

Call for Job Creation and Resilience in Export Oriented Value Chains

Annual Program Statement (APS)¹

USAID Economic Recovery & Reform Activity (ERRA)

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Submit Questions on the email address:	erragrants@trademarkafrica.com

This Annual Program Statement (APS) is a public notice that ensures all interested and qualified organizations within East Africa have a fair opportunity to qualify for funding. This APS covers the following countries in the East and the Horn of Africa, including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (with a focus on Somaliland), and Tanzania. To be considered for an award, applicants must respond to all the requirements and instructions provided within this APS.

Applicants must demonstrate that they fall into one of the grantee categories: private sector companies – both local (within Africa) and international (outside of Africa) firms; foreign organizations (referred to as non-U.S. NGOs): either nonprofit or for-profit organizations that meet the definition in 2 CFR 200.47²; non-profit organizations: organizations that meet the definition of 2 CFR 200.70³. See Eligibility Criteria Section III in this APS for further information.

This APS is a general announcement for future funding opportunities and is NOT a Request for Applications or a Request for Proposals. ERRA will issue specific funding opportunities, or “funding windows,” that will be addendums to this APS. **Please respond to the specific addenda** that may be opened and issued throughout the year on the TMA website at <https://www.trademarkafrica.com/erragrants/>. Please visit this website periodically for opportunities relevant to your country and focus areas.

¹ An Annual Program Statement is a type of solicitation used by USAID and USAID implementers to solicit grant concept papers for potential funding.

² Foreign organization means an entity that is: (a) A public or private organization located in a country other than the United States and its territories that are subject to the laws of the country in which it is located, irrespective of the citizenship of project staff or place of performance; (b) A private nongovernmental organization located in a country other than the United States that solicits and receives cash contributions from the general public; (c) A charitable organization located in a country other than the United States that is nonprofit and tax exempt under the laws of its country of domicile and operation, and is not a university, college, accredited degree granting institution of education, private foundation, hospital, organization engaged exclusively in research or scientific activities, church, synagogue, mosque or other similar entities organized primarily for religious purposes; or (d) An organization located in a country other than the United States not recognized as a Foreign Public Entity.

³ Nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including IHEs, that: (a) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (b) Is not organized primarily for profit; and (c) Uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of TMA, nor does it commit TMA to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a concept. TMA reserves the right to fund any or none of the concept papers or applications received resulting from public APS funding opportunities. Further, TMA reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.

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USAID-ERRA

The USAID Economic Recovery & Reform Activity (ERRA) is designed to promote resilient transformative trade and investment reforms in the East Africa region, accelerating recovery from the negative socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic whilst advancing East Africa's self-reliance, sustainable economic growth capacity, competitiveness, and environmental sustainability.

The COVID-19 crisis has further set back the economic outlook for the region due to disruptions in trade resulting from the imposition of lockdown measures. Consequently, the region has experienced its first recession in 25 years. The pandemic could drive up to 40 million people in sub-Saharan Africa into extreme poverty. The crisis has also eroded progress made in reducing time and costs along key trade corridors, undermining trade competitiveness and negatively impacting the poor. The cost of complying with COVID-19 restrictions has increased both the direct and indirect costs (e.g., inventory costs). The variability of regulatory implementation also has created significant uncertainty in the time taken for export and import and a rise in time and costs.

More specifically, to achieve this, ERRA will focus on three key objectives.

Objective 1: Job creation and preservation in export and regionally oriented targeted sectors.

Objective 2: Increased capacity of East Africa's private sector business associations, national governments, and regional organizations.

Objective 3: Strengthened regional capacity to mitigate the impacts of economic shocks.

These objectives address value addition, supply chain efficiencies, and access to markets, leading to inclusive and sustainable trade, increased resilience for businesses along the value chain as well as job creation. This APS is structured around the first and third objectives of ERRA.

SECTION I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Project Background:

This Annual Program Statement (APS) is written in response to the desire to promote inclusive trade in the East African Region. While East Africa has enjoyed some of the highest growth rates in Africa over the last decade (ranging between 6-8% on average), there are concerns that the shape and structure of this growth is not sustainable nor inclusive, as reflected in persistent levels of poverty and unemployment, particularly among women and youth⁴. Furthermore, in the region there are structural trade deficits where imports continue to outstrip exports; there is a continued over-reliance on a narrow export base mainly of primary commodities; an uncompetitive private sector handicapped by cartelism and corruption; low levels of productivity and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and low levels of product complexity and innovation in terms of industrialization and value addition.

Driven by market demand, ERRA embraces innovative approaches to achieve its goals. The activity is designed as a small, core set of centrally coordinated technical and institutional support activities, and a

⁴ Income growth rates of the bottom 40% have grown much more slowly than average per capita incomes. World Bank's database on shared prosperity. See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-database-of-shared-prosperity>

large, flexible performance-based subcontracting and grants under contract facility designed to support the needs and opportunities that USAID Missions and the private sector identify.

Purpose:

In response to these pressing needs, ERRA is exploring opportunities to use private-sector mechanisms, solutions, and partnerships to support more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth in the region. ERRA will seek innovative private-sector approaches to address the challenges outlined above as well as those designed to build East African resilience in the long-term.

Funding Opportunity:

Through this Annual Program Statement (APS) via APS-ERRA-001, ERRA is seeking partners to work with to develop innovative solutions from private sector employers in the cotton, textile, and garments (CTG) and agricultural (grains, horticulture, livestock, or fisheries) sectors that will strengthen the focus countries' agricultural competitiveness to increase exports in the region and internationally, contributing to job creation and preservation, as well as through enhanced services (export services, access to financial services, other business development services (BDS), improve as well as strengthening the resilience of companies to mitigate the impacts of COVID and other climate change shocks.

Through this mechanism, ERRA will co-create and co-invest with strategic private sector partner firms through milestone-based partnerships to develop solutions that align core business objectives with development goals. By doing so, ERRA will leverage USAID's convening power, positive relationships, and technical know-how in piloting or scaling these solutions. The Fund mitigates the risk of the private sector to invest, innovate, and engage in areas outside their normal business practices (new products or services or new supply/marketing/export models) but within their core business interests.

Through a competitive process, ERRA will evaluate partnership activities based on their ability to mobilize significant and responsible private investment, pilot or expand an innovation or practice that can address a key problem and contribute to industry-influencing learning. All of these must focus on job creation, preservation of jobs and/or lead to improvements in resilience for SMEs, including traders and farmers in export-oriented value chains.

To that end, **ERRA is seeking concepts that work towards the following overarching objectives and related target outcomes below.**

This APS is structured around two key objectives of ERRA.

ERRA Objective 1: Increased job creation and prosperity in export and regionally oriented value chains.

Partnerships under this objective will increase the growth of exports in the CTG and agricultural sectors and strengthen access to the support systems that facilitate this trade, including improvements in the business enabling environment and the logistics sector.

We will prioritize the development of job creation and export opportunities that are focused on regional or export trade in the agricultural sector (grains, horticulture, livestock, or fisheries) and the cotton, textile, and garment sectors. We will work closely with potential anchor firms and other possible partners working in the region, as well as several implementing partners, to prioritize increasing the quantity and quality of food trade between trade surplus and trade deficit countries by establishing a more inclusive, structured trading system within these sectors. In addition, we will look to support food security by supporting countries to become more self-resilient by supporting local sourcing and import substitution.

Furthermore, to improve the competitiveness of supply chains, we will encourage projects that facilitate trade, either through eliminating barriers to trade to improve market access or facilitating private sector compliance to standards and technical regulations. Also, recognizing the logistics sector as a key enabler to competitiveness, we will invest in the development of sustainable and innovative logistics solutions that facilitate the efficient movement of produce or goods out to market.

ERRA is interested in businesses in these sectors that have a direct, positive impact on the environment, such as those involving renewable energy, energy efficiency, or nature conservation. ERRA also makes a deliberate point of creating equal opportunities for women and youth in these targeted export sectors, so implementing partners will need to demonstrate how they will ensure women or youth actively benefit from their project.

This could include the following (note these are illustrative):

- Increase the exports of firms in the textile and apparel value chain, expanding production and trade, leading to improvements in the competitiveness of products.
- Facilitate the vertical integration of smallholder farmers into the end-to-end cotton and textile value chains; prioritize and provide support for the onboarding of women and youth, emphasizing capacity building and mentorship.
- Increased productivity or value addition in agricultural processing in companies across the East Africa region and the Horn, leading to an expansion in regional exports of value-added products and increased numbers of jobs at the processing level as well as along the supply chain.
- Increased market access to new markets and expansion in existing markets leading to growth of East African agricultural exports into the region, to the United States, or to other markets, leading to increased jobs at the firm and processing level.
- Programs focused on enhancing the quality and marketability of cocoa and coffee from East Africa through voluntary standards (e.g., Rainforest Alliance, organic, fairtrade) by introducing quality control training, quality control centers, product certification, as well as strategic market linkages to take advantage of these more lucrative market opportunities.
- Introduce digital solutions to reduce the cost of trade by improving the transparency of market information for farmers, linking farmers better to markets through e-commerce platforms, and addressing empty trucks on the backhaul.
- Develop the local staples sector to reduce reliance on imports by structuring the staples value chain so it is more productive. Providing more structured interventions for inputs, access to finance, and access to markets.
- Initiatives that support the formalization of agents in the trade of export produce such as soybean, maize, cocoa, or coffee, to better align incentives between buyers and agents, for instance, by

piloting an aggregation model and supporting market linkages, access to storage and logistics, as well as access to finance.

- Projects that link freight forwarders to transporters through backhaul linkages in order to improve efficiencies in transport.
- Innovative cold storage solutions powered by renewable energy sources for the preservation of perishable produce during transportation.
- Research and implementation of sustainable packaging solutions that reduce waste and ensure the freshness of produce during transit.
- Measurement and disclosure of GHG emissions for businesses in the private sector.
- Community-based logistics hubs that offer shared resources and infrastructure for local farmers, ensuring faster and greener delivery to markets.

Anticipated Outcomes: Increased exports of key agricultural products (grains, pulses, edible oils, horticulture, livestock products, cotton, garments, fish, and fish products) to key markets regionally and internationally; increased FDI into these export sectors; or the adoption of green practices. Increased volumes of trade will, in turn, support greater resilience in these value chains, with enhanced incomes of VC actors and new business opportunities for expansion and job creation/preservation, particularly for youth and women in agro-logistics and trade.

ERRA Objective 3

ERRA's third objective is focused on **Increasing sustainable and inclusive trade to improve resilience and inclusivity within the East and the Horn of Africa.**

Under ERRA objective three, this APS will focus on **enhancing the resilience and economic empowerment of cross-border traders**, particularly focusing on elevating the capacity of women and youth involved in informal trading to transition into formal and structured trade. Sustainable and inclusive trade will also be achieved by **improving the sustainable sourcing and efficient logistics of humanitarian aid along key transport corridors and across borders.** Partnerships will be explored to increase the flow of locally sourced food into humanitarian aid markets. The focus of this is to improve the sustainability and resilience of market actors supplying into this market.

This could include the following, focused on cross-border trade (indicative interventions):

- Organize workshops and training sessions for cross-border traders, especially women and youth, to familiarize with the nuances of trade and market dynamics. These workshops will equip participants with tools, strategies, and insights to optimize their market linkages, awareness of trading processes, and other opportunities to increase their trading opportunities.
- Invest in boot camps or training for SMEs or cross-border traders tailored to offer in-depth insights into financial planning, budgeting, and business management. This would ensure traders, particularly women and youth, have a solid understanding of managing finances to facilitate trade growth.
- Integrate and promote platforms like the Isoko platform by TMA, ensuring cross-border traders, especially those in remote areas, have digital access to critical trade and market information. Organize webinars and virtual training sessions to guide traders on leveraging these platforms to their maximum potential.

- Collaborate with cross-border trade agencies and trader's associations to conduct awareness and safety workshops for traders, especially women and youth.

This could include private or not-for-profit organizations, including cross-border associations. See eligibility criteria Section III for more information.

Additional indicative interventions could also focus on improving the efficiency of humanitarian aid across borders, for example:

- Initiatives that facilitate structured dialogues between the private sector involved in food and agricultural trade, and border agencies. This will ensure that both sides are aligned in their understanding of challenges and can jointly devise solutions for improved efficiency.
- Initiatives that promote cross-border collaboration, for instance, organizing regular bilateral meetings and workshops between border agencies of neighboring countries to ensure the smooth flow of food or medical aid across borders.
- Initiatives that focus on introducing a priority clearance mechanism for humanitarian food and medical aid. This system would utilize pre-certified transporters and suppliers, ensuring that aid reaches its intended beneficiaries in the shortest time possible.
- Investments in the improvement of storage, handling, and transportation facilities along key food corridors. This could include storage, modern loading and unloading equipment, and efficient road networks to reduce transit times.
- Expand the awareness and training programs on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) scheme, ensuring that more traders and businesses can benefit from streamlined procedures.

Anticipated Outcomes:

Investments under this outcome will support the increased capacity of cross-border traders and marginalized groups, leading to an increased number of firms trading regionally, increased incomes, and a percentage of females and youth accessing productive economic resources. More specifically, results will need to contribute to some of the following:

- increased number of small-scale traders reaching new markets,
- increase the number of Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs), including farmers, receiving business development services,
- increased number of small-scale traders accessing information and markets in the digital and physical platforms
- increased access to finance for traders and MSMEs
- improved management capacity of traders and MSME
- Improving business environment for traders and MSMEs.

SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATION

ERRA will apply a competitive process to select the projects that will receive a grant. That means that only those projects that present a clear and convincing pathway to employment, resilience, exports, and/or trade and can demonstrate leverage will be selected. Ideas are invited from private sector organizations or from a consortium involving two or more partners. Regardless of the status of the applicant, all concept notes will be assessed against the same criteria. All concept notes will need to report on their results, and the financial contributions made by the grant will be clearly linked to the achievement of those results.

Given the evolving nature of the markets where ERRA works, as well as the buy-in nature of ERRA, **addenda will be published for specific priorities or available funding.**

Technical support will be available for applicants throughout the process. The ERRA team will organize physical and online information sessions for potential applicants. Once concept notes have been selected for implementation, tailored technical support will be made available to maximize the design and delivery of results.

Private Sector

Private sector companies, and particularly SMEs, are the backbone of most economies. In the target regions, they are the engine driving economic growth, trade, and job creation, in both formal and informal markets. The private sector is the most efficient and effective mechanism through which to focus, develop, and test solutions that respond to this persistent, unsolved challenge of unemployment, poverty, and resilience challenges.

This means that while we welcome ideas and responses from any organization, we are looking for market-based solutions tailored to the specific context of the Fund. There is, therefore, an expectation that all projects will involve at least one partner from the private sector and at least one national partner or a partner with a local operating presence.

Additionality

Given the emphasis on market-based solutions, we will only consider working with Implementing Partners to present ideas that would not be possible without support from grant funds. We will not fund existing operations or 'business as usual.' We are interested in supporting solutions that would not be possible within the same timeline or on the same scale without support from ERRA.

We will, therefore, assess the level of additionality as part of our selection criteria. This includes looking at what type of project is being proposed, assessing the level of risk involved, and the potential for employment opportunities for people, including women. Based on this assessment, we will offer Implementing Partners the co-investment and technical assistance support from ERRA.

Type of Anticipated Funding. ERRA anticipates issuing performance-based grants ranging between US\$100,000 - US\$2,000,000 to establish partnerships meeting the development objective stated in Section 1. Grant sizes of smaller or larger amounts may be considered should the proposed activity meet the objectives of the APS.

Costs that do not meet the criteria below will be deemed non-responsive.

Note: Ineligible cost items include: profit or fee; application preparation costs; payment of debts; political elections; fees for public and elected government officials; fines and penalties; creation of endowments; military equipment, surveillance equipment; commodities and services for support of police and other law enforcement activities; abortion equipment and services; luxury goods and gambling equipment; alcohol; purchases of restricted goods without prior USAID prior approval, such as: agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, and fertilizer, and purchases of goods or services from any firm or individual whose name appears on the list of ineligible applicants.

Contribution. ERRA prefers that grant funding used for loans or equity investments should mobilize other investments as part of their cost-share. The use of the funds will contribute towards the total project budget, with the **range of the cost-share to be determined within each specific window. Please be sure to review the addenda before submitting a concept.**

Note that smaller leverage ratios may be considered in the event of certain market contexts or other high “returns” within a short period of time, such as the ability to trigger growth in the value of exports, or additional jobs created.

Performance-based grants: The specific type of performance-based grant preferred for this APS will be a Fixed Amount Award (FAA) agreement under USAID rules. Payment under FAA grants are made upon accomplishments of predetermined results, referred to as milestones. Milestones are agreed between ERRA and the partner prior to the grant being awarded.

Although the FAA is the preferred grant mechanism under this APS, ERRA will conduct capacity assessments of all potential grantees in which their mode of award will be determined based on the financial and administrative capabilities of the applicant. Other modalities of award may include an in-kind grant, standard grant, simplified grant, or a combination of FAA and in-kind grants, but this is dependent on ERRA’s determination of the potential grantee’s capacity.

If ERRA’s assessment identifies weaknesses or deficiencies that call into question the applicant’s ability to manage the award, ERRA may elect to remove the applicant from consideration under this funding opportunity or select a mechanism more appropriate for the applicant’s current financial, administrative, and operational capacity ERRA. The applicant will agree to the metrics and verification methods of awards during the development of the full application, giving latitude to the partner on how it will accomplish the agreed objectives.

Performance Period: The performance period of partnership grants will be no more than 24 months although this length of program will typically be reserved for activities needing longer timelines for externalities such as fundraising.

Questions: Please submit any questions regarding the APS process or APS ERRA-01 activity to erragrants@trademarkafrica.com. Also visit the frequently asked questions (FAQs) page linked to the portal: <https://www.trademarkafrica.com/erragrants>

TMA may choose to extend this APS until all funding has been awarded. **The number of awards and amount of available funding may be subject to change.** TMA may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund selected application(s). TMA reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS. TMA will evaluate concept papers on a rolling basis and full applications after their respective closing dates.

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible activities include novel and transformative ideas as described above.

Eligible applicants:

- Applicants can include financial institutions, investors, businesses, business service organizations, industry/sector organizations, trade, or other private sector associations. Applicants may also submit as a consortium that includes multiple institutions under one concept, but please clearly indicate who would be the lead partner ultimately responsible for implementation. Please note that TMA understands and expects that many interventions will be cross-cutting in nature and contribute to multiple objectives. Should there be questions about whether your entity is eligible, please submit your inquiry to erragrants@trademarkafrica.com
- Applicants must demonstrate that they fall into one of the grantee categories below:
 - Private Sector Companies – both local (within Africa) and international (outside of Africa) firms subject to ADS 310 (Source and Nationality Requirements).
 - Foreign Organizations (referred to as non-U.S. NGOs): either nonprofit or for-profit organizations that meet the definition in 2 CFR 200.47.
 - Non-profit Organizations: Organizations that meet the definition of 2 CFR 200.70.
- In addition, an applicant must be organized under the laws of the country in which it has its principal place of business or operations in.

Prior experience with USAID or other US Government entities is not required. TMA encourages concepts from potential new partners.

Ineligible Applicants:

- Any organization not legally organized under the laws of the country in which it has its principal place of business or operations in;
- Any entity listed in the U.S. government Excluded Parties List;
- Any entity unable to obtain a Unique Entity ID (SAM);⁵
- Any entity excluded in the US Government System for Award Management;
- Any Government Entity;
- Any Public International Organization (PIO);
- Any entity affiliated with TMA or ERRA directors, officers, or employees;
- Any projects involving involuntary resettlement, child labor, significant environmental impacts;
- Any military organization;
- Any political party organization;
- Any entity focused solely on religious activities;
- Any labor unions; and,
- Any individuals.

Cost Sharing or Matching

As per USAID 2 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 200, cost share is the “portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds or contributions. The partner is expected to demonstrate what they will fund, what they are requesting TMA/ERRA to fund, and how it will make a notable impact on addressing job

⁵ Applicants can register for a UEI number by accessing the following website: <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

creation, exports, and investment. ERRA prefers that grant funding used for loans or equity investments should mobilize other investments as part of their cost-share.

To qualify as cost-share, a cost must, at minimum, be:

- Verifiable from the applicant's records;
- Not included as a contribution for any other USG award;
- Necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of the partnership activity;
- Allowable, per the cost principles in [2 CFR 200 Subpart E](#);
- Not paid by the USG under any other USG award;
- Included in the final, agreed-upon partnership activity budget;
- Conform to other provisions communicated by Trademark.

SECTION IV – APPLICATION PROCESS

TMA will apply a streamlined two-stage review and selection process that begins with submitting a concept paper with a high-level budget. Only shortlisted applicants will be sent a request for application to initiate Stage 2 of the selection process, the full application (technical & cost) development and submission. Submitted full applications will undergo a second round of reviews resulting in final award selection.

Technical Selection Criteria - Concept papers and full applications will be evaluated on their responsiveness to the following criteria:

- **The concept & the objectives it will cover:** Describe the challenge the applicant seeks to address, the proposed partnership focal area or areas (as described in Section 1), and the novel idea to address job creation, increased exports, food insecurity, and resilience, through trade and investment in Africa. Explain what the applicant proposes to fund, what they are requesting ERRA to fund, and how it will make a notable impact on addressing recent food security and resilience challenges. Note the timeline and whether the pace of the work will directly align with job creation and exports. Describe the expected outcome(s) and alignment with one or more of the three objectives stated on page 1, including any relevant estimates for quantitative targets.
- **Additionality & the value of the partnership:** Explain how the proposed concept is a departure from the status quo and how the ERRA grant will produce demonstrated additionality. Additionality is defined as: The net positive difference expected to result from a donor-business partnership, (i.e., the positive change that otherwise would not happen without public support). It signifies the extent to which activities (and associated results) are larger in scale, are at a higher quality, take place more quickly, take place at a different location, or take place at all as a result of a donor intervention⁶. For example, a concept may outline the accelerated speed at which they can achieve their objectives with the grant funding as opposed to the absence of it.
- **Current capacity and the future of the organization:** Demonstrated institutional capacity to manage (technically, administratively, and financially) the proposed activity. Describe how the

⁶ Source: Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED))



proposed idea can be sustained and expanded beyond the life of the partnership's period of performance. Explain how the proposed partnership will attract additional private sector investment/resources, if relevant.

- **The business, community, or wider ecosystem impact:** Describe how this concept will create positive change at the business, industry, community, local/national/regional/continental ecosystem levels, what the benefits to the applicants will be, and what additional benefits will be created externally (e.g., new jobs created, jobs maintained, additional financing for companies which lead to their growth, higher exports of crops, inclusive supply chains). If possible, estimate how many individuals will benefit, by how much, and any available demographic information for those individuals (e.g., men, women, youth, etc.). This may include (but are not limited to) concepts that: incorporate multiple countries for regional benefits, reach large vulnerable populations, can quickly ramp up production of an export focused value chain, or otherwise present a significant opportunity to accelerate job creation, or sustaining jobs. In summary, concepts that demonstrate the potential for large scale impact on vulnerable populations are preferred. Applicants should note how they plan to capture and report on the development impact.
- **Sustainability and scalability:** Describe how the proposed idea can be sustained and expanded beyond the life of the partnership's period of performance. Describe how this concept will create positive change at the business, industry, community, local/national/regional/continental ecosystem levels, what the benefits to the applicants will be, and what additional benefits will be created externally (e.g., new jobs created, jobs maintained, additional financing for companies which lead to their growth, higher exports of crops, inclusive supply chains).

Proposed partnerships will be reviewed based on the following principles that provide value for money: cost-effectiveness, reasonableness, allocability, and allowability.

- **Are costs effective?** Will proposed costs provide a good value in achieving desired outcomes at a relatively low cost or becoming more cost-effective over time?
- **Are costs reasonable?** Are proposed costs generally recognized as ordinary and necessary, and would a prudent person incur them in the conduct of normal business?
- **Are costs allocable?** Do proposed costs have a legitimate justification for the funding amount requested, and is the cost clearly captured in the budget and concept paper?
- **Are costs allowable?** Are **proposed** costs strictly for the achievement of the partnership, and are they free of any restrictions or limitations, such as vehicles, alcohol, luxury goods, etc.?

Partnership grants will only start after approval by USAID and the signature of the grant agreement between the applicant and TMA. Costs incurred before the signing of the grant agreement will not be reimbursed.

STAGE 1: CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION

Concept Paper Instructions: Applicants are required to submit a technical concept paper describing the proposed activities addressing each of the technical selection criteria listed above. Concept papers

must address all criteria to be considered for partnership. The concept paper must meet the following requirements, or it will not be reviewed:

- Be written in English
- Be prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint or Microsoft Word, minimum font size 10
- Concepts should not be more than a total of 6 slides or pages in length (cover slide/page is non-counting)
- The APS number name and the specific addendum you are responding to
- Address of organization
- Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, association, etc.)
- Contact point (lead contact name, relevant telephone, e-mail information)
- Names of other organizations (federal and non-federal as well as any other USAID offices) to whom you are submitting and/or have submitted the concept and/or who are funding the proposed activity

Technical Approach:

- Concise title and objectives of the proposed activity
- Discussion of the objectives and the method of approach
- The amount of effort, funding, and resources to be employed
- The anticipated results
- The ability to measure/capture results and how the work will help accomplish ERRAs' goals as outlined above

Estimated Funding Request. Type of support the applicant requests from USAID (e.g., technical assistance, funds, equipment, materials, etc.), as well as the anticipated leverage ratio (e.g., \$ value of private capital raised) and/or commitment of grantee resources to the activity (see specific addendum to align to the required leverage ratio). The funding request must clearly distinguish between the proposed funding to be committed by the applicant, the funding/resources requested from ERRAs, and any third-party investment to be mobilized in the proposed partnership activity.

The Concept must be emailed to erragrants@trademarkafrica.com. No other forms of submission will be accepted. Further attachments to the concept paper are not permitted.

STAGE 2: FULL APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT AND SUBMISSION

Applicants whose concept papers have been shortlisted will go through a capacity assessment and, if successful, receive the full RFA and will begin co-development and due diligence with the ERRAs team. The RFA will provide detailed templates, instructions, and the requirements for the full technical and budget applications. Companies may contact TMA or USAID to get updates on the status of their application.

Co-Development: ERRAs will meet virtually with applicants to provide feedback and input to support applicants in their development of the full application, to identify appropriate concrete results

(milestones), to further define and develop the specifics of the partnership budget, to define the respective roles of each partner that align with the shared objectives of the partner firm and USAID and identify and share risk and responsibility. Milestone reporting and verifiable metrics will be discussed and agreed upon during the co-development phase. This process empowers the parties involved to design more transformational partnerships that maximize the value of ERRA grant funding while supporting firms to reach their business goals. It is not unusual for the ideas offered in the original concept paper to evolve significantly as the applicant determines the best ways to achieve the greatest impact.

Financial and organizational due diligence: All applicants in the RFA process will be subject to a pre-award due-diligence process that will include financial and management review, as well as environmental and social due diligence. All applicants must demonstrate that they have adequate financial and monitoring systems in place that ensure auditable systems and records. The review – which may be conducted remotely and on-site – will also ensure applicants have the ability to comply with the award conditions, including measuring and reporting on selected milestones, the ability to contribute the required cash investment, and a demonstrated good record of performance on the management and implementation of partnership activities and grants.

Full Application: Only applicants who complete the co-development process and the due diligence without significant negative findings will be eligible to submit a full application. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. TMA will set the deadline to submit the full RFA based on the completion of the co-design and due diligence. ERRA requires all applicants to have a current Unique Entity ID (UEI) (SAM) and register in the U.S. government's System for Award Management at sam.gov. (TMA is available to assist applicants with this process, but it is the applicant's sole responsibility to fulfill and keep updated on this requirement). The grantee must receive the UEI to complete the award process. *NOTE: Not all full applications will be recommended for award, and USAID must approve all award recommendations.*

SECTION V – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Post-Selection Information: TMA will inform the successful applicant of their approved award funding. The official authorization document is a notice of award signed by the ERRA Chief of Party, which TMA will provide electronically to the successful applicant's main point of contact. ERRA, USAID, and the awarded partner will host a kick-off award meeting immediately following the signature of the award agreement.

SECTION VI – TMA PROJECT CONTACTS

For any questions on the APS process, please email erragrants@trademarkafrica.com.

Any information given to an applicant concerning this APS will be made publicly available at <https://www.trademarkafrica.com/erragrants/>.

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

TMA reserves the right to modify by written notice the terms of this APS at any time or to withdraw this APS at any time—with or without a statement of cause—prior to any funding award.

Applicants that receive award funds will be required to comply with USAID required rules and regulations, including:

- **Environmental Procedures:** <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/200/204> In addition, the partner must comply with the host country's environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between the host country and USAID regulations, the latter will govern.
- **Branding:** <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/320> All USAID-sponsored assistance awards are required to adhere to branding policies and revised marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements in accordance with ADS 320.
- **Combatting Trafficking in Persons (TIP):** www.acquisition.gov For work performed outside the United States, ADS 303.3.32 Trafficking in Persons (TIP), shall be incorporated into grant award agreements with awards above \$500,000 requiring a TIP compliance and training plan.
- **Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions:** <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf> In accordance with ADS 303.3.8, TMA will require awarded grant partners to submit signed copies of required certifications and assurances.
 - Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>
 - Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>
 - Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Nongovernmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mat.pdf>

ERRA recognizes the importance of protecting sensitive information and data. ERRA's partnering approach requires the receipt and protection of proprietary technical and cost information received from partners as part of each grant process, as well as the review and retention of technical deliverables produced by partners during grant implementation. As part of tracking activity milestones, ERRA is also required to measure specific indicators, which may require the submission and review of sensitive and/or proprietary information. ERRA will work closely with each partner to gather/track the required evaluation data while ensuring the protection of all sensitive information.

End of APS