



To: Offerors

Date: September 16, 2020

From: Procurement and Partnerships Team, INVEST Project; Implemented by DAI Global LLC

Subject: Request for Proposals (RFP) INVEST-065: Technical Assistance for Hand Sanitizer Distribution in Afghanistan

Due: **1:00PM EDT on October 14, 2020**

Dear Offerors:

Enclosed is a Request for Proposals (RFP) to support the implementation of DAI's INVEST project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). DAI invites firms to submit a proposal for work as part of the USAID/Afghanistan buy-in.

- I. RFP Process and deadlines:** This solicitation will result in the award of one or multiple Fixed Price subcontracts.
- a. Submission of Questions – Questions must be submitted no later than **1:00 pm EDT on September 23, 2020** via email to INVEST_Procurement@dai.com.
 - b. Submission of Proposals – Proposals must be submitted no later than **1:00 pm EDT on October 14, 2020** via email to INVEST_Procurement@dai.com, copying katherine_tilahun@dai.com and carly_gorelick@dai.com. The subject line of the email should be your organization name, followed by “Submission under RFP INVEST-065: Technical Assistance for Hand Sanitizer Distribution in Afghanistan” Please certify in your submission email a validity period of 60 days for the price(s) provided and include your organization’s DUNS number. Please limit file submissions to 10 megabytes or less.
- II. Composition of Proposal:** Your organization’s proposal should comprise the following submission documents. The Technical Proposal and Price Proposal should be prepared as separate files for independent evaluation, as follows below. Technical proposals should be submitted as a maximum ten (10) slide/page presentation, using a minimum 12-point standard font with one-inch margins. Graphics may be included, so long as text is clearly legible. If text or graphics are of poor resolution, the information provided may not be considered. Submissions in PowerPoint or in PDF are acceptable, although PDF is preferred along with an accompanying PowerPoint document. Price proposals should be submitted in Excel format, and include within the spreadsheet any budget notes.

Part 1 – Technical Proposal

The technical proposal is composed of the following three (3) sections:

1. **Technical Approach** – Offerors will detail their approach to fulfilling the accompanying Statement of Objectives (SOO). The approach will clearly indicate how the proposed activities will result in the successful completion of all deliverables and milestones.

2. **Institutional Capacity** - Offerors should provide details about the experience, expertise, or capacity of their firm to recommend the proposed approach and complete the work as described. Offerors should detail existing relationships and demonstrate their experience and expertise in identifying and addressing the technical, operational, and financial challenges of a business. This section should also include past performance information for similar contexts. If a partnering arrangement is being proposed, please provide details about the experience, expertise, capacity, and local presence of the partner firm(s) as well.
3. **Management Plan/Staffing Structure** – Offerors should include details of personnel who will be assigned to activities as proposed in the technical approach, as well as a clear management plan for the development, review, and submission of all associated deliverables, including a milestone schedule. Offerors are permitted to engage in partnering/consortium arrangements if it will aid in providing best value to USAID. If a partnering arrangement is being proposed, please describe the nature of the arrangement, the specific technical value being contributed by each member of the team, and the appropriate management controls to ensure successful delivery. Firms may consider partnering with local firms that bring in complementary skill sets and experience, as well as local knowledge and networks in Afghanistan.

In addition to the above, please include the following. These inputs will not be counted as part of the 10-slide/page limit and the format may be PDF or Word:

- One (1) to two (2) examples of past performance relevant to this activity (limited to two (2) pages per example)
- CV(s) of any individuals proposed in the staffing plan to conduct this activity (limited to two (2) pages per individual)

Note: These inputs (past performance examples and CVs) will not be counted as part of the 10 slide/page limit and the format may be PDF or Word. A cover page will be considered a non-counting page. Offerors should include a cover page and list on it the names of all firms participating in the bid. No additional annexes or documentation are requested.

Part 2 – Price Proposal

The contract type for the presumptive activity will be Fixed Price Subcontract(s), awarded by DAI Global, LLC. Please include your total proposed fixed price along with details for specific deliverable pricing. Offerors must include a cost breakdown of the hourly rates for proposed personnel, any other direct costs, indirect costs, and fees if applicable, with a build-up to their total proposed price or include substantiating price reasonableness documentation/justification. Cost breakdowns included will be utilized to determine price reasonableness. Offerors are expected to use their own cost/budget template; please limit file submissions to 10 megabytes or less.

- III. **Evaluation of Proposal:** DAI will use best value determination for the award of this Request for Proposals. A best value determination means that, in DAI's estimation, the selected offer(s) will provide the greatest overall benefit to USAID in response to the requirements stated in this RFP. DAI may also exclude an offer from consideration if it determines that an Offeror is "not responsible", i.e., that it does not have the management and financial capabilities required to perform the work required. Proposals will be

evaluated against a stated number of factors, including the overall proposed approach, past performance, specific qualifications in the identified sectors and other evidence substantiating the bidder's ability to deliver, including budget and time frame considerations. Specific preference will be shown for firms that demonstrate regional familiarity, networks, and/or presence in addition to relevant technical qualifications and experience providing technical assistance and investment support.

1. Technical Proposal: The Technical Proposal will be scored and evaluated separately from the cost proposal. Technical panel reviewers will evaluate Offerors on the following factors, consistent with the Offerors' technical proposal. The Technical Proposal will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- a. Technical Approach (40 points)** - Points for this section will be awarded based on the information presented in the technical approach. Points will be awarded to firms describing their thoughtful approach to addressing the statement of objectives. The offeror will be scored based on its presentation of a clear approach per phase as outlined in the SOO, which reflects the requirements of this specific activity but also incorporates the offeror's competencies. Points will be given for the following areas:
 - i. Methodology proposed to conduct landscape assessment and develop company pipeline in the current Covid-19 environment;
 - ii. Incorporation of knowledge of the Afghan context into the technical approach, including sector awareness, networks with potential firms for technical assistance, and operational knowledge that informs implementation approach;
 - iii. Outline of strategy to assess needs of selected and provide the requisite technical, operational, and financial assistance;
 - iv. Outline approach to working with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) for any necessary approvals;
 - v. Methodology to providing specific technical assistance to at least two (2) Afghan companies to increase the production and distribution of hand sanitizer/disinfectant, including shipping of raw materials as needed.
- b. Institutional Capacity (35 points)** – Points for this section will be based on information presented in the corresponding section and any submitted case studies. Preference will be given to firms and/or consortia that have past performance in timely and successful delivery of similar services and/or relevant experience in Afghanistan. The offeror must demonstrate the following, as appropriate (or relevant) to their technical approach:
 - i. Relevant experience in conducting rapid landscape assessments and delivering tailored technical assistance to companies;
 - ii. Demonstrated experience, networks, and/or presence in Afghanistan as well as relevant experience providing technical, operational, financial, legal and/or investment support to businesses in ramping up similar production and distribution;
 - iii. If a partnering arrangement is being proposed, please provide details about the experience, expertise, capacity, and local presence of partner firm(s).
- c. Management Plan/Staffing Structure (25 points)** - Points for this section will be based on the qualifications of proposed staff, clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of each proposed staff and each proposed firm (if firms are partnering), and the demonstrated efficacy and clarity of the management plan.

Proposals should provide a clear management plan in narrative form for the development, review, and submission of all associated deliverables, including a proposed milestone schedule. If the offeror is submitting a proposal along with partners, the proposal should describe the nature of the arrangement (i.e. added technical value), the division of labor among the partners, and the appropriate management controls to ensure successful delivery. The Offeror should include:

- i. Management plan for proposed activities, including clearly defined technical roles for each partner (if applicable);
- ii. Timeline and deliverables that will result in objectives of SOO being met;
- iii. Experience of staff, to include local experts as needed, in providing technical assistance as appropriate to the technical approach proposed. Please include all relevant CVs for proposed staff (maximum 2 pages per staff person).

2. **Price Proposal:** Price will be evaluated separately from the technical approach, with due consideration for realism, price reasonableness, and allowability consistent with US government cost principles. Evaluation for this section will be dependent upon all information presented by the Offeror in their deliverable table, budget with cost breakdowns, and any relevant supporting cost information, as well as its alignment with the proposed technical approach.

IV. Offeror's Agreement with Terms and Conditions: Please visit the [INVEST Procurement Forecast](#) website for RFP Terms and Conditions.

The completion of all RFP requirements in accordance with the instructions in this RFP and submission to DAI of the technical and price proposals will constitute an offer and indicate the Offeror's agreement to the terms and conditions in this RFP and any attachments hereto. DAI is not required to accept and/or evaluate proposals that do not conform to the instructions of the RFP, and additionally, DAI may reject all proposals and not award a subcontract for this RFP. DAI reserves the right to award a subcontract without discussion and/or negotiation; however, DAI also reserves the right to conduct discussions and/or negotiations, which among other things may require an Offeror(s) to revise its proposal (technical and/or price). By submitting an offer, Offerors agree to comply with the general terms and conditions for an award, including Representations and Certifications compliance. Offerors must provide full, accurate, and complete information in response to this solicitation. By submitting an offer, Offerors certify that they have not/will not attempt to bribe or make any payment to DAI employees in return for preference. Issuance of this RFP in no way obligates DAI to award a subcontract, nor does it commit DAI to pay any costs incurred by the Offeror in preparing and submitting the proposal. DAI reserves the right to award a subcontract to one organization or to issue multiple awards to different organizations based on the results of our evaluation.

Thank you,
DAI INVEST Procurement and Partnerships Team
INVEST_Procurement@dai.com

Statement of Objectives RFP INVEST-065
USAID INVEST: Mobilizing Private Investment for Development
Domestic Hand Sanitizer Production, USAID/Afghanistan Buy-In Activity

Introduction

Through INVEST, USAID/Afghanistan seeks to unlock the potential of the private sector to drive inclusive growth in countries around the world. Increasingly, private investors and businesses are looking to emerging markets for better returns and new market opportunities. However, encouraging private investment and activity in high-impact areas important to USAID such as agriculture, financial services, infrastructure, energy, clean water, health, and education requires new forms of collaboration between USAID and the private sector. This means proactive engagement and collaboration throughout every stage of program cycle and integrating collaboration across USAID sectors to catalyze more market-based approaches for sustainable outcomes.

In support of its efforts to mobilize private investment within the agency, the USAID Office of Private Capital and Microenterprise (USAID/PCM) awarded the INVEST contract to DAI in September of 2017. Through INVEST's flexible buy-in mechanism, USAID Missions and Operating Units can access an unprecedented network of firms and individuals that have the range of technical expertise needed to identify opportunities and effectively mobilize private capital toward development priorities. Using a lean approach tailored to high potential opportunities, relevant parts of the network will come together to research, develop, and build specific solutions that align private capital with development needs.

Background

INVEST is working in collaboration with USAID/Afghanistan to further integrate Afghanistan's economy into international markets and reduce dependence on foreign aid on its journey to self-reliance. To do so, INVEST's focus has been on export-promotion and expansion by increasing international private investment across economic sectors in Afghanistan. Through a multi-phased, \$15 million buy-in, INVEST is building business-to-business linkages between Afghanistan and foreign investors and partners. Sector-specific transaction advisors and firms are matchmaking and closing deals in civil aviation/airport services, mining, marble, finance, carpets, gems, jewelry, and more.

The Covid-19 crisis has had a global impact, with over nine million confirmed cases and more than 500,000 deaths across 216 countries – numbers that continue to increase at an alarming rate each day and create uncertainty about how this will evolve over the coming weeks and months¹. The rapid spread of the virus has put pressure on governments worldwide to develop innovative solutions that will combat further transmission and flatten the curve, with many looking to the private sector as a means of addressing supply and resource shortages. In Afghanistan, one such shortage exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic is access to effective and affordable hand sanitizer.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in Afghanistan and the broader region has increased the demand for hand sanitizer enormously, leading to rapidly rising prices and shortages. This rapid increase in demand and price has encouraged local distributors to sell ineffective lotions that do not stem the spread of contamination. Recently the Afghan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has declared all domestically produced sanitizer as ineffective and has warned the public against these faulty products after it was found that a hospital in Kabul was stocked with unusable hand sanitizer, found to have zero alcohol content for proper disinfection². Hand sanitizer is lacking in hospitals and is difficult to acquire by local consumers. The price of a bottle of hand sanitizer has increased from about \$1.30 per bottle to nearly \$6 a bottle – an unaffordable alternative in a country when clean water and soap are not a reliable source

¹ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

² <https://theintercept.com/2020/04/02/coronavirus-afghanistan/>

for protection³. A solution from a local, reputable company offers the chance to make this crucial product more readily available to the public and medical community. Furthermore, the formula for effective hand sanitizer is not complex and only requires the following ingredients: ethanol, water, thickener, skin conditioner (optional), and fragrance.

To this end, the USAID/Afghanistan Office of Economic Growth is utilizing the INVEST mechanism to engage Afghanistan's private sector to produce effective hand sanitizer, in accordance with international standards, for the domestic market.

Implementation Objectives

This activity aims to support the Covid-19 response effort by providing technical assistance solutions to at least two (2) local Afghan producers of hand sanitizers and disinfectants to offer an affordable and effective alternative to the products currently in circulation in Afghanistan. INVEST will undertake a landscape assessment of Afghan-based companies with existing license to produce medical equipment and/or over-the-counter medicines for the domestic market – “Business License Medicine Production Company”⁴. INVEST will focus on identifying companies with strong trading relationships with suppliers of the needed materials for hand sanitizer (mostly from neighboring countries such as Uzbekistan and India) and which have received approval for their disinfectant/sanitizer formula or are in the process of having their product tested by the MoPH for use by the public.

INVEST is looking for a firm, or combination of firms, that has experience conducting landscape assessments and providing advisory services to address the technical, operational, and financial challenges of a business. INVEST anticipates this activity to last approximately six to nine (6-9) months. However, INVEST expects offerors to propose a timeframe that is representative of their proposed technical approach and management plan. INVEST encourages firms to present an adaptable strategy reflective of the Covid-19 environment. The firm(s) will report to the INVEST Afghanistan team based in Washington, DC. Flexibility in staffing as the project evolves is important.

Activity Structure

The successful offeror will:

- Conduct a landscape assessment to be developed into a pipeline of potential Afghan-based companies with existing licenses to produce medical equipment and/or over-the-counter medicines for the domestic market. The pipeline presented should include information on the financial and technical needs of the company to scale production.
- Provide technical assistance on hand sanitizer/disinfectant production to at least two (2) companies, to include:
 - Technical advice on the production of the sanitizer (e.g. 2 weeks - 1 month of oversight by an international advisor on the production methods)
 - Local expert business advisory on approval process from MoPH
 - Local expert business advisory assistance with logistics for shipping customs clearance of raw materials
 - Financial and business advisory to create financial models for this business line, to advise on pricing, profitability, financing options, and overall investment/business strategy

³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/war-ravaged-afghanistan-battles-threat-coronavirus-200316135224827.html>

⁴ <http://gdpa.gov.af/en/documents/category/policies-and-strategies>

- Packaging, marketing, and distribution support – amongst individual consumers, commercial and medical users.

The successful offeror should propose the number of companies targeted for support. The selected companies should produce and distribute effective hand sanitizer that is affordable for the population as well as the for the medical and commercial communities.

Deliverables may include:

- Rapid assessment report
- Pipeline of companies
- Technical assistance workplans per company, including appropriate milestones and deliverables

Role of INVEST Project

INVEST will work closely with USAID/Afghanistan and the selected partner(s) during all stages of this work. DAI will subcontract the selected partner(s) directly and provide review and oversight throughout the life of the activity in accordance with INVEST’s lean management approach. DAI will administer weekly check-ins (as needed), reporting, deliverable review prior to client presentation and approval, and manage an ongoing ME&L framework.

- Partner Onboarding: DAI will work closely with USAID/Afghanistan to provide the successful firm(s) with all necessary context and information in order to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Project Implementation: The selected partner(s) will implement the work as prescribed by the work plan(s). DAI will provide management support and ensure regular check-ins/reporting
- Ongoing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning: DAI will define indicators in the subcontract and collect and review M&E data from subcontractors for requisite reporting to USAID. DAI will conduct data quality assessments as necessary.

Illustrative Implementation Timeframe*

Activity	Timeframe
Onboarding & Work Planning	1-2 weeks
Landscape Assessment	2-4 weeks
Technical and Marketing Advisory Support on Production	6-9 months

*INVEST expects offerors to propose an implementation timeline that is representative of their proposed technical approach and management plan.

Contract Type and Budget Ceiling

DAI anticipates awarding a fixed price subcontract. The anticipated budget is in the range of \$500,000 to \$600,000.