

**To:** Offerors

**Date:** December 5, 2022

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

**Subject:** Request for Proposals (RFP) INVEST-117: Research and Advisory Support to Strengthen the Institutional Infrastructure for Carbon Labeling in Vietnam

**Due:** 1:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST) on **January 6, 2023**

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 to for work in support of USAID/Vietnam.

- I. RFP Process and deadlines:** This solicitation will result in the award of one firm fixed price subcontract. We anticipate issuing a single subcontract award with ceiling value not to exceed **\$450,000**.
1. Submission of Questions – Questions must be submitted in English no later than **1:00 PM EST on December 12, 2022** via email to [INVEST\\_Procurement@dai.com](mailto:INVEST_Procurement@dai.com).
  2. Submission of Proposal – Proposal must be submitted in English no later than **1:00 PM EST on January 6, 2023** via email to [INVEST\\_Procurement@dai.com](mailto:INVEST_Procurement@dai.com), copying [Katherine Tilahun@dai.com](mailto:Katherine_Tilahun@dai.com) and [Danny Mannka@dai.com](mailto:Danny_Mannka@dai.com). The subject line of the email should be your organization name, followed by “Submission under RFP INVEST-117: Research and Advisory Support to Strengthen the Institutional Infrastructure for Carbon Labeling in Vietnam.” Please certify in your submission email a validity period of 60 days for the price(s) provided. In order to submit a proposal, offerors must have at least initiated the process to obtain a [SAM UEID](#). If the UEID has not yet been issued, offerors should note that in the submission and update INVEST at [INVEST\\_Procurement@dai.com](mailto:INVEST_Procurement@dai.com) once it is issued. 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 ten (10) slide presentation, using 12-point standard font size. Graphics may be included, so long as text is clearly legible with a minimum font size of 10. If text or graphics are of poor resolution, the information provided may be excluded from consideration. Submissions in PowerPoint or PDF are acceptable, although PDF is preferred along with an accompanying PowerPoint document. Please provide a copy of your cost proposal in Excel format; offerors may use the attached cost/budget template.

## **Part 1 – Technical Proposal**

Please limit your technical proposal to no more than ten (10) slides. 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 achievement of the objectives as detailed in the statement of objectives and completion of all deliverables and milestones as proposed within the stated timeline.
2. **Institutional Capacity** – Offerors should provide details about the experience, networks, expertise, and capacity of their firm (or firms if partnering arrangement is proposed) to implement the proposed approach and complete the work as described. This should also include past performance information for similar activities as those planned under this proposal and note any previous experience working as partners if a partnering arrangement is proposed.
3. **Management Plan/Staffing Structure** – Offerors should include details of personnel who might be assigned to the activities described in the technical approach along with their proposed roles and responsibilities, as well as a clear management plan in narrative form for the development, review, and submission of deliverables, including a milestone schedule that indicates their proposed timeline for implementation. Offerors are permitted to engage in partnering arrangements if it will aid in providing best value to USAID, regardless of whether organizations belong to the USAID Finance and Investment Network managed by INVEST. 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, oversight, and coordination controls to ensure successful delivery.

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

- Two (2) examples of past performance (i.e., case studies) 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).

A cover page will be considered a non-counting page, and offerors should include one and list on it the names of all firms participating in the bid. No additional annexes or documentation are requested nor should be submitted.

## **Part 2 – Cost Proposal**

The subcontract type for the presumptive work will be Firm Fixed Price, awarded as a subcontract by DAI Global, LLC. The cost proposal should not exceed \$450,000.

Please include your total proposed fixed price along with details for specific deliverable pricing. Offerors must also 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 should use the attached cost/budget template for guidance, but are not required to use it, as long as the cost proposal captures the necessary elements (i.e. deliverables table with breakdown of how the deliverable totals were calculated). The successful offeror will need to demonstrate that the proposed rates, fees, etc. are reasonable and will be required to provide documentation during subcontract negotiations to substantiate costs, as needed. 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 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. DAI reserves the right to check the past performance, references, and other pertinent offeror information in making award decisions. Proposals will be evaluated against a stated number of factors including: the overall proposed approach, past performance, specific qualifications in the identified approach and sectors, and other evidence substantiating the bidder's ability to deliver, including budget and time frame considerations.

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. The offeror will be scored based on its presentation of a clear approach which reflects the requirements of this specific activity but also incorporates the offeror's competencies. Key parts of the technical approach are: (1) the offeror's approach to conducting in-depth analysis of industry trends and motivations for engaging in greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting and product carbon footprinting in Vietnam; (2) the offeror's capacity to offer recommendation for product carbon footprints (PCF) standard and develop life cycle analysis (LCA) for select industrial products according to Vietnam's context on GHG management; and (3) the offeror's competency to provide recommendations for carbon labels design and summarize existing facility-level carbon reporting standards for select industries.
  - b. **Institutional Capacity (35 Points):** Points for this section will be awarded based on information presented in the corresponding section and any submitted case studies (i.e., examples of past performance). 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-country. Offerors with joint experience in Vietnamese and international carbon labeling research and advisory will be preferred; demonstrated capacity to communicate and write in Vietnamese required; demonstrated capacity to understand needs of relevant Vietnamese stakeholders, especially industrial facilities and industrial associations required. Offerors should demonstrate any knowledge and technical experience that will support their ability to perform the requirements of the SOO in an efficient and effective manner.

**c. Management Plan/Staffing Structure (25 Points):** Points for this section will be awarded 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 (in English and Vietnamese, as needed), including a proposed milestone schedule. If the offeror is submitting a proposal 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 Management Plan should clearly outline where staff are located and, if any portion of the team or consortium will be remote, offerors should provide a detailed approach to conducting activities remotely. Offerors must demonstrate through their proposed staff the ability to communicate fluently in English and Vietnamese as well as produce deliverables and other correspondences in English and Vietnamese as required throughout the activity. Strong preference will be given to Offerors with an in-country presence in Vietnam.

2. **Cost Proposal:** Total price and associated cost build-up will be evaluated separately from the technical approach, with due consideration for realism, price reasonableness, and allowability consistent with U.S. government cost principles. Evaluation for this section will be dependent upon all information presented by the Offeror in their deliverable table and supporting cost information, as well as its alignment with the proposed technical approach.

IV. **Note Regarding Parastatal Organizations:** Under U.S. Government regulations USAID and INVEST are not able to fund parastatal organizations, even as second-tier subcontractors (partners). The USAID definition of parastatal is “Foreign government-owned parastatal organizations are firms operated as commercial companies or other organizations --including nonprofits--or enterprises in which foreign governments or the foreign agencies have a controlling interest” (ADS Chapter 302). A controlling interest could include organizations where the largest single shareholder is a government entity.

- V. **Offeror's Agreement with Terms and Conditions: Please visit the [INVEST Procurement Hub](#) website (scroll down to "Terms and Conditions") 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](mailto:INVEST_Procurement@dai.com)

## Statement of Objective RFP INVEST-117

### USAID INVEST: Mobilizing Private Investment for Development

#### Research and Advisory Support to Strengthen the Institutional Infrastructure for Carbon Labeling in Vietnam, USAID/Vietnam Buy-In Activity

##### **Introduction**

USAID seeks to unlock the potential of private capital to drive inclusive growth. Increasingly, private investors and businesses are looking to emerging markets for better returns and new market opportunities. Specifically, USAID can leverage its resources – grants, technical assistance, guarantees, and convening power – to help raise awareness of investment opportunities, lower transaction costs, and mitigate the risk of investments that generate positive social, economic, and environmental impact.

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**

Green growth policies in Vietnam, along with greenhouse gas (GHG) emission standards and policies introduced by developed economies to decarbonize their supply chains, are putting increasing pressure on carbon-intensive sectors in Vietnam to track, inventory, disclose, and reduce GHG emissions resulting from their operations and the manufacture of individual products. The European Union (EU), for example, is considering taxing the import of products that have high GHG emissions. Such Border Carbon Adjustments (BCAs) would be put in place to avoid carbon leakage when companies transfer production to countries that are less strict. Sectors covered by the proposed EU BCA would likely include iron & steel, cement, fertilizers, aluminum and electricity and could be phased in as soon as 2023. Vietnam could experience significant impacts of such requirements, due to the large role of exports in Vietnam’s economic growth and the high carbon intensity of its industrial consumption (43.5 gCO<sub>2</sub>/MJ, almost 20% higher than the EU).

In addition, some countries incorporate low-GHG emissions criteria into their procurement standards, which means that carbon intensive products manufactured in Vietnam may be at a disadvantage compared to low-carbon products from other countries. For example, France requires certification of the life cycle carbon impacts of solar photovoltaics (PV) manufacturing and sets a maximum embodied carbon footprint for PV modules depending on the size of the project. The PV carbon footprint can represent up to 30% of the final score on grading a company’s tender application.<sup>1</sup> The French PV market is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest in Europe and it’s thus important for Vietnamese manufacturers to be able to assess and meet the specific reporting requirements. In early 2021, South Korea adopted a similar Carbon Footprint Assessment standard for solar modules purchased for public projects<sup>2</sup> and has established a program to certify and incentivize South Korean firms to reduce GHG emissions from solar module manufacture.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to these emerging mandatory requirements, companies around the world are increasingly adopting voluntary GHG reporting standards and setting GHG reduction targets for their supply chain emissions, also known as Scope 3 emissions. These supply chain disclosure standards cover upstream

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://ultralowcarbonsolar.org/blog/reducing-carbon-footprint-of-solar/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ultralowcarbonsolar.org/blog/south-korea-implementing-carbon-footprint-assessment-regulations/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://new-q-cells.com/en/sub.php?idx=513&division=4&page=1>

emissions from material acquisition & pre-processing and downstream emissions from distribution & storage, use, and end-of-life disposal of products. Other emerging voluntary company initiatives and standards seek to manage the embodied carbon in built materials and the GHG emissions associated with products tied to food production, land use, and forestry. Suppliers in Vietnam are increasingly being asked to respond to this mix of mandatory and voluntary disclosure requirements and to improve the GHG emission profile of their products and processes or pay penalties.

In response to these developments, some international companies require suppliers to implement carbon labeling, which provides transparency and consistency of methods as well as proof/certificate of carbon footprint calculation for each phase of production, consumption, and disposal. Presently, some firms in Vietnam's garment and leather shoes manufacturing sectors have implemented their own process for calculating and publicizing their carbon footprint but there is no national legal framework. There are also no national benchmarks, certification systems, or indicators that Vietnamese companies could compare themselves against to disclose supply chain GHG emissions and/or demonstrate superior performance.

The Government of Vietnam plans to introduce a national GHG emissions trading system for large GHG emitters and is therefore working to establish facility-level GHG reporting requirements and creating the institutional infrastructure to support corporate GHG reporting and verification. In spring and summer of 2022, with support from USAID's INVEST project, the Vietnam Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) surveyed the current trends in facility- and product-level GHG reporting by companies in carbon-intensive sectors and investigated best practices and options for introducing a carbon labeling certification system in Vietnam. This work indicates that some companies are already preparing facility-level GHG inventories and conducting product carbon footprints (PCF) using life cycle analysis (LCA). However, overall, the survey indicates a general lack of knowledge and readiness of Vietnamese industry associations and companies to respond to and/or take advantage of emerging BCA and supply chain GHG reporting requirements. Additional work is needed to understand the priority sectors and industries that would benefit from a carbon labeling system and evaluate the appropriateness of different PCF standards, including data availability. The Government of Vietnam is also in need of materials it can use to inform relevant industries about coming GHG reporting and supply chain disclosure standards.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The purpose of this procurement is to identify a firm or consortium of firms to support MOIT to: 1) conduct in-depth analysis of industry trends and motivations for engaging in GHG reporting and product carbon footprinting, 2) offer recommendations for PCF standards and develop pilot LCAs for select industrial products, and 3) offer recommendations for carbon labels design for select industries.

Specifically, the successful offeror will carry out the following three activities:

1. Consult with industry associations and conduct in-depth survey of Vietnamese firms that are already conducting GHG emission inventories and PCFs/LCAs to understand the motivations for conducting these, including specific drivers in the domestic and/or export markets (i.e., PCF standards used, international procurement standards requiring GHG disclosure, voluntary corporate supply chain reporting, ESG disclosure requirements, specific consumer markets targeted), priority value chains and products, potential benefits/new market opportunities, and institutional readiness of Vietnamese certification and auditing entities to support LCA implementation, verification, and certification. Sectors of interest include garment & textiles, iron & steel, seafood, wood & wood products, electrical and electronic appliances, and solar PV manufacturing.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> INVEST and MOIT can provide a list and contact information for Vietnamese firms already consulted in the iron & steel and garment & textile sectors.

2. Collaborate with relevant industry associations or relevant sector organizations to develop pilot carbon footprints – using LCA – of at least 1 or 2 selected products to demonstrate approach and evaluate design options that MOIT can build on during the development of a product carbon labeling framework. The contractor must identify and develop partnerships with industry associations to select and conduct the LCAs. The offeror must propose the analysis method which is most suitable to the current context of Vietnam. Each product LCA must apply the methodology from the ISO14067 standard for carbon footprints of products, including the relevant product category rule (PCR), as well as the WRI/WBCSD GHG Protocol Product Standard – this is to test data availability and applicability of each standard in the context of Vietnam. The pilot LCAs can build on product LCAs already developed in other countries as long as they are modified for practices and data in Vietnam. The pilots will help build capacity/readiness of Vietnamese industry participants to engage in carbon labeling. Suggested products to use for the pilots, in order of preference, include: garment & textiles, wood & wood products, seafood, and electrical and electronic appliances.
  
3. Develop the technical guidance documents that MOIT can use to inform industry about upcoming carbon border adjustment mechanisms and other emerging carbon labeling and GHG procurement standards that may apply to Vietnamese businesses, risks/implications/benefits for Vietnamese firms (i.e., which value chains are most likely to be affected and how), and how to prepare and respond to these. Summarize existing facility-level GHG reporting standards and sector guidance already developed in Vietnam for select sectors and highlight remaining gaps and offer suggestions for how to address those gaps.

**Illustrative Deliverables:**

Illustrative deliverables are listed below, however, offerors should propose deliverables in line with their approach while meeting the objectives outlined in this SOO.

All deliverables will be submitted for review and approval in English, and some deliverables must be submitted in both English and Vietnamese, as agreed upon with INVEST and USAID. Translation of the final deliverables into Vietnamese is the responsibility of the offeror and all costs associated with translation should be included in the proposed pricing for this activity.

No	Contents / Activities	Deliverables
1	Kick-off meeting and workplan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interview list;</li> <li>- Survey plan and questionnaire;</li> <li>- List of relevant industry associations/ sector organizations to consult on for Activity #1 and explore collaborations with for pilot LCAs in Activity #2;</li> <li>- List of topics and formats for technical guidance documents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work plan</li> <li>- Survey plan</li> </ul>
2	Consultations and survey on drivers, practices, and trends in carbon labeling and product carbon footprints among Vietnamese firms	A research report on trends and drivers affecting corporate GHG reporting and product carbon footprinting and recommendations for Vietnam: findings



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey of companies across relevant sectors using questionnaire agreed to with MOIT;</li> <li>- Consult with industry associations and select companies across relevant sectors to understand drivers and trends in GHG facility reporting and product carbon footprinting, including readiness of Vietnamese institutions to support auditing, verification, and certification of carbon labeling;</li> <li>- Draft report summarizing findings of the assessment described in Activity #1;</li> <li>- Consultations with MOIT, MPI, MONRE, VCCI, and other relevant ministries/stakeholders to discuss findings of the draft report;</li> <li>- Finalize research report.</li> </ul>	<p>from consultations and survey of GHG reporting and product carbon footprint practices, trends and drivers of Vietnamese enterprises <i>(In EN and VN)</i></p>
3	<p>Develop pilot product carbon footprints using LCA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and partner with industry associations or other institutions in Vietnam representing the garment &amp; textiles, seafood, wood &amp; wood products, and electrical and electronic appliances sectors and select 8 or more products across these sectors for the development of pilot LCAs. Wherever possible, the selection of products should align with priority sectors and products identified during the consultations conducted for Deliverable 2 above.</li> <li>- Conduct the pilot LCAs using the approach described in Activity #2 and prepare a draft research report describing the methodology and results of the pilots, including lessons learned, key data gaps, protocol applicability by sector, analytical challenges, and implications for the design of a carbon labeling certification system in Vietnam</li> <li>- Consult with selected industry associations, MOIT, MPI, MONRE, VCCI and other relevant stakeholders to present draft findings of pilot LCAs and assess data gaps and lessons learned for establishing a carbon labeling certification system in Vietnam;</li> <li>- Final report detailing LCA findings and recommendations for GVN.</li> </ul>	<p>Research report describing the methodology and results of the pilot product carbon footprint LCAs as well as lessons learned and recommendations for GVN. <i>(In EN and VN)</i></p>

4	<p>Prepare technical guidance documents on emerging trends in carbon labeling and how Vietnamese firms can respond to these</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consult with MOIT on the selection of topics for 6 technical guidance documents of up to 5 pages in length on topics such as carbon adjustment mechanisms, carbon labeling, GHG supply chain reporting, product carbon footprints, corporate GHG reporting, existing facility-level GHG reporting standards, gap analysis, and recommendations.</li> <li>- Develop draft technical guidance documents. For each of the guidance documents describe trends, risks and opportunities for Vietnamese firms, options for adapting to these trends, and other guidance recommended by MOIT and stakeholders.</li> <li>- Consult with MOIT, MPI, VCCI and other relevant stakeholders to confirm relevance and usefulness of the guidance</li> <li>- Final technical guidance documents</li> </ul>	- 6 technical guidance documents
5	<p>Workshop presenting the above research activities and information materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Present report on trends and drivers for corporate GHG reporting and product carbon footprints in Vietnam;</li> <li>- Present findings from pilot product LCAs and lessons learned for establishing a carbon labeling certification system in Vietnam;</li> <li>- Present technical guidance documents on trends in carbon labeling and how Vietnamese businesses can respond.</li> <li>- Workshop report</li> </ul>	<p>- Face to face workshop / Online workshop</p> <p>- Workshop report listing participants and summarizing feedback and lessons learned</p>

**Period and Place of Performance:**

The activity is anticipated to commence in January/February 2023 and take place over a period of approximately 14 months. However, offerors should propose a timeline that is representative of their proposed technical approach and management plan that delivers the scope of work as described.

Work for this activity is expected to take place primarily in Vietnam with remote work supplementing the on-the-ground implementation, if necessary. If the offeror will not have in-country presence, they must provide a detailed approach to achieving the activity objectives remotely.

**Role of INVEST**

INVEST will work closely with the selected offeror(s) during all stages of this work. DAI will subcontract the selected offeror directly and provide review and oversight throughout the life of the activity. The INVEST team will administer regular check-ins, reporting, deliverable review prior to client presentation and approval, and manage an ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework.

- *Subcontractor Onboarding:* INVEST will provide the successful offeror(s) with all necessary context, and work with the successful offeror(s) to develop the work plan.
- *Project Implementation:* The successful offeror(s) will implement the work as prescribed by the work plan(s). INVEST will provide management support and ensure regular check ins/reporting.
- *Ongoing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:* INVEST will define indicators during the subcontracting process, collect and review M&E data from subcontractors for requisite reporting to USAID and will conduct data quality assessments as necessary.