CALL FOR PROPOSALS (CFP) FOR GRANT

TENDER TITLE: SPECIALISED LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNER IN NIGERIA FOR CROSS-BORDER TRADER MOBILISATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN FISHERIES PROGRAMME

TENDER NUMBER: GRFO20260010

ISSUE DATE: 29th September 2026

DUE DATE: 20th October 2026 [on or before 1600hrs EAT]

INVITATION TO TENDER INSTRUCTIONS

CONTENTS

General

1. This Call for Proposals (CFP) and the instructions for compiling and submitting your Tender are designed to help you produce a tender that is acceptable to TMA as well as ensuring that tenders are given equal consideration. TMA will select the most economically advantageous tender. It is essential, therefore, that you provide the information requested in the specific format and no other.
2. TradeMark Africa (TMA) is not bound to accept the lowest bidder, or any tender. We also reserve the right to request any or all grantees to clarify the proposals submitted.

Instructions to Grantees.

1. Costs and Charges

The Grantee shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its proposal, and TMA shall not be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the selection process. TMA is not bound to accept any proposal and reserves the right to annul the selection process at any time prior to award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Grantee.

2. Language of Proposal

The proposal, as well as all correspondence and documents relating to the proposal exchanged between the Grantee and TMA, shall be written in ENGLISH. Any other language shall lead to the disqualification of the proposal. In cases where there is a translation, it must be endorsed by an authorized translator.

3. Only One Proposal

A grantee shall submit only one proposal, either in its own name or as part of a Joint Venture (JV) in another proposal. If a grantee, including any JV member, submits or participates in more than one proposal, all such proposals shall be disqualified and rejected. This does not, however, preclude the Grantee's staff from participating as key experts and non-key experts in more than one proposal. However, the same sub-Grantee may participate in several submissions.

If the Grantee is a consortia/JV, the CFP shall include:

a copy of the JV agreement entered 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 sub-Grantees. Experiences and qualifications of sub-Grantees shall not be considered in the evaluation of the proposals.

4. Validity

The proposals must remain valid for not less than **120 days** from the date of submission. TMA shall endeavour to complete the evaluation and communicate within this period. The proposals shall be prepared in indelible ink, and it shall contain no interlineations or overwriting, except as necessary to correct errors made by the Grantee. Any such corrections must be initialled by the person(s) who sign(s) the proposals.

5. Clarifications and Amendments

Enquiries must only be for the purposes of clarifying the content of this CFP. All enquiries must clearly specify the tender title, number, section being queried and should be emailed to **grants@trademarkafrica.com**

Interested Grantees may request for clarifications on this CFP up to **Seven (7)** days before the submission date. TMA will endeavour to reply as soon as is possible. It will be at TMA's discretion to provide additional information where necessary.

Final clarifications with TMA's responses will be shared with all potential Grantees.

Should TMA deem it necessary to amend the CFP, because of clarifications, it shall do so by issuing an amendment in writing or by standard electronic means. The amendment shall be sent to all Grantees and will be binding on them. TMA may offer limited extension to the proposal submission deadline to give the Grantees reasonable time to take an amendment into account in their proposals.

6. Eligibility

Applications are open only to legally registered Nigerian organisations (private sector and /or Not for Profit) with active operational presence in Nigeria and demonstrated capacity to directly implement this assignment. The following mandatory eligibility requirements will be assessed on a pass/fail basis before technical proposals are scored:

- The bidder must be legally registered and actively operating in Nigeria, with a valid certificate of registration/incorporation and evidence of current operations in Nigeria for more than five years.
- The bidder must demonstrate the existence of a qualified project team, systems, field infrastructure, financial capacity, and operational capacity to implement the assignment directly. The organisation has robust systems and controls that provide full transparency, accountability, and traceability of the programme funds.
- Sub-granting, pass-through funding, or transfer of substantive delivery responsibilities to another organisation is not permitted. Proposals relying on sub-grantees for core implementation will be disqualified.
- The bidder must provide verifiable evidence of an operational office or established field presence in Nigeria, including office location, current staffing, geographic coverage, compliance with applicable Nigerian laws, and recent evidence of operations such as utility bills or equivalent documentation.
- The bidder must demonstrate relevant experience in the design, development and implementation of fisheries, cross-border trade, agricultural value-chain development, enterprise development, market systems programming, monitoring, evaluation and learning, women's and youth economic empowerment, safeguarding, financial inclusion, and capacity building.

a) **Sanctions:** A grantee or an individual sanctioned by TMA shall be ineligible to be awarded or benefit from a TMA-financed contract, financially or otherwise, during such period as TMA shall determine.

   Grantees debarred by the World Bank, the Public Procurement and Disposal Act (PPDA) of the **Government of all countries of TMA operation** TMA donors and/or any other international donor agency are barred from bidding.

b) **Restrictions for Government-owned Enterprises:** Government-owned enterprises or institutions in Nigeria shall be eligible only if they can establish that they are legally and financially autonomous, operate under commercial law, and are not dependent agencies of TMA.

   To establish eligibility, the government-owned enterprise or institution should provide all relevant documents (including its charter) sufficient to demonstrate that it is a legal entity separate from the government; it does not currently receive any substantial subsidies or budget support; it is not obligated to pass on its surplus to the government; it can acquire rights and liabilities, borrow funds, and can be liable for repayment of debts and be declared bankrupt; and it is not competing for a contract to be awarded by the government department or agency which, under the applicable laws or regulations, is its reporting or supervisory authority or has the ability to exercise influence or control over it.

c) **Restrictions for public employees:** Government officials and civil servants are not eligible to be included as experts in the Grantee's proposal unless such engagement does not conflict with any employment or other laws, regulations, or policies of the country, and they
   i. are on leave of absence without pay, have resigned, or retired.
   ii. are not being hired by the same agency they were working for before going on leave of absence without pay, resigning, or retiring.
   (In case of resignation or retirement, for a period of at least six (6) months, or the period established by statutory provisions applying to civil servants or government employees whichever is longer. Experts who are employed by the government-owned universities, educational or research institutions are not eligible unless they have been full time employees of their institutions for a year or more prior to being included in Grantee's proposal); and
   iii. Their hiring would not create a conflict of interest.

7. Format of Your Tender

Your tender should be set out in four (4) main parts:

- Part A – Preliminary Requirements.
- Part B – Executive Summary.
- Part C – General and Technical proposal; and
- Part D – Financial proposal.

8. Part A Preliminary Requirements

Grantees are required to submit scanned copies of the below mandatory documents:

- Valid certificate of registration/incorporation and evidence of legal authority to operate in Nigeria.
- Evidence of active operational presence in Nigeria, including office address(es), staffing structure, geographic coverage, and recent proof of operations.
- Evidence that the organisation has operated in Nigeria for more than five years.
- A signed declaration confirming that the bidder will implement the assignment directly and will not use sub-granting or pass-through arrangements for substantive delivery.
- Institutional profile showing Nigeria-based offices, staffing, systems, field infrastructure, and geographic reach.
- Evidence of past performance in comparable assignments, including at least three references and copies or summaries of relevant contracts, completion certificates, or performance attestations.

Failure to submit the above requirements may lead to disqualification.

Parts A, B & C may be contained in one PDF document. However, the Financial Proposal (Part D) must be submitted as a **separate excel** to enable the Technical and Financial proposals to be evaluated independently.

Please do not include any financial/ price information in Parts A, B or C. Inclusion of any price information in Parts A, B or C **shall lead to bid rejection**.

9. Part B Executive Summary

This should be a brief overview of your tender covering how you intend to achieve the outputs, and your assessment of the resources required.

10. Part C General and Technical Proposal

Your technical submission should contain the following:

a) Signed and stamped Technical Bid Submission Form (**Annex 2**).

b) Technical proposal, maximum 15 pages excluding annexes, covering methodology, implementation approach, workplan, staffing plan, corridor coverage, trader mobilisation strategy, risk management, safeguarding approach, direct implementation arrangements, and monitoring, evaluation and learning.

c) Evidence of relevant organisational experience, including client contact details, assignment descriptions, start and end dates, scale achieved, results delivered, and references. Refer to **Annex 4**.

d) A stakeholder and network profile identifying current relationships with fisheries actors, trader associations, cooperatives, border agencies, government institutions, financial institutions, private-sector actors, and other relevant partners in the proposed Nigeria corridors.

e) A list of the names and designations of all proposed experts/key personnel who will work on this assignment, clearly indicating the positions and roles to match the Terms of Reference. Refer to **Annex 5**.

f) Curriculum Vitae of proposed experts using the CV template in **Annex 3**.

g) Only one CV shall be submitted for each proposed key expert position. If more than one CV is submitted for the same position, only the first CV will be evaluated.

h) Confirmation that proposed key experts will be available to provide the required services for the full duration of the agreement.

i) Safeguarding, anti-fraud, conflict-of-interest, and other compliance declarations required in this CFP.

The technical proposal shall not include any financial information. The Inclusion of any financial information shall lead to the proposal being declared non-responsive.

Grantees are advised to respond in line with or in reference to the scoring criteria as indicated in the **Technical Evaluation** section of this CFP document.

11. Part D Financial Proposal

a) Contents: The financial proposal should contain the following information:
- Signed and stamped Financial Bid Submission Form (**Annex 6**); and
- Budget details with a clear breakdown of the available
- The financial proposal should not be combined with the technical proposal but should be submitted as a separate document.
- The financial proposal **<u>MUST be in excel and password-protected.</u>**

b) **Currency of Proposal:** The financial proposal shall be stated in ***United States Dollars ($)***.

c) **Taxes:**
- The financial proposal should clearly estimate, as a separate amount, the different applicable taxes, duties, fees, levies, and other charges imposed in **the TMA countries where the assignments will be implemented** under the Applicable law, on the Grantees, the sub-Grantees, and their experts (other than nationals or permanent residents of the country).
- The Grantee, its sub-Grantees and experts are responsible for meeting all tax liabilities arising out of the contract unless stated otherwise in this CFP. The Grantee is required to obtain information on taxes in the country where the contract is to be implemented.
- TMA funds shall not be used to meet the cost of any recoverable Value Added Tax (VAT).

12. Confirmation of grantee Experience Letters / References

References of potential Grantees which have been given by a current TMA employee shall not be accepted in support of a submission of a proposal as part of a procurement process. For the avoidance of doubt, only TMA's confirmation of grantee experience letter / references signed by the Head of Procurement are acceptable in support of applications, bids, proposals, or submissions.

13. Sustainability Considerations

TMA has adopted the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Grantees are required to demonstrate how the implementation of their proposed solution shall address/enhance sustainability.

14. Evaluation Criteria and Process

In assessing the proposals submitted, the evaluation panel will use the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) as specified in this CFP.

15. Technical Evaluation

The technical submissions will be evaluated in two main stages as follows:

Section A: Preliminary requirements

To implement the project the implementing organization /consortium would need a robust combination of expertise and experience as below.

- Legal registration and active operation in Nigeria, supported by valid registration/incorporation documents and evidence of operations in Nigeria for more than five years.
- Demonstrated direct implementation capacity, including personnel, systems, field infrastructure, financial controls, operational capacity, and ability to deliver without sub-granting.
- Verifiable Nigeria-based operational presence, including office location, current staffing, geographic coverage, and compliance with applicable Nigerian laws.
- Relevant experience in cross-border trade, fisheries, agricultural value chains, enterprise development, access to finance, market systems, women's and youth economic empowerment, safeguarding, and capacity building.
- Established networks with fisheries actors, trader associations, cooperatives, border authorities, customs and trade agencies, financial service providers, private-sector actors, and relevant government institutions along Nigeria–Benin, Nigeria–Cameroon, Nigeria–Niger, and/or Nigeria–Chad corridors.
- Robust programme management, financial management, procurement, monitoring, evaluation and learning, safeguarding, and reporting systems appropriate for a donor-funded assignment of this scale.

NB: To proceed to Section B, a grantee MUST be compliant in the stated criteria under Section A.

iv. **Section B:** Technical Proposal

Evaluation for **Section B** will be based on a scoring system marked out of a maximum score of **100 Marks**. Only proposals that score a minimum of **70 marks out of possible 100 marks** will be deemed to be "technically responsive".

Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Description	Weight (%)
i. Technical Approach and Methodology	Understanding of the assignment: Demonstrates a clear grasp of women's and youth economic empowerment, fisheries value chains, informal and formal cross-border trade, and the socio-cultural, regulatory, safeguarding, and security context in Nigeria and neighbouring markets. Approach and methodology: Quality, practicality, inclusivity, and scalability of the proposed mobilisation, capacity-building, enterprise-support, market-linkage, and trade-facilitation approach. Implementation plan: Realistic and detailed workplan with milestones, sequencing, corridor prioritisation, risk management, partner coordination, and rapid start-up arrangements.	25
ii. Relevant Organisational Experience and Trader Networks	Relevant delivery experience: Proven track record implementing (at scale to reach hundreds of thousands of women) cross-border trade, fisheries, agricultural value-chain, enterprise-development, access-to-finance, and market-systems assignments in Nigeria for over five years. Trader network experience: Demonstrated experience working directly with trader associations, informal traders, women and youth groups, cooperatives, fishing communities, processors, aggregators, logistics actors, and agricultural value chains. Fisheries and fish trade experience will receive additional scoring. Cross-border and fisheries networks: Evidence of established partnerships and relationships with fisheries actors, border agencies, government institutions, private-sector actors, and trade associations along the Nigeria-Benin, Nigeria-Cameroon, Nigeria-Niger, and/or Nigeria-Chad corridors. Past performance: Evidence of comparable assignments, scale achieved with young women in enhancing their employment opportunities specifically in fisheries sector, results delivered, and references from previous clients or funders.	25
iii. Team Composition and Technical Expertise	Team Leader: Relevant postgraduate qualification and at least 10 years' experience managing economic empowerment, fisheries, market-systems, or cross-border trade programmes. Core technical expertise: Appropriate expertise in fisheries and value chains, cross-border trade and trade facilitation, enterprise development and financial inclusion, gender and safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation, and communications. Field team: Adequate Nigeria-based staffing, local language and cultural fluency, corridor-specific experience, and demonstrated capacity to mobilise and support beneficiaries.	15
iv. Nigeria Operational Presence, Implementation Capacity,, and Reach	Local presence: Verifiable operational office(s), current staffing, management systems, and field infrastructure in Nigeria for over five years. Geographic reach: Demonstrated ability to mobilise beneficiaries and deliver activities across the proposed target corridors and	25

	border locations. Stakeholder relationships: Existing and active relationships with trader associations, cooperatives, fisheries groups, border authorities, relevant ministries and agencies, private-sector actors, and financial institutions. Direct implementation capacity: Credible evidence that the organisation will implement directly without sub-granting, including deployment plans, field logistics, safeguarding systems, financial controls, and surge capacity. MEL capacity: Clear framework for tracking outreach, enterprise performance, jobs, trade volumes and values, gender and inclusion outcomes, safeguarding, and learning.	
v. Cost-Effectiveness and Value for Money	A realistic, transparent, and adequately justified budget with a clear linkage between costs, activities, outputs, geographic coverage, staffing, and results. The proposal should demonstrate economy, efficiency, cost control, and value for money.	10

NB: Bidders who achieve the minimum technical score of 70 marks out of 100 marks will qualify for the financial evaluation.

Bidders with the highest scores (Technical & Financial) may be invited to make oral presentation of their proposals to the evaluation committee.

The weight given to the technical proposal shall be **70%** and the weight given to the financial proposal shall be **30%**.

16. Financial Evaluation

All substantially responsive proposals that score **70 marks or more** from the ***technical evaluation*** shall have their financial proposals evaluated.

The formula for determining the financial score (SF) shall be as follows:

Criteria	**Description**	**Max Score**
1. Budget Accuracy & Completeness	Budget covers all planned activities, detailed breakdown of costs, clear justifications provided.	**10**
2. Cost Reasonableness	Costs align with market rates, overhead within donor thresholds, unit costs realistic.	**10**
3. Cost-Effectiveness & Value for Money	Budget prioritizes direct activity costs, shows cost-sharing/leverage where applicable	**10**
Total score (P)		**30**

T is the weight given to the technical proposal (in this case **70%)** and
P is the weight given to the financial proposal (in this case **30%)**

Note P + T will be equal to **100%.**

The bidder who has achieved the highest combined technical and financial score shall be declared successful and subsequently invited for clarifications.

17. Packaging, Submission, and Delivery of Tenders

18.1 All submissions must be submitted via TMA's Grants mailbox using the email address grants@trademarkafrica.com, on or before **20th October 2026 1600HRS EAT.**

Please note that the maximum size of the email with attachments must not exceed **10MB**. The Technical and Financial proposal MUST be submitted **as two separate documents in PDF and Excel, respectively**, in the same email or separate mails. **Both Technical and Financial proposals MUST be password-protected.**

18.2 **Late tenders will not be accepted**. No special pleadings will be accepted. Faxed or hard-copy proposals/samples shall be rejected.

18. Clarifications.

Any questions, queries, or concerns about the call for proposal process should be raised directly with the Grants Manager in the first instance via grants@trademarkafrica.com, who will address the matters raised.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the complainant is encouraged to write to **complaints@trademarkafrica.com**.

19. Deviations, Reservations, and Omissions

During the evaluation of bids, the following definitions apply:

- "Deviation" is a departure from the requirements specified in the Bidding Document.
- "Reservation" is the setting of limiting conditions or withholding from complete acceptance of the requirements specified in the Bidding Document; and
- "Omission" is the failure to submit part, or all the information or documentation required in the Bidding Document.

20. Determination of Responsiveness

TMA's determination of a bid's responsiveness is to be based on the contents of the bid itself. A substantially responsive bid is one that meets the requirements of the Bidding Document without material deviation, reservation, or omission. A material deviation, reservation, or omission is one that,

- if accepted, would: -
  - Affect in any substantial way the scope, quality, or performance of the Works specified in the Contract; or
  - Limit in any substantial way, inconsistent with the Bidding Document, the Employer's rights, or the Bidder's obligations under the proposed Contract; or

- If rectified, would unfairly affect the competitive position of other Bidders presenting substantially responsive bids:
- The Employer shall examine the technical aspects of the bid submitted in accordance with evaluation criteria cited under (16), Technical Proposal in particular, to confirm that all requirements have been met without any material deviation, reservation, or omission; and
- If a bid is not substantially responsive to the requirements of the Bidding Document, it shall be rejected by the Employer and may not subsequently be made responsive by correction of the material deviation, reservation, or omission.

21. Nonconformities, Errors, and Omissions

- Provided that a bid is substantially responsive, the Employer may waive any non-conformity in the bid.
- Provided that a bid is substantially responsive, the Employer may request that the Bidder submit the necessary information or documentation, within a reasonable period, to rectify nonmaterial nonconformities in the bid related to documentation requirements. Requesting information or documentation on such nonconformities shall not be related to any aspect of the price of the bid. Failure of the Bidder to comply with the request may result in the rejection of its bid.
- Provided that a bid is substantially responsive, the Employer shall rectify quantifiable nonmaterial nonconformities related to the Bid Price. To this effect, the Bid Price may be adjusted, for comparison purposes only, to reflect the price of a missing or non-conforming item or component.

22. TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE: SPECIALISED LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNER IN NIGERIA FOR CROSS-BORDER TRADER MOBILISATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN FISHERIES PROGRAMME

1. Overview of the Programme

The Women & Youth Economic Empowerment in the Fisheries sector through the Inclusive Market Access Programme is a five-year initiative (2024-2029) led by the AfCFTA Secretariat, in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, and TradeMark Africa. The Programme aims to empower women and youth in the fisheries sector and related enterprises across Kenya, Uganda
, Tanzania (including Zanzibar), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Nigeria, and select island states, including the Comoros and Cabo Verde. It aims to create over 242,000 decent jobs and address economic inequalities by improving market access, strengthening business skills, and fostering inclusive economic opportunities. The programme seeks to identify and progressively address key barriers that limit the engagement of women and youth in fisheries and cross-border trade, promoting sustainable, equitable, and inclusive economic growth.

2. Programme Rationale

Africa’s $22 billion annual market for fish is projected to double by 2030. Despite the vast potential, the economic benefits of this growing market have not been evenly distributed. Young men and women, who comprise 70% of the sector's workforce, are often bypassed for downstream roles such as processing and informal cross-border trade. Notably, young women dominate informal cross-border trade, particularly at specific borders. These young traders face numerous challenges, including limited access to finance and market information, as well as weak bargaining power against larger, more established enterprises and groups. The program addresses these issues through interventions aimed at leveling the playing field and transforming the fisheries sector into a source of inclusive growth and improved livelihoods for those who need it most.

Nigeria, with its strategic position bordering Benin, Niger, and Cameroon, presents significant opportunities for regional fish trade but faces constraints, including informal trade practices, limited capacity of women and youth traders, poor access to finance, and weak coordination mechanisms at border points.

Given the delayed country start-up, the limited remaining implementation timeline, and two previous unsuccessful procurement attempts, the assignment will be procured through a restricted competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The process will target qualified Nigerian organizations with a demonstrated operational presence, implementation capacity, and established networks of fisheries and cross-border traders. The selected organisation will be expected to mobilize quickly and accelerate delivery of results aligned with the Programme’s approved workplans and targets.

The programme rationale is therefore anchored in the need to convert fisheries trade potential into practical economic opportunities for young women. By improving trade capacity, including business management, standards compliance, market intelligence, access to finance, trader organisation, digital tools, and safer cross-border operations, the programme will enable young women to increase their competitiveness, secure wage work in fisheries value chains, and grow self-employment opportunities through formalized and higher-value fish trade.

3. Implementation Strategy

The Programme will use a four-pronged approach.

i. Increase trade in fish by women and youth: capacity building, market access, supply chain linkages, digital solutions, and financing.
ii. Enhance access to fish feed inputs by improving market linkages, aggregation, and logistics for women and youth involved in cross-border fish feed trade.
iii. Enhance the cross-border trading environment: reduce trade barriers and improve safeguarding for young women traders.
iv. Strengthening the AfCFTA Secretariat's capacity: establishment of the Private Sector Unit (PSU) to coordinate priority interventions and enhance institutional capabilities for implementing these initiatives.

The programme will support small-scale entrepreneurs through collaborative group mobilization and the addressing of systemic cross-border barriers to facilitate smoother cross-border trade.

4. Background and context

Nigeria is one of West Africa's largest producers, importers, processors, and traders of fish. Smoked and dried fish from the Niger Delta, Lagos, Ogun, Cross River, and other coastal states flow through major domestic hubs (Onitsha, Aba, Kano, Kaduna, Ibadan) into neighbouring countries, including Benin, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. Despite this vibrant ecosystem, the cross-border fish trade remains informal, mainly unstructured, and characterized by high post-harvest losses, low compliance with standards, security bottlenecks, and gender-specific risks.

Women dominate processing, smoking, retailing, and small-scale cross-border trade, while youth drive logistics, aggregation, aquaculture input distribution, cold-chain operations, and emerging digital services. Yet systemic barriers—limited access to finance, harassment at borders, informality, and weak Standards Infrastructure—limit their full economic participation.

The AfCFTA, ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), and Nigeria's Blue Economy Strategy present an opportunity to elevate small-scale women traders and young entrepreneurs into more formalised, competitive, and job-rich trade markets.

This programme is designed to unlock those opportunities by strengthening corridors, empowering women and youth, accelerating inclusive employment, and improving the intra-African trade in fish and fish products.

5. Main objective

To enhance wage and self-employment opportunities for over 50,000 young women in Nigeria's fisheries sector by improving their trade capacity, strengthening participation in cross-border fish trade, and expanding access to markets, finance, business systems, and safer trading environments.

The partner will deliver on the programme workstreams by:

i. Enhancing Inclusion in Cross-Border Trade to create employment and increase trade: Mobilize and build the capacity of 50,000 young women and youth fish traders to formalize and increase their fish trade capacity (volumes and values), leading to wage and self-employment opportunities.
ii. Improving the Cross-Border Trade Environment: Address trade barriers, enhance safeguarding mechanisms, and promote gender-responsive policy and infrastructure.

6. Specific objectives

i. Increase Cross-Border Fish Trade: Increase the value and volume of formal cross-border trade in fish and fish products by supporting 50,000 women-led fisheries enterprises and traders to access regional markets along the Nigeria–Benin, Nigeria–Cameroon, Nigeria–Niger and Nigeria–Chad trade corridors through improved market linkages, trade facilitation and regional integration.

ii. Strengthen Enterprise Competitiveness and Value Addition: Enhance the productivity, competitiveness and profitability of 50,000 women-owned fisheries enterprises through skills development, post-harvest value addition, processing, cold chain development, logistics improvements and stronger business-to-business market linkages, enabling enterprises to move into higher-value regional markets.

iii. Improve Compliance and Market Access: Strengthen the capacity of 50,000 women fish traders and processors to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS), food safety and quality standards required under ECOWAS and the AfCFTA, improving market access, increasing export readiness and enhancing the value of fish and fish products traded across borders.

iv. Expand Access to Finance and Digital Trade Solutions: Improve access to affordable finance, digital financial services and digital trade solutions for 50,000 women and youth-led fisheries enterprises, enabling business expansion, increased trade volumes, greater productivity and enhanced participation in regional value chains.

v. Improve Cross-Border Trade Facilitation: Strengthen gender-responsive trade facilitation at priority border crossings by reducing border delays, informal payments, harassment and compliance costs, resulting in safer, more predictable and more efficient movement of fish and fish products across regional trade corridors.

vi. Create Sustainable Employment and Women's Economic Empowerment: Create and sustain self-employment and wage employment opportunities for at least 50,000 women and young people through expanded fisheries trade, enterprise growth, investment, value addition and stronger regional market systems, contributing to increased incomes and inclusive economic development

7. Scope of Work

The partner will be responsible for the direct implementation of the assignment using its own institutional systems, personnel, and field presence. Sub-granting, pass-through funding, or delegation of substantive implementation responsibilities to third parties is not permitted. The partner may coordinate with public agencies, associations, and technical stakeholders, but shall remain fully responsible and accountable for all outputs and results.

i. Market Systems & Value Chain Diagnostics

Conduct a well-structured rapid assessment of:

a. Major cross-border corridors and the opportunities to enhance trade for young women in fish trade

b. Nigeria–Niger (Kano–Katsina–Jibia- Maradi),

Nigeria–Cameroon (Calabar–Ikom–Mfun- Mamfe),

c. Nigeria–Benin (Lagos - Badagry–Seme–Cotonou),

d. Nigeria–Chad (Maiduguri–Gamboru- Fotokol/Baga- Diffa)

Lake Chad Basin fish flows (especially smoked/dried bonga & catfish).

e. Key traded products: develop an understanding for young women's opportunities in the trade of smoked fish, dried bonga, tilapia, catfish (fresh & processed), shrimp, crayfish, fishmeal.
f. Map economic and employment (Self and waged) opportunities for women and youth participation in the trade of fish and fish products.
g. Production–processing–marketing systems: Map production clusters where young women in fish trade participate (e.g., Lagos, Ogun, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers), hubs (Kano, Onitsha, Aba), border markets (Illela, Kongolam, Jibia, Mfun, Idanre, Ikom).
h. Systems constraints: identify post-harvest losses, informal charges, cold chain capacities, levels of certification, transport/logistics, financing gaps and status, working conditions for young women and youth, and formal-sector integration.

ii. Traders Mobilization and Capacity Building
a. Identify and organize networks with the capacity to reach over 50,000 women and youth in the cross-border fish trade into structured associations or cooperatives.
b. Deliver tailored capacity-building programmes on business management, financial literacy, quality standards, and trade facilitation to improve standards and increase trade values and volumes of fish and fish products.
c. Support certification of women- and youth-owned MSMEs involved in the fish trade.

iii. Institutional Strengthening
a. Support the establishment and operationalization of border resource centers that serve as safe spaces and information hubs for traders.
b. Facilitate regional Public–Private Dialogues (PPDs) to foster coordination and investment.

iv. Safeguarding and Gender Inclusion
a. Mainstream gender equality and safeguarding across interventions, ensuring mechanisms for reporting and addressing GBV and SEAH cases at borders.
b. Strengthen women and youth associations to advocate for inclusive and safe trade environments.

v. Access to Finance and Digital Solutions
a. Collaborate with financial institutions and fintechs to scale access to working capital and mobile payment solutions.
b. Train women and youth traders on digital trade tools (iSOKO) and mobile-based platforms for e-payments and market access.

vi. Communication and Knowledge Sharing
a. Develop and disseminate information materials and success stories on fish trade opportunities, regulations, and gender-responsive practices.

8. **Deliverables and Outputs**

i. Inception report with detailed implementation plan, baseline data, and results framework.
ii. Functioning resource centers at a minimum of two border locations.
iii. At least 50,000 women and youth traders trained on business, finance, and trade facilitation, and in self or wage employment
iv. Established and operationalized safeguarding and GBV response mechanisms.
v. Documentation of lessons learned and success stories for programme dissemination.
vi. Report showing the final value and volume of trade in fish and fish products.

9. Duration and Implementation Period

The assignment will run for two years, aligned with the Programme's Yearly workplans and reporting cycle.

10**. Application Approach and Mandatory Eligibility Requirements**

The assignment will be procured through acompetitive RFP process.. The shortlist will be developed using clear, documented, and transparent criteria, including legal status, operational presence, relevant technical experience, implementation capacity, and demonstrated networks in the fisheries and cross-border trade sectors. WorldFish may be consulted, given its established presence in Nigeria, to support market mapping and identification of potential organizations; however, all shortlisted organizations will be independently verified against the approved eligibility criteria.

The following requirements are MANDATORY and will be assessed on a pass/fail basis before technical proposals are scored:

i. Legal registration and operation in Nigeria: The bidder must be legally registered and actively operating in Nigeria. A valid certificate of registration/incorporation and evidence of current operations in Nigeria for more than 5 years must be submitted. Failure to meet this requirement will result in automatic disqualification.

ii. Direct implementation capacity: The bidder must demonstrate that it has the personnel, systems, field infrastructure, and financial and operational capacity to implement the assignment directly.

iii. No sub-granting: Sub-granting, pass-through funding, or transfer of substantive delivery responsibilities to another organisation is not permitted. Proposals that rely on sub-grantees for core implementation will be disqualified.

iv. Nigeria-based operational presence: The bidder must provide verifiable evidence of an operational office or established field presence in Nigeria, including the location of offices, current staffing, geographic coverage, and compliance with applicable Nigerian laws, including examples of recent bills for water, power etc.

11**. Qualifications**

The programme is seeking a Nigerian institution or non-governmental organisation that meets the mandatory eligibility requirements above and demonstrates:

- A minimum of seven years of relevant organizational experience in cross-border trade, fisheries, agricultural value-chain development, enterprise development, or related market-systems programming, with substantial delivery experience in Nigeria.
- Demonstrated experience working directly with cross-border traders, trader associations, informal traders, cooperatives, women- and youth-led enterprises, and agricultural value chains; experience in fisheries and fish trade will be particularly advantageous.
- Established partnerships and working relationships with fisheries actors, border authorities, customs and trade agencies, trader associations, cooperatives, financial service providers, private-sector actors, and relevant government institutions in Nigeria.
- Verifiable operational reach and beneficiary mobilization capacity across one or more priority corridors and border locations linking Nigeria with Benin, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.
- A proven track record in women's and youth economic empowerment, business development, financial inclusion, market access, and capacity building.

- Experience implementing gender equality, safeguarding, GBV, and SEAH prevention, referral, and response mechanisms in community and market settings.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver at scale within compressed timelines and in complex, fragile, or security-sensitive operating environments.
- Robust programme management, financial management, procurement, monitoring, evaluation and learning, safeguarding, and reporting systems appropriate for a donor-funded assignment of this scale.

Only bidders that pass all mandatory eligibility requirements will proceed to technical and financial evaluation. Technical proposals will be scored out of 100 points. TMA may establish a minimum technical pass mark in the RFP instructions; only technically responsive proposals meeting that threshold will proceed to financial evaluation.

12. Expected Outcome and Impact

Impact Statement: Young women in fisheries will access expanded wage and self-employment opportunities through improved trade capacity, stronger market participation, enhanced enterprise performance, and safer, more inclusive cross-border fish trade systems.

Expected Results (2-Year Horizon)

Outcome 1: Increased inclusive cross-border fish trade

- 15-20% increase in volumes and values traded through formal channels.
- Trade a minimum of $20M worth of fish and fish products.

Outcome 2: Women and youth economic empowerment

- 50,000+ women and youth supported across corridors.
- Increased income through processing, trading, and aquaculture upgrading.

Outcome 3: Job creation and enterprise growth

- 25,000-30,000 direct and indirect jobs created.
- At least 3,000 MSMEs strengthened with digital and financial tools.

Outcome 4: Improved trade environment

- Reduced border crossing time and costs for small traders by 25–40%.
- Gender-sensitive border systems are institutionalized.
- Collaborate with WorldFish on the same corridors and trade routes for enhanced impact.

13. Submission of Proposals

Interested and qualified organizations are invited to submit:

- Technical proposal (maximum 15 pages, excluding annexes), including methodology, workplan, staffing plan, corridor coverage, mobilization strategy, risk management, safeguarding approach, and direct implementation arrangements.
- Financial proposal submitted as a separate attachment, with detailed assumptions and unit costs.
- Evidence of past performance in comparable assignments, including at least three references and copies or summaries of relevant contracts, completion of certificates, or performance attestations.
- CVs of proposed key personnel and an institutional profile showing Nigeria-based offices, staffing, systems, and geographic reach.
- Valid evidence of legal registration/incorporation and authority to operate in Nigeria.

- Evidence of active operational presence in Nigeria, including office address(es), staffing structure, and current or recently completed field activities.
- A declaration confirming that the bidder will implement the assignment directly and will not use sub-granting arrangements for substantive delivery.
- A stakeholder and network profile identifying current relationships with fisheries actors, trader associations, cooperatives, border agencies, government institutions, and private-sector partners in the proposed corridors.
- Safeguarding, anti-fraud, conflict-of-interest, and other compliance declarations required in the RFP.

14. Ethical Considerations

TradeMark Africa (TMA) places a strong emphasis on ethical considerations in its recruitment process, aligning with its core values of transparency and fairness. This commitment involves conducting a quality-assurance-based, transparent, and merit-based selection process that adheres to the principles of fairness, equal opportunity, and confidentiality. TMA is dedicated to preventing conflicts of interest, upholding anti-corruption measures, and complying with local regulations. Robust whistleblower protection mechanisms and ongoing integrity measures are in place to ensure ethical standards are upheld throughout the partner’s tenure. The identification and shortlisting of the bids will be documented against the approved eligibility criteria, and any technical input received from external stakeholders will not confer preferential treatment or influence the independent evaluation

15. Budget for the Proposal

The budget for this Proposal is USD 900,000.

ANNEX 1: TMA'S SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT

This document is shared as a separate document to the tender document.

ANNEX 2: TECHNICAL BID SUBMISSION FORM

[The Bidder shall fill in this Form in accordance with the instructions indicated No alterations to its format shall be permitted and no substitutions shall be accepted.]

Date: _______________________________________ *(insert date (as day, month, and year) of Bid Submission)*

To: **TradeMark Africa**
Fidelity Insurance Centre,
P O Box 313 00606,
Nairobi, Kenya

We, the undersigned, declare that:

(a) We have examined and have no reservations to the Bidding Documents.

(b) We offer to supply in conformity with the Bidding Documents and in accordance with the Delivery Schedules specified in the Schedule of Requirements the following Goods and Related Services [insert a brief description of the Goods and Related Services].

(c) Our bid shall be valid for a period of **120 days**, from the date fixed for the bid submission deadline in accordance with the ITT, and it shall remain binding upon us and may be accepted at any time before the expiration of that period.

(d) If our bid is accepted, we commit on request to obtain a performance security (if applicable) for the due performance of the Contract.

(e) We have no conflict of interest.

(f) We understand that this bid, together with your written acceptance thereof included in your notification of award, shall not constitute a binding contract between us, until a formal contract is prepared and executed.

(g) We understand that you are not bound to accept the lowest evaluated bid or any other bid that you may receive.

Signed by: _______________________________________ (*signature of person authorized by the Bidder to sign the bid submission form, and whose name and title are shown below)*

Name: _______________________________________ *(insert full name)*

Title: _______________________________________ (*insert official title)*

Duly authorized to sign the bid for and on behalf of: _______________________________________ (*insert full name of Bidder)*

Dated on ____________ day of __________________, _______ *[insert date of signing]*

ANNEX 3: CURRICULUM VITAE TEMPLATE

PLEASE SUBMIT ONLY ONE (1) CV FOR EACH OF THE POSITIONS MENTIONED FOR THE PROPOSED KEY PERSONNEL AND SHORT-TERM TECHNICAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL. IF MORE THAN ONE CV IS SUBMITTED FOR THE SAME POSITION, ONLY THE FIRST CV WILL BE EVALUATED. PLEASE ALSO CLEARLY INDICATE THE POSITIONS THAT EACH OF THE SUBMITTED CVS WILL HAVE IN THIS ASSIGNMENT

Position/Role Title:	{e.g., TEAM LEADER}
Name of Expert:	{Insert full name}
Date of Birth:	{day/month/year}
Country of Citizenship/Residence	

Education: {List college/university or other specialized education, giving names of educational institutions, dates attended, degree(s)/diploma(s) obtained **attach valid copies of the certificates and testimonials}**

____

____

Employment record relevant to the assignment: {Starting with present position, list in reverse order. Please provide dates, name of employing organization, titles of positions held, types of activities performed and location of the assignment, and contact information of previous clients and employing organization(s) who can be contacted for references. Past employment that is not relevant to the assignment does not need to be included.}

Period	Employing organization and your title/position. Contact info for references	Country	Summary of activities performed relevant to the Assignment
[e.g., May 2005-present]	[e.g., Ministry of ……, advisor/consultant to… For references: Tel…………/e-mail……; Mr. Hebb, deputy minister]		

Membership in Professional Associations and Publications: ____

Language Skills (indicate only languages in which you can work ranking from 1 to 5 for speaking, writing and reading where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent):

Language	Reading	Writing	Speaking

Adequacy for the Assignment:

Detailed Tasks Assigned on Consultant's Team of Experts (*insert the time period*)	Reference to Prior Work/Assignments that Best Illustrates Capability to Handle the Assigned Tasks
{List all deliverables/tasks in which the Expert will be involved)	

Experts contact information : (e-mail…………………………………………… Phone……………………………………)

Certification:

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes myself, my qualifications, and my experience, and I am available to undertake the assignment in case of an award. I understand that any misstatement or misrepresentation described herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal by the Client, and/or sanctions by the Client.

{Day/month/year}

Name of Expert Signature Date

{Day/month/year}

Name of authorized representative Signature Date

of the consultant ***(the same one who signs the Proposal)***

Note:

1. Failure by the consultant to sign the CV (physically or electronically), may lead to the CV not being considered altogether.
2. Failure to submit copies of certificates and/or accreditation may lead to the CV being invalidated.

ANNEX 4 – FIRM EXPERIENCE

[*Using the format below, provide information on each assignment for which your firm, and each associate for this assignment, was legally contracted either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association, for carrying out consulting services similar to the ones requested under this assignment.*]

Assignment name:	**Approx. value of the contract (in current US$ or Euro):**
Country: **Location within country:**	**Duration of assignment (months):**
Name of Client:	**Total Nº of staff-months of the assignment:**
Address:	**Approx. value of the services provided by your firm under the contract (in US$ currency equivalent):**
Start date (month/year): **Completion date (month/year):**	**Nº of professional staff-months provided by associated Consultants:**
Name of associated Consultants, if any:	**Name of senior professional staff of your firm involved and functions performed (indicate most significant profiles such as Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader):**
Narrative description of Project:	
Description of actual services provided by your staff within the assignment:	

ANNEX 5 – TEAM COMPOSITION

Proposed Personnel

Bidders should provide the names of suitably qualified personnel to meet the specified requirements for each of the positions listed in your technical proposal.

The data on their experience should be supplied using the Form below for each candidate.

Team Composition and Task Assignments

Professional Staff				
Name of Staff	Firm	Area of Expertise	Position Assigned	Task Assigned

Comments and Suggestions on the Terms of Reference and on Counterpart Staff and Facilities to be Provided.

C - On the Terms of Reference

[*Present and justify here any modifications or improvement to the Terms of Reference you are proposing to improve performance in carrying out the assignment (such as deleting some activity you consider unnecessary, or adding another, or proposing a different phasing of the activities). Such suggestions should be concise and to the point, and incorporated in your Proposal, as applicable.*]

Description of Approach, Methodology and Work Plan for Performing the Assignment

Technical approach, methodology and work plan are key components of the Technical Proposal. You are suggested to present your Technical Proposal divided into the following three chapters:

a) Technical Approach and Methodology,

b) Work Plan, and

c) Organization and Staffing,

a) <u>Technical Approach and Methodology.</u>
In this chapter you should explain your understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output, and the degree of detail of such output. You should highlight the problems being addressed and their importance and explain the technical approach you would adopt to address them. You should also explain the methodologies you propose to adopt and highlight the compatibility of those methodologies with the proposed approach.

b) <u>Work Plan.</u> In this chapter you should propose the main activities of the assignment, their content and duration, phasing and interrelations, milestones (including interim approvals by the Client), and delivery dates of the reports. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan. A list of the final documents, including reports, drawings, and tables to be delivered as final output, should be included here. The work plan should be consistent with the Work Schedule of Form

c) <u>Organization and Staffing.</u>

In this chapter you should propose the structure and composition of your team. You should list the main disciplines of the assignment, the key expert responsible, and proposed technical and support staff.

STAFFING SCHEDULE[1]

N°	**Name of Staff**	Staff input (in the form of a bar chart)[2]													Total staff-month input		
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**n**	**Home**	**Field**[3]	**Total**
Foreign																	
1		[*Home*]															
		[*Field*]															
2																	
3																	
n																	
										Subtotal							
Local																	
1		[*Home*]															
		[*Field*]															
2																	
n																	
										Subtotal							
										Total							

1 For Professional Staff the input should be indicated individually; for Support Staff it should be indicated by category (e.g.: draftsmen, clerical staff, etc.).

2 Months are counted from the start of the assignment. For each staff indicate separately staff input for home and field work.

3 Field work means work carried out at a place other than the Consultant's home office.

Full time input Part time input

N°	Activity[1]	Months[2]												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	n
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
n														

1 Indicate all main activities of the assignment, including delivery of reports (e.g.: inception, interim, and final reports), and other benchmarks such as Client approvals. For phased assignments indicate activities, delivery of reports, and benchmarks separately for each phase.

2 Duration of activities shall be indicated in the form of a bar chart

ANNEX 6: FINANCIAL BID SUBMISSION FORM

Dear Sir/Madam:

We, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for [Insert title of assignment] in accordance with your Request for Proposal dated [Insert Date] and our Technical Proposal.

Our attached Financial Proposal is for the amount of

____

(***indicate the corresponding amount(s) in words and figures and the currency (ies))***, including all applicable taxes in line provided clauses in this tender document.

This financial bid submission/ proposal is in line with Pro-forma 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Annex 1 of this RFP tender document.

Our Financial Proposal shall be binding upon us subject to the modifications resulting from any contract negotiations, up to expiration of the validity period of the Proposal, up to a period of **120 days** after bid submission deadline date.

We understand you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

We remain,

Yours Sincerely,

Authorized Signature ***(In full and initials)***: ____
Name and Title of Signatory: ____
In the capacity of: ____
Address: ____
E-mail: ____

(For a joint venture, either all members shall sign or only the lead member/ consultant, in which case the power of attorney to sign on behalf of all members shall be attached)

ANNEX 7: FINANCIAL PROPOSAL - BUDGET TEMPLATE

Annex 7 Budget Template

ANNEX 8: EMAIL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Bidders for Bid Submissions via Email

1.1 Bidder Guidance for Emailed Submissions

a) TradeMark Africa (TMA) will automatically send an email acknowledgment for all applications, bids, proposals and/or submissions received via the email addresses stipulated/specified in the bidding document. If a bidder does not receive an email acknowledgement **IMMEDIATELY** after submitting their applications, bids, proposals and/or submissions, via the email address stipulated in the bidding document, **IMMEDIATELY** contact TMA's Grants unit via email address **grants@trademarkafrica.com**, to confirm whether the applications, bids, proposals and/or submissions were received.

b) Bidders must not ignore any bounce back email received regarding rejection of an emailed application, bid, proposal and/or submission. If such an email is received, contact TMA's Procurement unit **IMMEDIATELY**.

1.2 Possible Reasons for Emailed Submission Rejection

a) The email submission exceeded the maximum size of 5 MB.

b) The subject line matched a known phishing subject line.

c) The email contained a known phishing Uniform Resource Locator (URL), or the email originated from a server associated with phishing.

d) The outbound mail server was present on a subscribed blacklist; or

e) The email contained a virus or malware.

1.3 Remedial Action for Rejected Email Submission Prior to Tender Closing Date & Time

Prior to the tender closing date and time, if a bidder's submission is rejected, the following remedial action should be explored prior to re-submission.

a) If the collective size of the emailed attachments **exceeds 5 MB**, the bidders should resubmit through multiple emails or may use other modes such ***WeTransfer, Dropbox, or Google drive***. The bidder shall be required to clearly identify how many emails constitute the full submission.
e.g., email **1 of XX**.

b) If the emailed submission included zipped or executable files, unzip or remove the executable files then resubmit through one or more emails (refer to point 1.3a) above if the files collectively exceed 5 MB).

c) If the email submission is rejected because of a blacklisted domain, the bidder is required to resend the submission from a different email account from a different domain that is not blacklisted, e.g., Gmail. Please note, this should be done before the stipulated tender submission deadline; and
d) If the email submission is rejected because of a virus/malware in the email or any of the email attachments, ensure that the virus/malware is removed/cleaned prior to resubmission.

TMA's Grants unit shall only consider and review cases of undelivered applications, bids, proposals and/or submissions, when it is brought to our attention by the affected bidder/s prior to the tender submission deadline.

Automatic Email Acknowledgement sent from the Grants Mailbox

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your email to TradeMark Africa's Grants mailbox.

Your email will be reviewed, and a response will be provided at the earliest opportunity. We encourage you to visit our website www.trademarkea.com/procurement-faqs/ for our procurement guidelines and answers to FAQs.

If you have submitted a bid for an open procurement process, it may take several weeks before you receive any further communication from us.

*The maximum size of each email with attachments should not exceed **5 MB**.*

Please get in touch with us via email grants@trademarkafrica.com , in case you do not receive an automatic acknowledgement email immediately after submission of your bid.

For and on behalf of:

TradeMark Africa

Fidelity Insurance Centre, 2nd Floor, Off Waiyaki Way, Westlands

P.O. Box 313, 00606 Nairobi, Kenya
www.trademarkafrica.com