

Request for Qualifications Consultant

TechnoServe invites **individuals** to participate in this competitive solicitation for qualifications related to the position of Learning consultant to support CASA TAF to create an annual learning paper that explores and documents lessons learnt with respect to supporting inclusive agribusiness growth. The paper will seek to outline conditions for success, showcase effective inclusive business models and identify potential challenges that inhibit effectiveness.

Position Location: NA

Anticipated start date: 15 November 2023

Estimated Duration: 4 months, part-time

Budget ceiling: £15,000 (fees) - travel budget to be discussed separately with preferred bidder

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 2022, TechnoServe assisted 1.3M people and enterprises with increased revenue; and directly supported a subset of participating farmers and businesses to realise incremental financial benefits of \$366 million.

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 Technical Assistance Facility (CASA TAF). The CASA TAF is an £8M funded programme and forms part of FCDO's Inclusive Green Growth Centre of Expertise (COE) which aims to support a climate resilient and inclusive global agriculture sector through technical assistance to a variety of stakeholders including impact investors, agribusinesses and FCDO country missions. Technical assistance ultimately aims to change how investors, donors, and governments view and invest in agribusinesses that build smallholder resilient supply chains.

CASA TAF operates across all FCDO priority countries in Africa and Asia. It is working with seven investor partners, and to date has supported 27 agri-business investees of these partners to design and implement new business models to improve the resilience of farmers. By 2025, the programme will have supported the increased resilience and food security of ~90,000 smallholders and demonstrated the impact of these models to catalyse additional investment into agriculture.

II. Background

TechnoServe is seeking a consultant to lead the development of CASA TAF's fourth learning paper, in the series of five papers. The paper will focus on CASA TAF's experiences supporting inclusive agribusiness growth; drawing out key insights and lessons around conditions for success, key drivers for shared value

and effective approaches as well as incentives for sustained adoption of inclusive business models. It will identify potential challenges that can inhibit the effectiveness of inclusive business models and also highlight key enablers and opportunities that have the potential to attract more commercial investment into these kinds of businesses. For example, the paper will examine how digital tools and technologies can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of inclusive business models, lower costs, and better serve smallholder farmers.

Aims and Objectives

The paper aims to analyse and document key factors that contribute to the success of inclusive business models, as well as those that could hinder progress. The analysis will identify common challenges faced in the implementation of these models, providing practical insights on what works and what doesn't.

The paper seeks to share practical insights and guidance for agribusinesses, TA practitioners, investors and donors supporting inclusive agribusiness growth; and, specifically, seeking to promote adoption, expansion and/or strengthening of inclusive business models. Specifically, the paper aims to:

- Guide investors, public funders and TA practitioners on effective approaches to support inclusive agribusiness growth
- Highlight conditions for successful inclusive agribusiness models; emphasising what works and what doesn't, including CASA TAF insights on typical shared value drivers and impact levers.
- Showcase the potential and realised value of successful inclusive agribusiness models from a commercial and impact perspective, using case studies from the CASA TAF portfolio
- Discuss key enablers of successful inclusive business models, including where we are seeing opportunities to attract more investment into the kinds of models (e.g. the role of technology, new forms of (blended) finance, etc.)
- Showcase characteristics and criteria for successful adoption of inclusive business models, underlining the (evolving) role CASA TAF plays, strategies for effectively engaging management teams of agribusinesses, etc; and how this could be applied to other public sector and TA practitioners seeking to support similar models.

Illustrative Learning Questions

The consultant will develop the learning paper by addressing the following key learning questions (subject to further refinement), split into four broad parts:

1) Potential for Shared Value: The consultant will investigate the main levers driving commercial viability and smallholder farmer impact (using the CASA TAF portfolio as a reference point).

1. Based on CASA TAF's experience, what are the key commercial drivers for agribusinesses to invest in shared value initiatives? How do these vary by sector, business model, business maturity, and why?
2. Based on CASA TAF's experience, how can shared value initiatives impact SHF incomes and resilience? How does this vary by type of initiative? Why?
3. How can agribusinesses navigate challenges around gender inclusion and climate adaptation

2) Conditions for Sustained Adoption: The consultant will explore patterns, profiles, key barriers and risks associated with sustained adoption.

4. What are the typical conditions and characteristics of inclusive business models that have shown sustained adoption?

5. What are the characteristics of agribusinesses that adopt inclusive business models? What are the competing priorities that hinder or delay adoption?
6. What approaches have worked effectively for engaging agribusiness partners and incentivising continued adoption?
7. What are agribusiness partners' perspectives on the role, nature and value of TA provided by CASA TAF?

3) Emerging Trends and Opportunities: The consultant will delve into the role of technology, climate risks, new forms of finance, and other factors that influence investment into these kinds of business models.

8. How do digitisation, climate finance, and other novel forms of finance play a role in influencing investment into these business models?
9. What (other) opportunities exist for reducing the cost and risks to serve SHFs?
10. What are emerging trends that may enable replication and scale?

4) Reflections on the “sweet spot” for attracting commercial investment into inclusive agribusiness growth.

11. What is the balance that ensures commercial viability, sustained adoption, and meaningful SHF inclusion and impact? What are effective methods and models used to support investment in gender-inclusive and climate resilient business models? How can and should TA play a role?
12. What are critical systemic barriers the CASA TAF team runs into that continue to hinder inclusive agribusiness growth? How can/should blended finance and/or TA play a role?

Target Audience

The paper will primarily target impact investors, agribusinesses, TA practitioners and institutional funders interested in supporting or funding inclusive agribusiness growth.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The consultant will play a pivotal role in the development of the annual learning paper, taking on a variety of responsibilities that include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Finalise Learning Questions:** As their first task, the consultant will work closely with the CASA TAF team to finalise the list of learning questions (see above). This involves refining and validating the initial set of questions based on their understanding of the project's objectives and the insights gained from preliminary discussions with the team and review of available data and materials.
2. **Engagement:** The consultant will actively engage with the CASA TAF team, inclusive business models, and supported agribusinesses to gather insights and develop an in-depth understanding of the subject matter, the challenges faced, and the strategies used for success. It is envisaged that this will largely involve remote discussions but may include limited travel to meet in-person with companies, where a need is identified.
3. **Research and Analysis:** Based on interactions with the team and supported agribusinesses, the consultant will conduct rigorous research and analysis to address the key learning questions. They will identify trends, patterns, and unique characteristics of successful and inclusive business models. This will involve both desktop research, reviews and interviews with stakeholders including the CASA TAF team, agribusiness teams, investor partner representatives and TA providers.
4. **Case Study Development:** The consultant will prepare detailed case studies to illustrate the points discussed in the learning paper, based on the supported agribusinesses. These case studies will spotlight different types of business models and value chains and the strategies employed to navigate gender inclusion issues, among other things. The consultant may also draw on existing case studies the CASA TAF team has developed and incorporate adapted or redacted versions into the paper where appropriate.

5. **Drafting Paper:** The primary task of the consultant will be drafting the annual learning paper. This will involve synthesising the research and analysis into a comprehensive, accessible, and engaging paper that effectively communicates the findings and insights.
6. **Revision and Editing:** The consultant will work closely with the CASA TAF team throughout the drafting process to incorporate feedback and revisions. This iterative process will ensure that the final paper accurately reflects CASA TAF's experiences and insights and effectively guides investors, funders, and practitioners.
7. **Final Presentation:** The consultant may be asked to present the key findings of the learning paper to the TechnoServe team, funders, investors, and/or other key stakeholders.

IV. Deliverables

- An annual learning paper on conditions for viable, successful inclusive agribusiness models.
- Case studies that showcase the above; successful models and strategies.
- An analysis and reflection on the implementation, success metrics and projected (commercial and social) benefits of inclusive business models supported within CASA TAF's portfolio.
- Presentation to the team on the main findings and recommendations of the paper.

V. Skills Required

- Experience working in inclusive economic development and agriculture sector.
- Demonstrated experience working with corporations around shared value initiatives; and supporting inclusive agribusiness growth.
- Excellent interpersonal communication and facilitation skills, strong ability to work effectively with teams and independently.
- Strong report writing skills, with prior experience leading and/or contributing to development of similar learning documents and external publications preferred.
- Proven research, analytical and qualitative skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Has a strong sense of ownership, accountability and can-do attitude. Proactive and can work with limited direction.
- Prior strategy consulting experience preferred.

VI. Instructions

Interested candidates should submit their CV and budget (including daily rate in GBP) for implementing the required assignment and deliverables outlined in this document.

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. 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: 3 November 2023

Questions regarding this request may be addressed to Noel Verrinder (nverrinder@contractor.tns.org) and must be received no later than **27 October 2023**

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 TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
5. TNS 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. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the submission when award is provided.
7. All information provided by TNS 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. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
8. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement with TNS.
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.