

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBJECT:

**TENDER FOR THE CONSULTANCY ON MAPPING/LANDSCAPING OF
WSMEs MARKETPLACE PLATFORMS**

REF: AGF/RFP/CD/2024/003

Launching Date: 9th May 2024

Closing Date: 24th May, 2024

1700Hrs EAT

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY ON

MAPPING/LANDSCAPING OF WSMEs MARKETPLACE PLATFORMS

Introduction

The African continent has the highest entrepreneurship rate in the world, mainly driven by women entrepreneurs. African women are twice as likely to start a business than women elsewhere in world, however, their contributions to economic growth have so far been limited.

African women entrepreneurs still find it more difficult than men to convert their intentions into fast-growing, profitable, and sustainable businesses. They tend to be overrepresented in small businesses and in sectors characterized by low productivity and profitability and face multiple challenges. They are, therefore, disproportionately shunned from effectively participating in the market economy, limiting countries from realizing their full growth and employment creation potentials. Low access to finance has been a major constraint for women entrepreneurs in Africa who face a total financing gap estimated at USD 42 billion for formal women SMEs.

To address this challenge, the African Development Bank Group, established the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA), a flagship initiative that specifically focuses on increasing inclusive finance for women entrepreneurs on the continent. African Guarantee Fund is the Implementing Agency for AFAWA in Africa.

About the African Guarantee Fund

African Guarantee Fund (AGF) is a specialized guarantee provider whose mission is to facilitate economic development and poverty reduction in Africa. To achieve this, AGF increases access to finance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) across key economic sectors through its guarantee products and capacity development assistance.

Since inception, AGF has issued guarantee portfolio of over USD 2 billion, unlocking about USD 4 billion in SME financing, through partnerships with more than 200 partner financial institutions in 40 African countries. As a 2X Challenge qualified institution, AGF is committed to supporting women-owned/led

businesses through the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) Guarantee for Growth program, which aims to unlock up to USD 3 billion in financing for women SMEs in Africa. AGF also fosters sustainable growth by offering a green guarantee facility to lending institutions to enable them increase access to finance for SMEs investing in climate and green growth-oriented economy.

AGF is backed by the following shareholders and sponsors: Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECID), the African Development Bank (AfDB), French Development Agency (AFD), Nordic Development Fund (NDF), Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU), German Development Bank (KfW), French Agency for Private Sector (PROPARCO), West African Development Bank (BOAD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and USAID's West Africa Trade & Investment Hub (WATIH).

African Guarantee Fund is rated AA- by globally renowned Fitch Ratings.

The RFP and its Objectives

AGF's primary objective through the AFAWA initiative is to bridge the finance gap for women entrepreneurs and to unlock their entrepreneurial capacity and full potential. For this to be achieved, AGF works through partner financial institutions (PFIs). AFAWA is unique in that it offers a multi-dimensional approach to removing the constraints that women entrepreneurs face through three pillars of intervention:

1. Strengthening access to finance for women-owned/led businesses by leveraging the Bank's financial traditional instruments (lines of credit, trade finance, and equity funds) and through the AFAWA Guarantee for Growth (G4G), an innovative mechanism de-risking women entrepreneurs and enhancing Financial Institutions' (FIs) appetite in lending to WSMEs;
2. Building the capacity of women entrepreneurs and financial institutions; and,
3. Strengthening the enabling environment to increase WSMEs ability to access financing.

One of the potential solutions amongst the ones currently offered by the AFAWA initiative is the establishment of a WSMEs Marketplace Platform. The expectations for anticipated Marketplace Platform include to provide:

- a forum where women led business can undertake transactions with their fellow businesses,
- a platform where women led businesses can engage with their customers,
- a medium where women led businesses can interact with the Government and Government-related bodies,
- a forum where women led SMEs can download and interact with various Toolkits that they can use to improve their business,
- a medium where women led SMEs can access resources and reports.

However, before any plan to establish a Marketplace, AGF would like to determine if there is need to create a Platform. To make this determination, AGF wants to undertake an appreciation of what exists in the market with regards to previous and existing Marketplace Platforms.

In summary, the following are the objectives of the assignment:

1. Comprehensively describe existing types of Marketplace Platforms,
2. Describe any shortcomings with the existing Marketplace Platforms make recommendations on what needs to be addressed for them to maximize their potential, and
3. Make broad recommendations to AGF with regards to either establishing a new Platform or enhancing an existing Platform.

Expected Deliverable

Comprehensive Landscape Report capturing the above details.

Geographical Scope

All applications are welcome.

Evaluation Criteria

In evaluating technical proposals received from invited consultants, AGF shall consider mainly each consultant's current professional qualifications, its recent performance on similar assignments, its understanding of the assignment at hand, and the qualification of the staff assigned to the work.

As a guide to evaluating proposals, AGF shall use numerical ratings for each of the following technical evaluation criteria:

- a) experience of the consulting firm in the same field as that of the assignment and on similar projects,
- b) professional reputation of the firm and previous performance and experience,
- c) knowledge of the project environment in the country and region and their implications for the project,
- d) understanding of the terms of reference,
- e) overall quality of proposal, quality of work plan and methodology proposed,
- f) qualification of experts and experience in the field of the assignment,
- g) ability to deal with national and international personnel and agencies; and language proficiency in English and French.

The Proposals received will be assessed based on set criteria as indicated in the Annexure.

Qualifications and experience

The successful consultant/firm must have the following competencies: -

1. The consultant/firm must have a minimum of degree qualification in Business Management, Strategic Management, or any other related field from a recognized institution. In cases of a firm submitting the bid, each member of the proposed team should meet the minimum, education qualification stated.
2. The Service Provider must provide:
 - a) Names and qualifications of the key personnel that will perform the services indicating who is Team Leader, who are supporting, etc.;
 - b) CVs demonstrating qualifications must be submitted as required by the RFP; and
 - c) Written confirmation from each personnel that they are available for the entire duration of the contract.
3. At least 5 years working for or with commercial banks or other financial institutions at a senior management level,
4. At least 5 years of progressive experience in undertaking financing to women led MSMEs.
5. Experience in undertaking mapping, landscape assignments,

6. Experience in interacting with any automation initiative,
7. Understanding of challenges and opportunities for women-led micro, small and medium enterprises in the refugee context.
8. Good networking skills to engage with Fis, WSMEs, Development Financial Institutions, Donors and other partners.
9. Excellent communication and report writing skills.

Request for Proposal

AGF now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). The proposal should be structured to clearly address each of the requirements.

Submission and Review Process

All Proposals should include:

Technical and Financial Proposals

- The technical proposal should highlight among any other necessary information: brief profile of the consultant, previous experience, understanding of the ToR.
- The proposal should be brief and precise with the technical proposal being a maximum of 15 pages excluding annexes.
- Statutory compliance documents (Tax Authority PIN, Tax compliance, business registration, registration to professional bodies etc.) are to be submitted as annexes.
- The financial proposal should provide cost estimates for the services to be rendered.
- All costs must be inclusive of any tax obligations.
- Both technical and financial proposal should be sent as a single document in Portable Document Folder (PDF) format.
- Correspondence should be addressed to 'The Procurement Officer'.
- Application proposals can be submitted either in English or French.

Application proposals should be submitted via email **by 24th May 2024, 1700Hrs** to:

procurement@africanguaranteefund.com

Awardees will be contacted directly via email. Short-listing and selection shall be done in accordance with AGF's policies, rules and procedures.

NOTE: -

AGF reserves, at its sole discretion, the right to select or reject, either in totality or partially, any or all proposals made in the context of this RFP. Any such decisions made will be final and no correspondence will be engaged into, other than to inform the bidders of the outcome of the process.