

Request for Qualifications
Programme Advisor, Ethiopian oilseed processing business

TechnoServe invites you to participate in this competitive solicitation for qualifications related to improved seed advisory to SAMANU, a major Ethiopian FMCG and oilseed processing group that will drive improved incomes for tens of thousands of (SHFs) in Ethiopia.

Position Location: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Anticipated start date: October 2023
Estimated Duration: 18 months, full time position
Budget: max \$90,000 for 18 months

I. About TechnoServe

TechnoServe (www.technoserve.org) is a non-profit, economic development organisation with sustained commitment to its 50-year old founding mission to work with enterprising men and women in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. We are business specialists assisting farmers and other entrepreneurs in 29 countries, increasing their access to information, capital, and markets. The increased income our clients derive enhances resilience and prosperity for their families and communities. In 2021, TechnoServe assisted 407,000 farmers and businesses resulting in \$250 million of new revenues and wages for participating farmers, businesses, and employees.

TechnoServe was competitively selected by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to lead part of a five-year programme – Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusinesses (CASA) – focused on driving catalytic change in how investors view and invest in agribusinesses operating in supply chains with significant numbers of smallholder producers. CASA is focused on increasing economic opportunities for smallholder farmers by:

- Enabling more smallholder farmers to engage with and trade into commercial markets;
- Demonstrating the commercial viability of agribusinesses with significant smallholder supply chains and attracting more investment into these businesses;
- Deepening the smallholder impact of investments made by development finance institutions and impact investors.

TechnoServe's role on CASA is to establish and operate a £8 million Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) to support agribusinesses that have received development finance institution (DFI) or impact investor financing to extend and deepen their smallholder impact. The facility provides grants and technical assistance to agribusinesses that have received financing from a DFI (e.g., BII, FMO, Norfund) or an impact/patient capital investor (e.g., Dob Equity, C4D Partners, Acumen, ARAF) for projects which will increase the volumes of purchases from smallholders and bring new smallholders into business supply chains. CASA TAF's aim is to increase the development impact of individual deals and help build an evidence base of the potential development returns from agribusiness investments that can be used to raise expectations of investors from future deals. CASA TAF has the potential to re-define the role that private investments in agriculture can play towards driving development impact for millions of smallholder producers across the globe. Over 5 years, our objective is to work with 35 agribusinesses to increase sales and productivity of over 100,000 smallholders, and increase jobs and rural income generation opportunities.

II. Background

One of CASA TAF's supported businesses is SAMANU – a leading Ethiopian FMCG group that has recently invested in a solvent extraction plant that will allow it to source oilseeds such as sunflower, rapeseed and soybean from farmers in Ethiopia, rather than importing crude oils. CASA TAF partnered with SAMANU in April 2023 to deliver an inclusive business plan which was completed in August 2023.

Sunflower and rapeseed cultivation in Ethiopia is currently very limited, with a small number of farmers cultivating a handful of old sunflower and rapeseed varieties that are registered in the country. In order to access sufficient supply of sunflower and rapeseed, SAMANU will need to promote the uptake and cultivation of high performing sunflower and rapeseed varieties that can capture smallholder farmer interest while accommodating the limitations of smallholder agriculture (e.g., suboptimal GAP, limited access to fertilizer and agrochemicals, etc.)

SAMANU proposes to promote improved varieties of sunflower and rapeseed seed to farmers through selected agro-dealer intermediaries, while supporting clusters of farmers with high quality extension to ensure successful harvests and word-of-mouth demand for future seasons.

The **Programme Advisor** will provide day to day operational support and will oversee critical activities throughout the project's implementation period. The Programme Advisor is expected to report to SAMANU's Head of Cluster and CASA's Inclusive Business Manager for Delivery.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Project set up and programme management
 - a. Activities
 - i. Serve as the primary point of contact for CASA TAF for TA project delivery
 - ii. Develop consolidated project work plan covering technical assistance projects focused on (1) seed field trials, (2) agent recruitment and management, (3) extension and farmer cluster formation based on the technical assistance memo and initial project plan developed by CASA TAF
 - iii. Coordinate with Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) when appropriate to gather relevant studies, manuals or training materials for project implementation
 - iv. Support market research and procurement activities for Technical Assistance providers
 - v. Establish weekly and monthly check-ins with Samanu and CASA TAF team members to ensure activities are on track
 - vi. Support CASA TAF in managing and developing content for Steering Committee meetings with Samanu senior management and partner investors
 - vii. Submit monthly progress reports on activities completed, KPIs achieved, challenges, and risks
 - b. Deliverables
 - i. Consolidated project work plan covering technical projects
 - ii. List of potential TA providers for technical assistance projects based on market research
 - iii. Weekly and monthly project check-ins with CASA TAF team
 - iv. Monthly progress reports covering key activities, KPIs achieved (farmer reached, trainings conducted, volume procured, etc.), challenges, risks and lessons learned
2. Seed field trials
 - a. Activities
 - i. Support Seed Consultant in implementing field design protocols with Samanu team
 - ii. Support field trials data collection and monitoring activities

- iii. Engage farmer groups (5-10 in 2023; 10-20 in 2024) in field trials and determine willingness to grow sunflower and rapeseeds as rotational crops
 - iv. Document farmer feedback and contribute to Seed Consultant's field trial reports
 - b. Deliverables
 - i. Short report documenting farmer feedback during small scale and full scale sunflower and rapeseed field trials
- 3. Sunflower economics
 - a. Activities
 - i. Identify key rotational crops to sunflower in areas of SAMANU intervention (e.g., maize, soybean) and define gross margin reference, leveraging expertise of local agri-institutions to ensure methodology is relevant to the local context
 - ii. Calibrate assumptions on sunflower economics and resulting farmer income benefits based on seed field trial results
 - iii. Establish methodology to track the performance of sunflower economics during following seasons and allow Samanu to make adjustments to farm-gate price to ensure competitiveness
 - b. Deliverable
 - i. Methodology to assess sunflower economics vs. reference crops and inform Samanu price adjustments
- 4. Intermediary agent network formation (preliminary work)
 - a. Activities
 - i. Visit identified Samanu agents and conduct initial assessment of agents operational model
 - ii. Conduct initial gap assessment of potential agents that will feed into capacity building programmes
 - iii. Develop initial value proposition for potential Samanu agents based on business and operational model assessed
 - iv. Develop initial process flow illustrating how Samanu will identify, engage and manage agents within its supply chain structure based on engagements with woreda and kebele level intermediaries
 - v. Together with Samanu and the Technical Assistance (TA) provider, develop agent selection criteria and onboarding programme
 - vi. Support TA provider in managing onboarded agents through field and monitoring visits
 - b. Deliverables
 - i. Report covering initial assessment of intermediary agents as distribution channels, including training and capacity needs
- 5. Farmer extension and cluster formation
 - a. Activities
 - i. Together with Samanu, develop selection criteria to identify priority areas for sunflower production and cluster formation
 - ii. Support Samanu and TA provider in implementing SOPs for cluster formation and farmer extension services
 - iii. Provide input to ToT and farmer extension training curriculum and materials based on farmer feedback sessions and field visits
 - iv. Ensure incorporation of climate smart and regenerative practices in the training curriculum and activities
 - v. Support ToT and farmer training activities
 - vi. Conduct farmer visits during production and harvest season and to monitor effectiveness of training and extension programmes
 - vii. Provide input to Samanu extension team and TA provider on training programmes based on insights from field visits
 - b. Deliverables
 - i. Selection criteria and framework for agent selection and cluster formation
 - ii. Report on extension and training effectiveness

6. Monitoring and evaluation
 - a. Activities
 - i. Support CASA TAF Climate experts in conducting additional risk assessments if needed
 - ii. Support CASA TAF M&E Lead in project monitoring, including data collection for quarterly donor reports
 - iii. Conduct farmer and agent interviews for project case studies
 - iv. Serve as primary point of contact if the project team decides to conduct impact evaluation activities

IV. Skills Required

- Bachelor's Degree in agriculture, business management or relevant field
- At least five years experience in agronomy, advisory services, and farmer extension programmes
- At least five years experience in directly working with farmers and incorporating the farmers perspective in programs and initiatives
- Experience in oilseed crops preferred
- Experience working with smallholder farmers in developing markets highly preferred, but not essential provided the candidate can demonstrate necessary technical skillset and network, combined with an openness to adapting to fit the smallholder context
- Proficiency in Amharic and English required
- Should possess excellent business management skills
- Proven analytical and quantitative skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong computer skills, including MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel
- Ability to work independently, flexibly, and responsibly
- Ability to adapt to changing working conditions
- Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines

V. Instructions

Interested candidates should submit their CV, an indicative work plan and budget (including the proposed daily rate and level of effort) via email to Ana Herrera (aherrera@tns.org).

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the submission that is deemed to be in the best interest of TechnoServe and the Donor. TechnoServe also reserves the right to award contracts to multiple bidders. The winning submissions will be notified in writing. Those who were not selected may or may not be notified, at the sole discretion of TechnoServe.

Submission deadline: 25 September 2023

Questions regarding this request may be addressed to Ana Herrera (aherrera@tns.org) and must be received no later than 18 September 2023, 18h00 EAT.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Request for Qualifications is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
2. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFQ. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All awards will be subject to TechnoServe contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.

5. TechnoServe reserves the right to accept or reject any submission or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing party submitting for such rejection or cancellation of the request for qualifications.

6. TechnoServe reserves the right to accept all or part of the submission when award is provided.

7. All information provided by TechnoServe in this RFQ is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TechnoServe is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.

8. TechnoServe reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

9. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.

10. TechnoServe may select and/or award contracts to multiple bidders.