**TO: Prospective Applicants**

**SUBJECT: RFA NO.** RFA2- BASPs-2020

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR: PREQULAIFICATION OF BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVCIE PROVIDERS (BASPs)**

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| **REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)** | | | |
| **RFA NUMBER:**  RFA No. RFA2- BASPs-2020 | | **ISSUE DATE:**  **December 19, 2019** | |
| **CLIENT:** Global Communities | | **PROGRAM:**  Agribusiness Investment for Market Stimulation (AIMS) | |
| **PREQULAIFICATION OF BUSINESS SERVCIE PROVIDERS** | | | |
| **ISSUED BY:** Cooperative Housing Foundation, doing business as Global Communities  Off Mphonongo Street, Area 43/Plot 491 PO Box 30209 Lilongwe 3 Malawi  [www.globalcommunitieskenya.org](http://www.globalcommunitieskenya.org) | | | **APPLICATION DUE DATE: Applications are received and evaluated on an ongoing basis.** |
| **This Request for Application contains the following sections:** | | | |
| Part 1 | Instructions to Applicants | | |
| Part 2 | Evaluation Factors | | |
| Part 3 | Statement of Work | | |
| Part 4 Annexes | Annex A – Prequalification application form | | |

**Back Ground**

The Cooperative Housing Foundation, doing business as Global Communities, implements the Agribusiness Investment for Market Stimulation (AIMS) Program, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded three country initiative to support small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) to increase their volumes and value in agriculture trade.

AIMS has identified access to finance as a key component in enhancing A-SMEs operations. Access to finance is however limited because of various constraints faced by A-SMEs including inadequate documentation of their operations. As part of

A-SME loan assessment, proper documentation of business operations including financial reports are an integral requirement by financial institutions to facilitate loan repayment capacity evaluation. Lack of documentation or poor quality documentation often lead to loan ineligibility by A-SMEs with credit worthy business operations.

In view of this, AIMS will support capacity building initiatives that facilitate documentation of business operations including development of financial reports. This will involve A-SME support and guidance on maintaining financial records, book keeping and accounting, business plan development and cash flow projections. A key deliverable in these engagements with A-SMEs shall be 3 years’ financial reports.

Global Communities is therefore seeking to prequalify business advisory service providers (BASPs) to provide assistance to agribusiness SMEs, including producer groups and cooperatives to address these service needs. Under this opportunity, Global Communities will link the prequalified BAS providers with the SMEs based on client demand in the above referenced target areas. The fee for the service offered by the BAS providers is expected to be covered by the SMEs. Global Communities may contribute to the payment to the provider at the sole discretion of Global Communities. This shall be determined during contracting.

The purpose of this RFA is to therefore to invite qualifying firms desirous to provide business advisory services to submit their application for prequalification.

Interested firms should submit their applications electronically in accordance with the language of the solicitation to the address specified.

Responding firms are advised that this solicitation does not in any way obligate Global Communities to compensate the responding firms for any costs associated with the preparation and submission of their application s.

Any questions or requests for information should be addressed in writing, to [keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org](mailto:keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org) and copied to [pkabuli@globalcommunities.org](mailto:pkabuli@globalcommunities.org)

Any information given to one prospective applicant concerning this solicitation will be furnished to all such applicants as an amendment of the solicitation.

Please e-mail Global Communities at [keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org](mailto:keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org) and cc [pkabuli@globalcommunities.org](mailto:pkabuli@globalcommunities.org) of your intent to propose at the earliest practicable date, so that we may anticipate the number of applications to be evaluated and also to enable Global communities to share with you on any subsequent correspondences regarding this RFA.

## This RFA is open to interested applicants who meet the following mandatory requirements:

1. Registered to do business in Malawi.

## Have at least 5 years’ of experience supporting SMEs (experience supporting agribusiness is a plus).

1. Have a private sector, commercial orientation.( Fee for service approach)

## Part 1: Instructions to Applicants

1. Applicants are requested to submit an application for prequalification directly responsive to the terms, conditions, and clauses of this RFA and strictly in accordance to the Prequalification application form (**Annex A)**. Applications not conforming to this format will not be evaluated.
2. Application s must remain valid for a period at least **12 months** from the date of submission.
3. Applications should be submitted electronically - Internet email with up to 2 attachments (2MB limit) per email compatible with PDF,MS WORD, and Adobe Acrobat in a MS Windows environment to: [keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org](mailto:keconsultancy@globalcommunities.org)
4. All applications received in response to this solicitation will be reviewed strictly as submitted and in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified in Part 2, Evaluation Factors.
5. The person signing the application form must have the authority to commit the applicant to all the provisions listed in the application.
6. Global Communities is not obligated to pay for any costs incurred by the applicant in preparation of an application in response hereto.
7. Applicants are informed that Global Communities complies with U.S. Sanctions and Embargo laws and Regulations including Executive Order 13224 on Terrorist Financing, which effectively prohibit transactions with persons or entities that commit, threaten to commit or support terrorism. Any person or entity that participates in this bidding process, either as a prime or sub to the prime, must certify as part of the bid that he or it is not on the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) List and is eligible to participate. Global Communities shall disqualify any bid received from a person or entity that is found to be on the List or otherwise ineligible.
8. Firms or individuals that are included on the Excluded Parties List System ([www.epls.gov](http://www.epls.gov/)) shall not be eligible for financing and shall not be used to provide any commodities or services contemplated by this RFA.

## Part 2: Evaluation Factors

1. The evaluation factors presented below will serve as the basis upon which Applications will be evaluated. The relative weight accorded to each factor is expressed in points up to 100 points. (60% Technical strength and 40 % Cost competitiveness and reasonableness) The prequalification cut-off mark is 50% on the overall score with atlteast 50% in the technical Score)
2. Global Communities will evaluate all applications received based on the above evaluation criteria. This review may include follow-up questions as well as face to face interviews.
3. Application Evaluation Matrix per service category.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Criteria** | | **Maximum Score/Points** |
| Technical Application | Technical understanding | 20 |
| Team Composition and Qualifications | 10 |
| Organizational Specialized competency | 10 |
| Past Experience/Performance | 20 |
| Fee Structure | Cost competitiveness and reasonableness and justifications (Proposed daily rate) | 40 |
| Total Maximum Score | | 100 |

1. Global Communities will rank the applicants on the overall points obtained in each specialization category applied and in consideration of Geographical coverage.

## Part 3: Statement of Work

1. **Background**

Global Communities is implementing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) supported program Agribusiness Investment for Market Stimulation (AIMS) which seeks to bolster agriculture trade through increased access to finance, technical assistance to financial institutions and agribusiness small and medium enterprises (A-SMEs) and market linkages to

A-SMEs. The program is operating in Kenya and Malawi.

AIMS support to A-SMEs, which include cooperatives, involves working with Business Advisory Service Providers (BASPs) who offer services targeted at upscaling these business operations. These services include interventions that enhance partnerships between different actors within the value chains of their operations including financial institutions. This support develops A-SMEs capacity to better take advantage of market opportunities. This support is based on a fee-for-service sustainable model aimed at provision of these services beyond the life of the program in 2021.

In the context of current support to A-SMEs by the AIMS program:

1. A-SME refers to: An agribusiness enterprise with at least two of the following three characteristics: (a) 5 to 300 employees; (b) total assets valued between $20,000 to $15 million and annual revenues between $20,000 and $15 million.
2. A cooperative refers to an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise with an annual revenue ranging between $ 20,000 and $15 million.
3. AIMS works with A-SMEs supporting dairy/livestock, grains/pulses and horticulture agriculture sub sectors. This includes all value chain actors within the value chains from input suppliers, aggregators, processors, transporters, storage service providers, distributors and traders.
4. AIMS program targets to support a pool of these A-SMEs and cooperatives in Kenya and Malawi through the BASPs.
5. **Service Needs and Prequalification Categories.**

AIMS has identified access to finance as a key component in enhancing A-SMEs operations. Access to finance is however limited because of various constraints faced by A-SMEs including inadequate documentation of their operations. As part of

A-SME loan assessment, proper documentation of business operations including financial reports are an integral requirement by financial institutions to facilitate loan repayment capacity evaluation. Lack of documentation or poor quality documentation often lead to loan ineligibility by A-SMEs with credit worthy business operations.

In view of this, AIMS will support capacity building initiatives that facilitate documentation of business operations including development of financial reports. This will involve A-SME support and guidance on maintaining financial records, book keeping and accounting, business plan development and cash flow projections. A key deliverable in these engagements with A-SMEs shall be 3 years’ financial reports.

1. **Responsibilities and deliverables of the BASP upon prequalification**
2. Participate in AIMS forums for purposes of interacting with A-SMEs, cooperatives and participating financial institutions.
3. Sign up contracts of engagement with the service recipient (client) upon engagement. The service agreement will specify the detailed scope of work as well as the payment terms.
4. Provide the service in accordance with service agreement.
5. Deliver the assignment within the agreed time frame as stipulated in the contract.
6. Provide Global Communities with relevant and accurate reports.
7. **Responsibility for Global Communities**
8. Recommend the prequalified BASPs to apex, trade and organizations and participating financial institutions for further business opportunities with their members and clients.
9. Conduct a BASPs induction forum to introduce AIMS, mode of engagement and share experiences.
10. Link prequalified BASPs with A-SMEs and cooperatives under AIMS through relevant events including trade fairs, sensitization forums and other for a.
11. Support the prequalified BASPs in accessing continuous professional development opportunities.
12. Provide the prequalified BASPs with access to materials relevant in the delivery of the required service including the needs assessment report, the A-SME self-assessment tool, the BASP contracting templates and information on target businesses.
13. Provide continuous review and monitoring of the performance of the prequalified BASPs.
14. **Responsibility for the A-SMEs (Clients)**
15. Participate in AIMS forums for purposes of exploring market opportunities.
16. Sign contractual service agreements with BASPs based on need and ability to pay.
17. Undertake a detailed self-assessment with the view of identifying specific service gaps to guide the BASP in providing effective support, as appropriate.
18. Share relevant information and data with the BASP as well as Global Communities as may become necessary.
19. Evaluate the services provided by the BAPS.

**-END OF RFA-**

# Annex A – BASPS - Prequalification application form

1. **Applicants Profile**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicants business Name |  |
| Postal address |  |
| Business Office Location |  |
| Telephone Contact |  |
| Email Address |  |
| Website link |  |

1. **Applicants Business Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nature of Business registration | *(Indicate if sole proprietor, Limited company, individual, partners etc.)* |
| List of Directors/Partners |  |
| Date of registration |  |
| List of Licenses obtained |  |
| Tax registration Number |  |

1. **Regional Coverage.**(Tick regions where applicant applies to provide services for the selected categories)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Region | Geographical coverage base on counties | Tick as applicable |
| Malawi | Central | Lilongwe, Mchinji, Salima, Nkhotakota, Dedza, Ntcheu, Kasungu, Dowa |  |
| Northern | Mzuzu, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhatabay |  |
| Eastern | Zomba, Balaka, Machinga, |  |
| Southern | Blantyre, Mulanje, Thyolo, Mwanza |  |

1. **Applicants Technical Understanding**

|  |
| --- |
| Applicants understanding of the specific capacity gaps facing SMES/Coops specifically on financial management ( Provide a summarized brief of these Gaps) |
|  |

1. **Team Composition and Qualifications**

The applicant should include the names and anticipated positions of the individuals proposed to provide the services

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Resource Person | Academic Qualification | Relevant Experience | Specific responsibilities. |
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NB: For each resource person listed above submit as an attachment, a complete and current resume for each proposed professional employee (not exceeding 3 pages each). The resumes should clearly describe the individuals’ education, experience, contacts, and professional credentials and be duly signed by the respective person.

1. **Organizational Specialized Competence.**

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| --- |
| *Applicants to indicate specialized competence the organization possesses with regard to the support of A-SMES and co-operatives on financial management support* |
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1. **Applicants Past Experience/Performance**

Applicant to list three service recipients directly supported in the last 5 years.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Service recipient | Area supported (BDS provided) | Location | Contacts |
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1. **Fees Structure**

Indicate the fees structure for the services applied. Break out trainings and direct technical assistant.

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| --- | --- |
| **Daily rate per resource person. (8 Hour Day)** | **Explanatory notes (Cost Justification)** |
|  |  |
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|  |  |

*\*Fees amounts should not include transport and accommodation costs as this will be case specific and will be agreed upon at the point of engagement.*

1. **Mandatory Attachments**

## The following documents must be attached to the prequalification application.

1. Certificate of registration/incorporation for firms.
2. Copies of identity documents for individual applicants
3. Copies of CVs for the technical staff dully signed.
4. A copy of tax certificate
5. Copies of any professional licenses and/or certifications obtained.

Signed by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_