

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)**

**FOR**

**DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ETHIOPIA EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**FINANCED BY**

**Agence Française de Développement**



**APRIL 2025**

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**ETHIOPIA****Export Development Program  
Request for Expressions of Interest****1. Background**

TradeMark Africa (TMA) is a leading aid-for-trade organization dedicated to improving trade facilitation and regional integration across Africa. Established in 2010, TMA works with governments, regional economic communities (RECs), the private sector, and development partners to eliminate trade barriers, enhance customs efficiency, and strengthen regulatory frameworks. Its interventions are designed to boost economic growth, reduce trade costs, and create a seamless trade environment that drives Africa's competitiveness in global markets.

TMA operates across East, West, Southern, and the Horn of Africa regions, focusing on Trade and Investment Environment; Quality & Value of Traded Goods; Digital Trade Systems; Greening Trade; and Resilience and Inclusive Trade. TMA programmes align with international best practices, supporting regulatory harmonization, infrastructure investments, and trade-related capacity-building. TMA ensures that African businesses can compete effectively in regional and international markets by addressing trade barriers enhancing business competitiveness.

TMA is funded by major development partners, including the EU, AFD, USAID, the World Bank, FCDO, and AfDB, among others. These partnerships enable TMA to implement large-scale, impactful programs that align with national trade policies and regional integration strategies. Through its collaboration with governments and private sector stakeholders, TMA ensures that its trade facilitation interventions are sustainable and responsive to Africa's evolving economic landscape.

TradeMark Africa has received financing from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) toward the cost of "Promoting regional economic integration in the Horn of Africa through the development of the Djibouti Corridor" (the "Project"), a portion of which will be used to finance the **Technical Assistance and Market Facilitation for Export Development Program** (the "Services").

. All queries quoting the above Tender Title and Number should be emailed to [procurement@trademarkafrica.com](mailto:procurement@trademarkafrica.com).

**2. Introduction, Aims and Objectives of The Export Development Program****Introduction**

Ethiopia is a predominantly agricultural economy, with horticulture, pulses and oilseeds being key agricultural exports. The country is one of the largest producers of horticulture, pulses and oilseeds in Africa, with particular prominence in fruits and vegetables, sesame seeds, sunflower, soybeans, baricot beans, chickpeas, sunflower etc. However, challenges such as low processing capacities, limited value-added production, and inconsistent quality control have hindered the sector's growth in international markets. Current Ethiopia's pulse and oilseed exports have shown growth over the last few years, especially in markets such as India, the Middle East, and Europe. However, opportunities for diversification and tapping into emerging markets remain underexploited. The demand for pulses and oilseeds is on the rise globally, driven by the increasing demand for plant-based proteins, biofuels, and

health-conscious food products. There is also growing interest in Ethiopia's organic and sustainable farming practices, which can further boost exports.

### **Program Aim**

The aim of this programme is to transform Ethiopia into a competitive exporter of selected pulses and Oilseeds. The goal is to boost the country's export volumes and value, improve value chain competitiveness and access existing and new international markets. This contributes to Programme Output 3: an inclusive approach to business competitiveness and the compliance and promotion of export competitiveness for selected sectors.

### **Program Objectives**

The main objective of this program is to strengthen Ethiopia's trade and export competitiveness by addressing sector specific constraints, increase exports for horticulture, pulses and oilseeds generate additional revenues for SMEs and producer groups and enhance inclusive economies as well as jobs.

### **Specific Objectives**

1. Strengthen and improve selected SMEs and producer groups' capacity to export horticulture, pulses and oilseeds to existing and new regional and global markets and grow revenue.
2. Improving business and policy environment to enhance private sector trade and exports
3. Enhancing standards and SPS Regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity as well as compliance with market standards and SPS requirements

### **Cross cutting issues**

Economic Inclusion with special focus on women and youth owned SMEs and producer groups to be supported to access markets and services. The program will also involve strengthen value chain innovation, creativity and technology driven interventions, including greening supply chains and application of climate smart approaches to enhance market competitiveness.

### **3. Scope of The Services:**

The interventions will focus on strengthening Ethiopia's export and trade competitiveness in horticulture, pulses and oilseeds value chains, ensuring optimal supply chains, sustainable export market linkages, improved business and logistics environment, efficient regulatory frameworks, improved institutional capacity, and enhanced compliance with international standards and SPS measures while ensuring inclusivity, creativity, innovation and technology driven approaches. The key tasks are grouped under the following objectives:

#### **1.Strengthening and improving selected SMEs and producer groups' capacity to export horticulture, pulses and oilseeds to existing and new regional and global markets and grow revenue.**

This will involve supporting and strengthening producer groups and SMEs to optimize their supply chains, consolidate and value add their products and link to enabling services. It will also include facilitating trade and export market development, export market analysis and diversification, export preparedness etc. This will enhance market access by reducing the number of intermediaries, introducing market efficiency and enhancing value chain and sector competitiveness.

#### **2. Improving business and policy regulatory environment**

This will involve analysis of specific policy and trade constraints undermining exports in the selected value chains and working with public sector, policy makers and private sector to address and resolve those policy related constraints. This will involve public and private sector dialogue and stakeholder

policy analysis and resolution to improve the business and trade environment and increase exports from Ethiopia.

### **3. Enhancing standards, SPS and Food Safety Regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity as well as compliance with market standards and SPS requirements**

This will involve strengthening Ethiopia's standards, metrology, accreditation, conformity assessment, and SPS systems to align with international trade agreements (WTO SPS/TBT, Codex, IPPC, OIE, and AfCFTA). This includes improving risk-based regulatory enforcement, mutual recognition agreements (MRAs), and digital certification systems to reduce non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and streamline trade compliance. It will also involve supporting exporters of pulses and oilseeds as well as horticulture (flowers, fruits, vegetables) and agrifood importers (palm oil, wheat) in meeting regulatory and voluntary standards (Global GAP., HACCP, Organic, Fairtrade) for better market access. This includes capacity-building for SMEs, implementation of industry self-regulation models, and adoption of voluntary third-party assurance (VTPA) programs to expand Ethiopia's market access and strengthen its position in global trade.

#### **Cross cutting issues**

In order to ensure that women and youth are represented in this program and to align with TMA's focus on economic inclusion, a gender and youth lens will be expected during selection and participation of producer groups and SMEs. The programme will also mainstream climate smart applications and green supply chains as well as technology driven interventions and innovations that will simplify processes and enhance trade competitiveness.

### **4. Place of the Assignment**

The program will be implemented in Ethiopia, with a strong regional component covering the Ethiopia-Djibouti Corridor. The assignment will be carried out at both the national level and along key commodity and production and trade corridors, ensuring efficient and optimal market driven supply chains, improved business environment, harmonized regulatory implementation, strengthened institutional capacity, and improved private sector compliance for horticultural, pulses and oilseed exports and agrifood/petroleum imports.

#### **4.1 National Level Interventions (Ethiopia)**

The national-level activities will focus on strengthening export competitiveness of selected SMEs and producer groups in pulses and oilseeds, improving the business environment, strengthening Ethiopia's regulatory framework, upgrading institutional capacities, and enhancing exporter compliance capabilities. The interventions will be implemented in key locations across Ethiopia, including:

- **Selected value chains production and trade corridors**-The programme will be implemented at national level. Key partners will include producers, SMEs, Ethiopia Horticulture Exporters Association, Ethiopia Pulses and Oilseeds and Spices Exporters Association (EPOSEA), Ethiopia Chamber of Commerce and other relevant public and private sector stakeholders.
- **Addis Ababa – The central hub for policy and regulatory engagement**, housing key institutions such as the Ethiopian Standards Agency (ESA), Ethiopian Agriculture Authority (EAA), Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA), Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise (ECAE), Ethiopian National Accreditation Office (ENAO), National Metrology Institute of Ethiopia (NMIE), Private Sector (Ethiopian Horticultural Producers & Exporters Association), and Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI).

- **Horticultural Production Zones (Rift Valley, Central and Southern Ethiopia and Oromia Region)** – Ethiopia’s primary horticultural export zones, including Zeway, Holeta, Bishoftu, Hawassa, and Jimma, where the focus will be on SPS risk management, certification support, compliance training, and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) implementation.
- **Laboratories and Testing Facilities (Key QI and SPS Institutions Across Ethiopia)** – Strengthening laboratory testing and conformity assessment services at institutions such as NMIE, ESA, ECAE, EAA and regional testing centres to improve SPS risk-based inspections, product safety testing, and certification capacity.
- **Major Customs Clearance Points (Galafi, and Dewelle)** – Enhancing SPS enforcement capacity, risk-based border inspections, and electronic certification processes to facilitate efficient trade clearance for agrifood and petroleum imports.

## 5. Duration and Size of the Services:

The Program is expected to be implemented over an estimated period of 24 months from the date of contract signing. This duration is designed to ensure a structured and phased implementation, allowing for value chain organisation, policy and regulatory reforms, modal shift to sea freight, regulatory reforms, institutional capacity-building, private sector compliance support, and corridor-level interventions to be effectively executed.

The budget allocated for this assignment is **approximately USD 1,400,000**, covering technical expertise, capacity-building activities, regulatory framework enhancements, private sector engagement, and trade facilitation interventions. This budget will be strategically allocated to ensure high-impact, scalable interventions that align with international best practices, Ethiopia’s trade facilitation priorities, and regional harmonization efforts along the Ethiopia-Djibouti Corridor.

## 6. Application and Eligibility Criteria

### 6.1 Application Requirements

TradeMark Africa hereby invites Applicants to express their interest in delivering the Services described above.

This Request for Expressions of Interest is open to:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consulting firms | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual consultants                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NGOs                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Venture between NGO(s) and consulting firm(s) |

Eligibility criteria to AFD financing are specified in sub-clause 1.3 of the "Procurement Guidelines for AFD-Financed Contracts in Foreign Countries", available online on AFD’s website: <http://www.afd.fr>.

The Applicant shall submit only one application, either in its own name or as a member of a Joint Venture (JV). If an Applicant (including any JV member) submits or participates in more than one application, those applications shall be all rejected. However, the same Subconsultant may participate in several applications.

If the Applicant is a JV, the expression of interest shall include:

- a copy of the JV Agreement entered into by all members,
- or
- a letter of intent to execute a JV Agreement, signed by all members together with a copy of the Agreement proposal,

In the absence of this document, the other members will be considered as Subconsultants. Experiences and qualifications of Subconsultants are not taken into account in the evaluation of the applications.

## 6.2 Evaluation Criteria for Similar Experience

Interested Applicants must provide information evidencing that they are qualified and experienced to perform those Services. For that purpose, documented evidence of recent (completed within the last 7 years) and similar services shall be submitted.

Determination of the similarity of the experiences will be based on:

### A. Contract Size (value equal to or above USD 300,000)

AND

### B. Nature of Services Provided

- i. Technical assistance
- ii. Design and Implementation of Capacity Building programs
- iii. Stakeholder engagement activities with private sector actors, particularly smallholder horticulture producers, export-oriented SMEs, and cross-border traders, with an emphasis on women-led businesses

AND

### C. Technical Area of Expertise

- i. Inclusive economic development, Market Systems, Private sector/SMEs Programming
  - a. *The Applicant should demonstrate experience and knowledge in implementing programmes and projects through value chains approach and market systems, business development, policy and regulatory reforms, innovation, green logistics, supply chain optimization, export market analysis and facilitation etc.*
- ii. Standards and Quality Infrastructure (SQI) Development
  - b. *The Applicant should demonstrate experience in strengthening national metrology, accreditation, certification and testing systems to enhance compliance with international trade requirements.*
  - c. SPS Risk Management and Compliance
    - a. *The Applicant should have experience in implementing pest risk analysis (PRA), food safety controls, border biosecurity and risk-based SPS inspection systems to prevent export rejections.*
  - d. Regulatory Reforms and Policy Harmonization
    - a. *The firm should have experience in supporting alignment of Ethiopia's or similar technical regulations and SPS measures with WTO SPS/TBT, AfCFTA, Codex Alimentarius, IPPC, and OIE frameworks.*

AND

**D. The Location :** English-speaking in developing countries outside of the country of registration of the Applicant

*NB: For an experience to be considered “similar” the contract must: (A) have a value of at least USD 300,000, (B) include services involving a combination of several of the aforementioned services (I, II, III), (C) cover one or a combination of the aforementioned technical areas of Expertise (IV, V, VI, VII), (D) having been delivered in an English-speaking developing country, and have been completed within the past 7 years.*

The Client will also take into account for the evaluation of the applications the following items:

- I. Skills and availability of in-house technical experts provided to the on-site experts
- II. Local representatives/partners

**A bidder must comply with Part A, B and C to be recommended for RFP stage.**

### 6.3 Security

Due to the security risk in the areas where the Services are to be performed, the evaluation of Expressions of Interest will verify that the applications meet the following criteria:

- The Applicant has at least one experience providing services in an area with a similar security risk, for which it shall provide proof of implementation of security measures (invoice or contract with a security service provider, proof of security awareness training before departure on-site, etc.).
- The Applicant has set up internal security management procedures: it shall provide a description of its monitoring system and crisis management system.
- For services provided abroad, the Applicant has entered into an assistance and repatriation contract for its employees: it shall provide the certificate evidencing such contract.
- The Applicant shall describe its standard preparation process for departure on assignment in sensitive areas, and shall attach documents proving its implementation (service orders with related instructions, certificates of awareness-raising or training actions, etc.)

For a JV, its leader and any member that has its registered office outside the Client's country shall fulfil each of these criteria.

**An application that does not meet any of these requirements will be rejected.**

### 7. Shortlist

Among the submitted applications, TMA will shortlist a maximum of six (6) Applicants, to whom the Request for Proposals to carry out the Services shall be sent.

### 8. Submission and Contacts

Applicants may submit their **Expression of Interest (EOI) electronically** or in **hard copy**. All submissions must be received no later than **05 May 2025 at 10:00 AM (EAT)**.

- **Electronic submissions** should be sent to [procurement@trademarkafrica.com](mailto:procurement@trademarkafrica.com). Electronic submissions must be in **PDF format**, must **not exceed 10MB**, and must be protected by a **password**. **The password shall be sent in a separate email, shortly after the deadline for submission.**
- **Hard copy submissions**, along with a flash disk, should be delivered to the address below.

TradeMark Africa

Elili International Hotel Building, 19th Floor.

Kazanchis Business District, Guinea Conakry Street

Kirkos Sub-City, woreda 17/18

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

[www.trademarkafrica.com](http://www.trademarkafrica.com)

Interested Applicants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours.  
[procurement@trademarkafrica.com](mailto:procurement@trademarkafrica.com).

**TMA is unable to respond to questions relating to this EOI within 7 days of the submission deadline.**



**Appendix to The Request for Expressions of Interest  
(To be submitted with the application, signed and unaltered)**

**Statement of Integrity, Eligibility and Environmental and Social Responsibility**

Reference of the bid or proposal \_\_\_\_\_ (the "Contract")

To: \_\_\_\_\_ (the "Contracting Authority")

1. We recognise and accept that Agence Française de Développement ("AFD") only finances projects of the Contracting Authority subject to its own conditions which are set out in the Financing Agreement which benefits directly or indirectly to the Contracting Authority. As a matter of consequence, no legal relationship exists between AFD and our company, our joint venture or our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants. The Contracting Authority retains exclusive responsibility for the preparation and implementation of the procurement process and performance of the contract. The Contracting Authority means the Purchaser, the Employer, the Client, as the case may be, for the procurement of goods, works, plants, consulting services or non-consulting services.

2. We hereby certify that neither we nor any other member of our joint venture or any of our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants are in any of the following situations:

2.1 Being bankrupt, wound up or ceasing our activities, having our activities administered by the courts, having entered into receivership, reorganisation or being in any analogous situation arising from any similar procedure;

2.2 Having been:

a) convicted, within the past five years by a court decision, which has the force of res judicata in the country where the Contract is implemented, of fraud, corruption or of any other offense committed during a procurement process or performance of a contract (in the event of such conviction, you may attach to this Statement of Integrity supporting information showing that this conviction is not relevant in the context of this Contract);

b) subject to an administrative sanction within the past five years by the European Union or by the competent authorities of the country where we are constituted, for fraud, corruption or for any other offense committed during a procurement process or performance of a contract (in the event of such sanction, you may attach to this Statement of Integrity supporting information showing that this sanction is not relevant in the context of this Contract);

c) convicted, within the past five years by a court decision, which has the force of res judicata, of fraud, corruption or of any other offense committed during the procurement process or performance of an AFD-financed contract;

2.3 Being listed for financial sanctions by the United Nations, the European Union and/or France for the purposes of fight-against-terrorist financing or threat to international peace and security;

2.4 Having been subject within the past five years to a contract termination fully settled against us for significant or persistent failure to comply with our contractual obligations during contract performance, unless this termination was challenged and dispute resolution is still pending or has not confirmed a full settlement against us;

2.5 Not having fulfilled our fiscal obligations regarding payments of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of either the country where we are constituted or the Contracting Authority's country;

2.6 Being subject to an exclusion decision of the World Bank and being listed on the website <http://www.worldbank.org/debarr> (in the event of such exclusion, you may attach to this Statement of Integrity supporting information showing that this exclusion is not relevant in the context of this Contract);

2.7 Having created false documents or committed misrepresentation in documentation requested by the Contracting Authority as part of the procurement process of this Contract.

3. We hereby certify that neither we, nor any of the members of our joint venture or any of our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants are in any of the following situations of conflict of interest:

3.1 Being an affiliate controlled by the Contracting Authority or a shareholder controlling the Contracting Authority, unless the stemming conflict of interest has been brought to the attention of AFD and resolved to its satisfaction;

3.2 Having a business or family relationship with a Contracting Authority's staff involved in the procurement process or the supervision of the resulting Contract, unless the stemming conflict of interest has been brought to the attention of AFD and resolved to its satisfaction;

3.3 Being controlled by or controlling another bidder or consultant, or being under common control with another bidder or consultant, or receiving from or granting subsidies directly or indirectly to another bidder or consultant, having the same legal representative as another bidder or consultant, maintaining direct or indirect contacts with another bidder or consultant which allows us to have or give access to information contained in the respective applications, bids or proposals, influencing them or influencing decisions of the Contracting Authority;

3.4 Being engaged in a consulting services activity, which, by its nature, may be in conflict with the assignments that we would carry out for the Contracting Authority;

3.5 In the case of procurement of goods, works or plants:

a) Having prepared or having been associated with a consultant who prepared specifications, drawings, calculations and other documentation to be used in the procurement process of this Contract;

b) Having been recruited (or being proposed to be recruited) ourselves or any of our affiliates, to carry out works supervision or inspection for this Contract.

4. If we are a state-owned entity, and to compete in a procurement process, we certify that we have legal and financial autonomy and that we operate under commercial laws and regulations.

5. We undertake to bring to the attention of the Contracting Authority, which will inform AFD, any change in situation with regard to points 2 to 4 here above.

6. In the context of the procurement process and performance of the corresponding contract:

6.1 We have not and we will not engage in any dishonest conduct (act or omission) deliberately intended to deceive others, to intentionally conceal items, to violate or vitiate someone's consent,

to make them circumvent legal or regulatory requirements and/or to violate their internal rules in order to obtain illegitimate profit;

6.2 We have not and we will not engage in any dishonest conduct (act or omission) contrary to our legal or regulatory obligations or our internal rules in order to obtain illegitimate profit;

6.3 We have not promised, offered or given and we will not promise, offer or give, directly or indirectly to (i) any Person who holds a legislative, executive, administrative or judicial mandate within the State of the Contracting Authority regardless of whether that Person was nominated or elected, regardless of the permanent or temporary, paid or unpaid nature of the position and regardless of the hierarchical level the Person occupies, (ii) any other Person who performs a public function, including for a State institution or a State-owned company, or who provides a public service, or (iii) any other person defined as a Public Officer by the national laws of the Contracting Authority's country, an undue advantage of any kind, for himself or for another Person or entity, for such Public Officer to act or refrain from acting in his official capacity;

6.4 We have not promised, offered or given and we will not promise, offer or give, directly or indirectly to any Person who occupies an executive position in a private sector entity or works for such an entity, regardless of the nature of his/her capacity, any undue advantage of any kind, for himself or another Person or entity for such Person to perform or refrain from performing any act in breach of its legal, contractual or professional obligations;

6.5 We have not and we will not engage in any practice likely to influence the contract award process to the detriment of the Contracting Authority and, in particular, in any anti-competitive practice having for object or for effect to prevent, restrict or distort competition, namely by limiting access to the market or the free exercise of competition by other undertakings;

6.6 Neither we nor any of the members of our joint venture or any of our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants shall acquire or supply any equipment nor operate in any sectors under an embargo of the United Nations, the European Union or France;

6.7 We commit ourselves to comply with and ensure that all of our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants comply with international environmental and labour standards, consistent with laws and regulations applicable in the country of implementation of the Contract, including the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and international environmental treaties. Moreover, we shall implement environmental and social risks mitigation measures when specified in the environmental and social commitment plan (ESCP) provided by the Contracting Authority.

7. We, as well as members of our joint venture and our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants or subconsultants authorise AFD to inspect accounts, records and other documents relating to the procurement process and performance of the contract and to have them audited by auditors appointed by AFD.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ In the capacity of: \_\_\_\_\_

Duly empowered to sign in the name and on behalf of1: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Dated : \_\_\_\_\_