

Request for Proposals (RFP) ATI-050
SCOPE OF WORK (SOW)
Technical Assistance for Export-Ready Firms

1. INTRODUCTION

The USAID Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program is designed 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.

Driven by market demand, ATI embraces innovative approaches to achieve its goals. ATI is designed as a small, core set of centrally coordinated technical and institutional support activities and a large, flexible performance-based subcontracting and grants under contract facility designed to support the needs and opportunities that USAID Missions and the private sector identify.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to enhance and heighten the trade (export) through industry-based Trade Promotion Service Providers (TPSPs), exporting firms, and service providers such as certification bodies, accreditation bodies, branding and marking institutions, and laboratories that conduct tests for food and other agricultural products. To attain this activity, USAID ATI is seeking the services of a local and commercialized TPSP to offer Technical Assistance (TA) and training (and information sharing) to exporting firms to collectively engage, and provide high-quality, affordable, and reliable services, etc., so exporters can meet buyers' requirements consistently.

Through this activity, it will be possible to determine whether the firms' objectives and export experience are aligned with the mandate of the buy-in. Firms are required to be established in their local market (at a minimum) with some export experience preferred. To increase trade, applying firms identified to receive technical assistance will also be supported in areas, including but not limited to:

- a. Certification
- b. Product innovation/development
- c. Processing equipment
- d. Marketing promotion including branding and positioning
- e. Market linkages including buyer-to-seller (B2B) linkages
- f. Digital presence – websites, emails, e-commerce platforms, and social media presence
- g. Registration with relevant authorities in end markets such as FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration)
- h. Business planning and strategy development
- i. Financial statements development and audit
- j. Financial products knowledge and information

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the Technical Assistance (TA) offering is to increase exports from Malawi to other African countries (i.e., intra-trade) as well as increase competitive exports of Malawian products to other markets such as United States by training and enabling export firms to meet export readiness standards and certifications required. The activity through collaboration with the successful TPSP, will offer technical assistance to firms that are ready to export with the main objective of increasing trade across the Continent and to the U.S. market:

- a. Webinars, workshops, and training.

- b. Linkages to service providers, that is: certification, branding, digital trade platforms and financial audit services providers.

Specific activities include:

The contracted TSPS is expected to carry out the following activities to achieve the above assignment objective:

- a. Collaborate with the Buy-in and USAID Malawi to identify a pipeline of at least 10 firms that are export ready and could benefit from the range of Technical Assistance being offered
- b. Segmentation of the firms and assistance required including timeframe and demonstrate that an export opportunity would accrue from the Technical Assistance.
- c. Work with the firms to obtain competitive quotations to support the range of services required and associated costs.
- d. Oversee the implementation of assistance and follow up with firms as well as providers to ensure progress is maintained. The TPSP will be expected to provide monthly reports on the status of assistance for each firm.
- e. Facilitating export deals to the value of \$5 million for the portfolio of firms receiving TA.

Illustrative deliverables are as follows:

- Project mobilization report outlining how the TPSP will identify the portfolio of firms and the range of services that would be provided to get the firms export ready.
- A pipeline of at least 10 firms and their profiles, segmented into sectors, nature of TA required and demonstrate the export opportunity that would accrue from technical assistance.
- Narrative monthly reports providing updates on progress of implementation.
- Monthly export reports and sales data from the firms.

4. GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

ATI will work closely with the service provider to determine the delivery structure including final timelines, deliverables, and associated costs. Additionally, ATI and USAID Malawi will also work closely with the TPSP on the overall learning agenda, including the appropriate cadence for reporting, communications, and other general ongoing project management activities, as well as be a resource to help the awardee achieve overall objectives.

5. MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL)

DAI will work closely with the subcontractor to define appropriate indicators for the overall interventions based on applicable MEL indicators identified by ATI and USAID. ATI will work with the subcontractor to develop and finalize the MEL plan which will feed into the overall ATI MEL Plan at the kick-off of the activity, edit as needed during implementation, and will collect and review data from the subcontractor for requisite reporting to USAID throughout the life of the activity. The subcontractor is expected to reasonably maintain and report on relevant data as part of the periodic check-in process. DAI will conduct data quality assessments on a quarterly basis. The subcontractor must share results for at least a six-month period following the completion of their subcontract for ATI and USAID to accurately capture results (e.g., processing through the facility that is completed after the period of performance but was facilitated during the contracted support).

The subcontractor will provide data on developed indicators on a quarterly basis to ensure that all achievements are reported in line with standard ATI reporting guidelines and timelines. The contractor will be obliged to provide evidence for all actions undertaken as part of standard reporting requirements.

6. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

This activity will be managed from Malawi. Offerors should provide details on their approach to working in relevant countries as the activity requires. The selected firm(s) will report to the Activity Manager who is supported by ATI teams based in Nairobi and Johannesburg in coordination with USAID Malawi.

7. BUDGET

Offerors should propose a realistic budget for undertaking this assignment, we would recommend a range of US\$ 80,000 – \$100,000 to support at least 10 firms.

8. IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME

The activities outlined above are estimated to take place over a one (1) year period starting on/about March/April 2024, although offerors should propose a timeline commensurate with their technical approach. In response to this solicitation, offerors may propose their own alternate timelines, work plans, and level of effort associated with the various components of the activity in line with their proposed approach.