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Request for Proposal (RFP) for Consultancy Services: Technical Support to Farmers

Introduction

Pepea is a EUR 20 million fund managed by Goodwell Investments on behalf of Oxfam Novib. The fund is proposed to invest in SMEs with high impact potential to support the growth of impact driven East African entrepreneurs. Pepea focuses on innovative, early-growth stage companies that are increasing the involvement of female stakeholders, creating new jobs, facilitating living wages, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Smallholder Safety Net Upscaling Programme (SSNUP) is a 10-year programme funded by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg (MFEA) as Lead Donor and supported by Lux-Development, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the Liechtensteinischer Entwicklungsdienst (LED).

The programme aims to address issues related to smallholders' resilience and food insecurity by increasing the amount of private capital in local agrifood systems. It relies on the knowledge, experience, and network of impact investors (asset managers) in agriculture to identify technical assistance (TA) needs of the aggregators in agri-food systems and implement TA projects to respond to those issues. The aggregators/beneficiary organisations are agri-SMEs, farmer organisations, or financial intermediaries that are current or future investees of the impact investors.

Gaea Foods Ltd has been approved for under this program to enhance its operations and support its network of farmers. This RFP is issued by Goodwell Investments, investors in Gaea Foods, to strengthen the certification processes of the company and thus make it more sustainable.

We are seeking proposals from qualified consultants to conduct technical support to farmers.

Background

Gaea Foods is a pioneering female-founded and led business within Kenya's potato value chain. Founded in 1998, the company has evolved substantially from its origins as a sole proprietorship focused on trading ware potatoes to its current status as a leading potato processor with a vision for expansive growth. Gaea Foods directly sources potatoes from smallholder farmers, who often struggle with market access due to systems largely dependent on middlemen who may not ensure fair pricing. By incorporating direct linkages with farmers, Gaea Foods guarantees steady demand and allows for flexible pricing aligned with market conditions. This dedication to improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers involves increasing their yields, reducing post-harvest losses, and ensuring reliable supply chains. Gaea Foods is now seeking qualified consultants to provide expertise and help implement the approved SSNUP (Smallholder Safety Net Upscaling Programme) project as discussed below.

Project Purpose and Goals

The SSNUP (Smallholder Safety Net Upscaling Programme) project, supported by ADA Microfinance, is designed to enhance the operations of Gaea Foods and support its network of smallholder farmers. Three key objectives of the project are:

1. **Strengthening the Safety Net of Smallholder Households:**
 - Ensure steady demand and fair pricing for the produce of smallholder farmers by reducing their reliance on middlemen. This will provide farmers with more stable and predictable income.
 - The project will include farmer training to promote product quality consistency and enhance technical know-how, leading to better yields and improved livelihoods.
2. **Strengthening Agricultural Value Chains:**
 - The project aims to optimize the potato value chain from seed provision to market delivery. This involves enhancing seed quality, agricultural practices, and market access to transform potato farming into a more robust economic driver, promising enhanced food security and increased GDP contribution.
3. **De-risking or Increasing Investments in the Agricultural Sector:**
 - The project will focus on strengthening the systems, structures, and capacity of Gaea Foods to ensure its continuity and resilience. By adopting robust practices and establishing strong organizational frameworks, the project will mitigate risks and enhance operational efficiency.

Gaea Foods seeks qualified consultants to assist in implementing the approved SSNUP project, providing expertise in technical support for farmers. This assistance will help Gaea Foods achieve the project's goals, drive sustainable development in the agricultural sector, and support the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Kenya.

Scope of Work: Technical Support to Farmers

Objective: Increase yields, reduce post-harvest losses, and enhance the reliability of the supply chain for smallholder farmers supplying GAEA Foods.

1. **Training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP):**
 - Provide comprehensive training to smallholder farmers on GAP.
 - Focus on improving agronomy practices, intercropping techniques, seed varieties, correct inputs (pesticides and herbicides) and post-harvest handling.
 - Cover quality management and disease and pest management.
2. **Capacity Building:**
 - Training on handling of hazardous materials (pesticides and herbicides) and worker health.
 - Financial literacy and production planning
3. **Partnerships:**
 - Initiate partnerships with seed propagators and actors to support with post-harvest losses.

Farmer Outreach: Currently, GAEA Foods sources potatoes from 62 smallholder farmers in Kenya. The aim is to increase the number of supported farmers to 90 within the 6 month period.

Deliverables: The consultancy period will involve a 6-month implementation plan, followed by a monitoring and evaluation plan to be tracked by management post implementation. The consultant will be required to provide an interim report mid-way through the consultancy and a final report at the end of the consultancy.

Selection Criteria

- Strong track record of working with SMEs and smallholder farmers.
- Proven track record in agricultural training and support for smallholder farmers, with experience in implementing GAP and agronomy practices.
- Knowledgeable in agronomy, intercropping techniques, post-harvest handling, quality management, and disease and pest management, with experience in managing farm inputs.
- Strong background in conducting on-the-job training and capacity-building for farmers, and experience in supporting and managing out-grower schemes.
- Ability to engage agricultural specialists for targeted training sessions, with experience in specific areas like agronomy and post-harvest management.

Submission Details

- Company profile
- Relevant experience and track record including list of similar companies worked with.
- Proposed methodology and Work plan.
- Team composition and CVs of key personnel.
- Financial proposal (including cost breakdown) and terms of payment.
- References from previous clients.

Submission Deadline

Proposals must be submitted no later than **11th October 2024** to anne@goodwell.nl and jennifer@goodwell.nl

Contact Information

For queries or further information, please contact:

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Conclusion

We look forward to receiving comprehensive proposals from qualified consultants who can contribute to the success of the programme and the enhancement of Gaea Foods' operations. Thank you for interest in partnering with us to support smallholder farmers and drive sustainable development.