



To: Offerors

Date: June 29, 2020

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

Subject: Request for Proposals (RFP) INVEST-048: Assessment of Afghanistan Trade Opportunities within Indian Markets

Due: **1:00PM EDT on July 13, 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 June 9, 2020** via email to INVEST_Procurement@dai.com.
 - b. Submission of Proposals – Proposals must be submitted no later than **1:00 pm EDT on July 13, 2020** via email to INVEST_Procurement@dai.com, copying katherine_tilahun@dai.com, matthew_mitchell@dai.com, and talin_baghdadlian@dai.com. The subject line of the email should be your organization name, followed by “Submission under RFP INVEST-048: Assessment of Afghanistan Trade Opportunities” 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 Cost Proposal should be prepared as separate files for independent evaluation, as follows below. Technical proposals should be submitted as a maximum fifteen (15) 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. Cost 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. This section should also include past performance information for similar contexts in trade, landscape, and investment assessments.
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 networks in Afghanistan and India.

In addition to the above, please include the following. These inputs will not be counted as part of the 15-slide/page limit and the format may be PDF or Word:

- J One (1) to two (2) examples of past performance relevant to this activity (limited to two (2) pages per example)
- J 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 15 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 – Cost 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 conducting similar assessments.

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 (30 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. Ability to research, identify, and evaluate trade and markets sectors, including analysis of value chains, products, market viability and trade/business enabling environments.
 - ii. Methodology proposed to conduct econometric analysis – including methods to collect and analyze data
- 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 India and Afghanistan. The offeror must demonstrate the following, as appropriate (or relevant) to their technical approach:
 - i. Local knowledge and access to sources of information to complete the assessments as described
 - ii. Relevant networks and experience in assessing trade, market, product, and value chain assessments to promote job and economic growth in developing countries like Afghanistan
 - iii. Experience conducting econometric analysis of export promotion and its link to job and economic growth
 - iv. Experience conducting literature reviews, including specific methodology used
 - v. If a partnering arrangement is being proposed, please provide details about the experience, expertise, capacity, and local presence of partner firms as well
 - vi. Additionally, offerors should demonstrate their ability to maintain a consistent local presence in India given COVID-19 international travel restrictions and/or propose alternatives to validate the findings of the feasibility study
- c. Management Plan/Staffing Structure (35 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 in market assessments as appropriate to the technical approach proposed. Please include all relevant CVs for proposed staff (maximum 2 pages per staff person).

2. **Cost Proposal:** Cost 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-048
USAID INVEST: Mobilizing Private Investment for Development
Assessment of Afghanistan Trade Opportunities within Indian Markets

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. 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.

This activity seeks to conduct a multi-phased assessment of Afghanistan's export opportunities in India's markets. The purpose of the assessment is to match Afghan products with Indian markets, prioritizing those which improve Afghanistan's options to increase employment opportunities and improve incomes among Afghan workers.

Background

Afghanistan's economy is inseparable from those of its neighbors. Afghanistan has always been a trading nation with a central role in the Silk Road routes that bind Europe and Africa to Asia. However, its prominence diminished over the last forty years as warfare hindered the development of a complete and modern logistics system while neighboring countries invested heavily in alternative transit systems that bypassed Afghanistan. With U.S. support, Afghanistan is attempting to reposition itself by becoming a modern roundabout that connects to every neighbor and the most profitable distant markets. Furthermore, it is modernizing its own domestic production systems so it can export to lucrative markets and compete against imported goods.

The National Statistics and Information Authority (NISA) reported that Afghanistan officially exported 160 products to 54 countries for a value of \$831 M dollars in 2018. Agriculture represents \$734 M or 87 percent of Afghanistan's exports; asafetida, grapes, figs, pistachios, tomatoes, raisins, onions, apricots and saffron almonds dominate the agricultural exports. Coal is also a significant, albeit under-measured export. Afghanistan's exports to Pakistan and India were equal and amounted to 86 percent of its total exports. NISA reported Afghanistan exported \$395 M worth of goods to India in 2018. The bestselling products (asafetida, dried fig, pistachios, raisins, almonds, saffron, caraway, dried apricot, and apples) were \$341 M or 95% of Afghanistan's exports.

The Government of Afghanistan published a four-year National Export Policy and National Export Strategy (NES) in 2018. The NES was designed to improve Afghanistan's competitiveness in international and domestic markets. The NES addresses six topics Afghanistan needed to improve and coordinate: quality control management, trade facilitation, trade information and promotion, skills development, business and professional services, and access to finance. It prioritized agricultural, extractives, and crafts industries and products for which there was already demand in the international markets: saffron, fresh fruits and vegetables, dried fruits and nuts, carpets, marble and granite, and precious stone and jewelry. It identified domestic value chains which could be improved as a way to reduce Afghanistan's dependence on imports: cement, production of construction materials such as rebar and steel, poultry and eggs, light manufacturing, edible oils, sugar, dairy, plastic piping and products,

packaging, and fruit juices. The NES entrusted the trade promotion team with matching markets with products. Afghanistan's Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) also wanted to enter European, North American and Southeast Asian markets.

The NES had two limitations which are important for USAID's effort to promote economic development. First, it did not estimate how increased exports might affect job growth or wage rates and incomes along the value chains, particularly for producers, women, and youth. Second, the strategy did not present a sequence for industrial diversification. Afghanistan would do everything simultaneously.

USAID Support for the National Export Strategy in India

USAID/Afghanistan's CDCS (2018-2023) aligned its own programming with the NES. Its private-sector-driven and export-led-growth strategy focuses on: vegetables, fruits, saffron, carpets, embroidery, marble, and precious stones/jewelry. USAID Missions in Central Asia, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, and India also supported the NES. USAID/India aligned its own CDCS with the Afghan Ministry of Industry and Commerce goal of increasing exports to \$2 billion by 2023. From 2017-2019, USAID/Afghanistan and USAID/India sponsored three Passage to Prosperity shows – an international forum designed to showcase Afghan trade and investment opportunities for the Indian market. Each year, more than 2,000 Afghan, Indian, U.S. and other business leaders participate in the show – including hundreds of Afghan businesses. USAID promoted all of the NES strategic products including the leading agricultural products along with gemstones, jewelry, marble, carpets, embroidery, health care equipment, and pharmaceuticals.

USAID/Afghanistan built its strategic alignment on long term investments in agriculture and trade. The Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP) was particularly important in USAID's support of marketing agricultural products to India. Operating from 2010 through 2019, CHAMP promoted exports to India for almonds, apples, apricots, asafetida, basil seed, bitter apricot kernel, caraway seed, cucumbers, cumin, dried apricots, dried plums, figs, grapes, licorice root, melons, muskmelon seeds, onions, pistachios, pomegranates, raisins, saffron, walnuts. Other countries imported: bitter apricot kernel, cucumbers, dried cherries, dried mulberries, dried plums grape juice, green mung beans, mustard, pine nuts pomegranate juice, potatoes, roasted peas, sesame seed, soap root, tomatoes, and watermelon seed. CHAMP reported \$160 million in exports to India. The largest sellers were asafetida (21%), figs (32%), and pomegranates (24%).

Currently, the Afghanistan Value Chains-High Value Crops activity focuses on 18 fresh and dried fruits, nuts, spices, and medicinal crops. The crops include apple, grape, pomegranate, melon, almond, raisin, pine nu, pistachio, walnut, dried fig, dried apricot, liquorice root, yarling, jujube, asafetida, saffron, cumin, and anise/fennel seed. It is paying particular attention to non-regional markets, meaning those like India, Kazakhstan, Russia, East Asia, the United Arab Emirates, Europe and North America.

INVEST is working in collaboration with USAID/Afghanistan to weave 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.

Implementation Objectives

USAID/Afghanistan is conducting this assessment to determine how trade can best contribute to Afghanistan's development. USAID promotes trade to support Afghanistan's development. Trade is not an end unto itself. Job growth and the distribution of the gains from trade are even more important than

increased trade. Afghanistan's national export policy states that its purpose is to create an inclusive and diversified economy that improves incomes, equality, and creates job opportunities or, conversely, reduces unemployment, inequality, and poverty.

The Mission's initial operating theory is that customers prefer products that meet their requirements over those that do not. Retail firms, traders and suppliers respond to increased demand by producing more and elevating prices whenever demand outstrips supply. Firms invest to improve productivity and scale. Eventually, firms pay higher marginal wages to hire more and to retain increasingly productive employees.

USAID's research under the Afghanistan Trade and Revenue Project demonstrated that South and Central Asian interregional trade had the potential to double if trade facilitation and promotion were emphasized. An internal report calculated that if Afghanistan could increase its exports from \$750 million to \$2 billion, it could create 250 thousand jobs in agriculture, 125 thousand non-agricultural jobs and 71 thousand jobs in others. Most recently, the CHAMP activity's final report indicated that women who participated in its export-led activity increased their income by 9%. The CHAMP report did not compare increases in income or estimate the number of jobs created by increased exports.

USAID/Afghanistan needs additional information to guide its decision making. It seeks to understand the opportunities and limits of India's markets for Afghan products because its huge population and growing prosperity make it a valuable market. The USAID Afghanistan Mission wishes to know the most viable Afghan product categories and the Indian markets that would maximize Afghan job and income growth for low-wage Afghan farmers and workers. The assessment requires a gender lens to its methods because women play a fundamental and disadvantaged role within Afghanistan's economy.

In short, all components of this activity should answer the following questions:

-) Which Afghan export products have the greatest prospects to increase Afghan jobs and income, particularly among women and youth?
-) Which Indian markets provide Afghanistan with the greatest growth opportunities?
-) What are the appropriate matches between Afghan products and Indian markets?
-) What is the relationship between trade, employment growth and income growth along the value chains? In other words, how much Afghan wage growth and job creation should result from a one percent increase of sales in the Indian markets?
-) What changes to the products, value chains and trade facilitation regimes would maximize Afghan job growth and wages?
-) What methods or procedures will more precisely align USAID support for an increased population of micro, small and medium sized Afghan businesses and workers?

The assessment calls for standard market research and econometric techniques. The assessment will be done through a combination of desk-based research and field interviews to identify: Afghan value chains, India markets; stakeholders; products and services; consumer preferences; prices at the point of retail and along the value chain; trade and transit processes; and business requirements. Some of this information can be ascertained from government and donor studies, business chambers, administrative bodies, trade associations, the Consulate of Afghanistan in Mumbai, and USAID/India among others. The assessment should provide the descriptive information needed to understand Afghanistan's exportable value chains, labor and wage dynamics, and relevance for economic diversification. The analysis should use the gathered information to rank the value chains according to their potential for employment and wage growth among Afghanistan's workers.

INVEST is looking for a firm, or combination of firms, to implement all activities under this scope. INVEST anticipates this activity to last approximately seven (7) months. However, INVEST expects the

firm(s) to propose a timeframe that is representative of their proposed technical approach and management plan. The place of performance is India, with potential travel to Afghanistan if needed, and if possible given potential travel restrictions. The firm(s) will report to the INVEST Afghanistan team based in Washington, DC.

INVEST encourages firms to propose Indian-based partners if they currently do not have a presence in India and to present an adaptable strategy reflective of current and short-term travel restrictions. Given the current COVID-19 situation, offerors should consider and propose a combination of methods for conducting this assignment, such as desk research, remote meetings and interviews, webinars, and subsequent field validation/site visits once health and travel restrictions are lifted. Additionally, offerors should propose how subsequent phases may be impacted by the current pandemic.

The firm, or combination of firms, should apply a gender-lens throughout the market assessment, including making recommendations that may be specific to women entrepreneurs and women-owned businesses in India and Afghanistan. It should accurately present the most salient information necessary to understand the status and opportunities for Afghan goods in India.

Activity Structure

Activity 1: Value Chain Mapping

The selected firm(s) will use existing value chain analyses and field interviews to map the value chain for the Afghan products from origin to retail outlet. The selected firm(s) should propose and test theories or hypotheses that answer the assessment's main questions. They should acquire the information through extensive interviews with implementing partners, businesses (along the value chain), business associations, research companies, NGOs, donors, government officials, etc. At a minimum, the firm(s) should describe the value chain, stipulating the processes, costs, incomes, margins, financing requirements as well as the costs and transit times for delivery to final retail markets. The market mapping should:

-) Identify the principal value chains - by product, corridor and stakeholders (companies etc.);
-) Measure the costs and times for product movement throughout the value chain;
-) Estimate the costs and times for product movement throughout the value chain;
-) Estimate the number of jobs and wages in the value chain that depend on the export;
-) Estimate the number of jobs that could be created by market expansion or product differentiation;
-) Estimate the effects on wages that could result from product differentiation and market expansion;
-) Identify obstacles to trade and gains from trade for Afghan producers, transporters, and traders;
-) Identify re-export opportunities to other markets for Afghan goods - value add or packaging, etc.;
-) Identify obstacles to trade and gains from trade for Afghan producers, transporters, and traders; and
-) Identify which value chains would benefit the most from USAID assistance and intervention, i.e., improving market targeting or product selection and value chain performance.

The firms can rely on the many existing value chains and trade analysis, supplementing them with analyses of wage labor and income distribution that might be associated with competitive market growth.

Activity 2: Indian Market Assessment

The second part of the analysis examines the Indian markets for the Afghan goods. The selected firm(s) will conduct desk research on India's markets as well as more detailed rapid field work in the ten most promising markets. The firm(s) will gather qualitative and quantitative information regarding consumer

product and marketing preferences, retailer requirements, value chains, and any structural economic constraints and barriers to trade and market expansion.

Potential areas for this market assessment already identified by the Mission include: Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, National Capital Region, Punjab, Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. In particular, offerors should pay closer attention to large urban areas with a large Afghan diaspora: Mumbai, New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bhopal, Indore, Pune, Nagpur, Jaipur, and Kolkata.

The assessment should provide basic market characteristics, including:

-) Profile of the area, such as
 - o Location and demography,
 - o Infrastructure (transit roads-rail-air, storage).
 - o Economic diversification, especially noting the production of competitive products, and
 - o Wage and income distribution;
-) Indian market actor segmentation (retail – big box, online, design houses, niche international stores, small roadside kiosks, shops) and wholesale practices (bulk, packaged, types of shops, etc.), including
 - o Sales and prices of products that compete with Afghan imports;
-) Trade shows, markets or areas where specific businesses congregate (e.g., gemstone shows in Jaipur, Vibrant Gujarat, etc.);
-) Profile of current Afghan goods and services entering India, including:
 - o Volume, seasonality, product mix, prices; and
 - o Quality of the goods; and
-) Other factors affecting Afghan export to the specific markets.

The selected firm(s) should evaluate the markets and potential for further Afghan trade and investment, identifying the success factors for the sale of specific types of goods and why those markets are more viable. Illustrative questions and prompts to be explored during this activity may include:

-) What are the qualities, standards, quantities, timing, delivery, and pricing of Afghan goods and services relative to competing goods and substitutes within the Indian markets?
-) What can be done to change the Afghan goods/services to meet consumer preferences? Conversely, what can be done to alter consumer preferences (advertising, packaging, branding/marketing, etc.) to increase demand for Afghan goods?
-) What can Afghan companies do to increase their own chances for sustained competitiveness and financial viability? What are their limitations? What types of de-risking support are they requesting? How serious are they?

Activity 3: Product Category Recommendations

The selected firm(s) will be responsible for identifying current investment opportunities in Afghanistan from a wide variety of sources. Potential sources to populate this information might include development finance institutions; asset managers; banks and lenders; transaction advisors; government investment agencies; donor-funded projects; industry associations; incubators and accelerators; and other ecosystem actors. The firm(s) will also note and describe existing investment incentive programs offered by development partners, the Government of Afghanistan, the Government of India and others, and describe how each may support or detract from the investment environment and appetite.

Based on the findings and specific opportunities identified in the landscape assessment, the selected firm(s) will provide recommendations on the best suited investment market(s). This may include the following key components:

-) What must be done to improve access and profitability?
-) What are the best product mixes for those markets?
-) What can be done to improve product desirability among consumers and retailers (quality, quantity, reliability, price, etc.)?
-) What does it take for an Afghan company to enter the market and succeed as a retailer, freight forwarder, merchant, and producer?
-) What can be done to improve the average wages of producers along the value chains for Afghan goods sold in India?

Activity 4: Trade and Business Enabling Environment

The trade and business enabling environment is meant to be a summative overview of the current regulatory and trade policies per market. It should highlight issues that the USAID/Afghanistan and USAID/India Missions should receive their attention. Questions to consider, segregated by market, may include:

-) What are the most severe binding constraints, particularly those created by inconsistencies in regulatory environments of India and Afghanistan?
-) Which are the priorities that will move the most trade goods and have the greatest benefits for the Afghan producers?
-) To what extent do Afghan producers and traders have an understanding of: the markets' requirements and how to comply with them; wholesalers and retailers in the markets; consumer preferences in terms of quality, seasonality, or other standards; distribution channels; existing preferences related to rules of origin, etc.?
-) How does gender affect market participation and investment opportunities?

The final report should include:

-) Mapping Afghan export products, ranking them according to their prospects to increase Afghan exports, jobs and income, especially for their producers, women, and youth.
-) Mapping Indian urban or regional markets, ranking them according to their potential growth in demand for Afghan products.
-) Recommendations on matching the identified Afghan products with Indian markets.
-) Projections on financial gains from trade along the value chain in terms of increased profit margins, employment, and percent wage growth.

The final report should include a summary from each of the four activities including: value chain, market, and product analyses with recommendations; business conditions for Afghans; bibliography; lessons-learned; description of research design and methods; data and tables for market research; schedules, interview lists, and transcripts; profiles of the team; and softcopies of all secondary literature.

Role of INVEST Project

INVEST will work closely with USAID/Afghanistan, in coordination with USAID/India, 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, and in coordination with USAID/India, 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

- J 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.

General Implementation Timeframe

Below is an illustrative timeline of the activities. Note that activities will be implemented in tandem with INVEST and USAID reviews.

Activity	Timeframe
Onboarding & Work planning	14 days
Activity 1 – Value Chain Mapping	40 days
Activity 2 – Indian Market Assessment	70 days
Activity 3 – Product Category Recommendations	40 days
Activity 4 – Trade and Business Enabling Environment	40 days
Final Report	15 days

Contract Type and Budget Ceiling

DAI anticipates awarding one or multiple fixed price subcontract(s).