organization's reason(s) as to why USAID's support is critical to achieve the goals of this EOI
- Your organization's approach to supporting the objectives of USAID
- Your organization's expected development outcomes or impact through the proposed activity
- If/how your organization's approach addresses the immediate food security and/or resilience impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine
- If/how your organization's approach addresses the medium- and long-term food security and/or resilience impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine
- Whom your organization targets
- How your organization could partner with USAID and/or other private sector actors to amplify your work and catalyze additional activities
- How your approach will be sustainable beyond USAID funding
- How you will monitor and evaluate development impact in your approach
- Your organization's talent and other resources you are willing to dedicate to this activity; and
- Your organization's unique knowledge, capabilities, and expertise in the sectors relevant to your proposed idea

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be applied to all Expressions of Interest. Submissions are not evaluated against other submissions, but solely against the evaluation criteria outlined below.

1. Idea(s) for partnering with USAID: Fresh, informed, and realistic thinking about how USAID can work with the private sector to unlock and catalyze activities in line with its food security and resilience priorities.

2. Approach to supporting USAID objectives: Comprehensive approach based on experience in food security sectors. Identification of how the proposed approach advances or augments the objectives and priorities illustrated in this EOI, and where relevant, how the approach addresses or mitigates the impacts of Russia's war against Ukraine.

3. Qualifications and experience: Strengths of your organization as a partner, including your ability to make a unique contribution to achieving the objectives of this activity.

4. Timeline for results: Ability of your organization to leverage USAID funding to best facilitate rapid, sustainable results to food security and resilience challenges on the African continent.

5. Geography: While concepts covering all geographies in Africa are welcomed, USAID has prioritized the geographic regions of Southern Africa, Eastern Africa, the Sahel region, Kenya, and Uganda. Priority may be given to those concepts that include a focus in these geographic areas.

Selection and Co-Creation Process

ATI will review and select EOIs submitted in accordance with the guidelines and criteria set forth in this solicitation. Selected candidates will be invited to the co-creation workshop. ATI may also invite to the workshop respondents to other ATI grant procurement announcements and requests for information after being evaluated against the criteria stated in this EOI. This provides ATI with the flexibility to ensure other ideas and potential stakeholders that would benefit from co-creation are included.

ATI reserves the right not to review any EOIs that do not meet the guidelines. Due to the expected large number of response to this EOI, ATI is unable to provide detailed information to those expressions that are not selected to move forward.

Stage 1: EOI Evaluation and Participant Selection. ATI and USAID will review and evaluate submitted concepts based on the criteria above. Selected organizations will be invited to participate in a co-creation workshop which they will be expected to attend at their own cost.

Stage 2: Co-Creation Event. This workshop will provide the opportunity for open conversations to develop a richer, shared understanding about opportunities, challenges, barriers, and gaps for achieving increased food security in Africa. Participants will be able to share their own insights and perspectives, offer constructive input to other stakeholders about their concepts, and can use the constructive feedback and ideas for partnership offered in the workshop to refine their own concepts.

Stage 3: Updated Concept Notes. After the workshop, participants will further develop partnerships, narrow down priorities, and refine their ideas. They will put together updated concept notes to be presented/submitted to ATI within two weeks from the end of the workshop. ATI will evaluate the concept notes and further shortlist firms (evaluation criteria to be shared at the workshop). Not all concept notes will advance to Stage 4.

Stage 4: Formalizing Partnerships. Depending on the nature of the partnership, problem, and solution proposed, ATI will issue one or more Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Applications (RFA) for firms to complete a proposal for a subcontract or an application for a grant. When appropriate, ATI may also formalize the partnership through a memorandum of understanding (MOU). Proposals and applications will be evaluated by a selection committee according to selection criteria set forth in the RFP or RFA. More information on this stage will be provided to the shortlisted firms prior to the release of RFP(s) or RFA(s). One or more subcontracts and/or grants may be issued as a result of this process.

ATI reserves the right to check the past performance, references, and other pertinent offeror information in making award decisions. Previous experience with USAID is not required.

Thank you,

ATI Procurement and Partnerships Team

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