Call for Expression of Interest (EoI) to source consultant(s) to undertaking Institutional Capacity Assessment of Agribusiness Hub Partnering Host and its affiliate entities in Rwanda

1. Background information

Kilimo Trust is implementing, 5-year project (2020 - 2024) on youth incubation in agribusiness in partnership with African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF) and Rwanda Polytechnic. The project titled Rural Youth Employment Opportunities: Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Rwanda (R-YES), will be implemented in Rwanda. The project is funded by International Fund on Agricultural Development (IFAD). R-YES project is part of a larger IFAD program that will focus on creation of employment opportunities for rural youth in Africa through support to integrated agribusiness hubs.

Kilimo Trust (KT) is an East Africa-based not for profit organization that was established in 2005 to contribute to broad-based wealth creation through agriculture and agribusiness development. KT is an implementing partner of choice for inclusive market-led agricultural value chain development in the region, on behalf of regional and international development partners, EAC governments and private sector.

Our vision is to see “sustained and equitable wealth creation, food and nutrition security for smallholder farmers and other VC actors”. The mission is to make agri-business a transformative tool for wealth creation, food and nutrition security for over 500,000 smallholder farmers and other VC actors in the next five years beginning 2018. And, our core business is to structure national and regional trade in agricultural products. We are headquartered in the Republic of Uganda, with registered affiliated subsidiaries in Tanzania, Rwanda and Kenya.

The proposed Integrated agribusiness hub is an innovative mechanism to foster youth employment through applying combinations of innovative technologies, developing talent, building know how, facilitating access to capital, enhancing business skills and access to finance and other services. Integrating these combinations in agribusiness hub presents an opportunity to occupy the gaps existing between mechanisms such as business development services (BDS), TVET services, technology parks, and other platforms for business development, by directing them towards gainful youth employment. Critical to delivery of R-YES project is partnership with a capacity building institution that provides hands on skills trainings in agribusiness. During project design, Rwanda Polytechnic and its affiliated satellite training centers were identified as potential partners to host the integrated hub. However, there is need to undertake detailed profiling and assess the strengths, weaknesses and capacity-building needs of all the strategic institutions that are potential partners for the execution of this project. The starting point is to undertake in-depth Institutional capacity assessment that will inform institutional strengthening component of R-YES project. Therefore, this EoI is soliciting applications from individual or a team of consultants to undertake in-depth Institutional capacity assessment of agribusiness hub partnering host and its affiliate entities.
2. Capacity Assessment Participants:
The Institutional Capacity Assessment will target staff and leadership of the partnering host and its affiliate colleges and partners in the employment space especially:

1. Leaders of the board  
2. Vice chancellors and principals  
3. Lead trainers and business incubators  
4. Curriculum developers  
5. Institutions financial managers and custodians of equipment and machinery  
6. Key knowledge and information management team  
7. Private sector institutions that provide employment opportunities to youth  
8. Policy makers (including experts from line ministries)

3. Objectives of the assignment:
The objective of the assessment to undertake detailed capacity assessment of R-YES project potential partnering host (hub) and its affiliate entities (Integrated Polytechnic Regional Centers and Business Incubation Centers) to establish their readiness and document gaps that need to be addressed (in terms of facility upgrade, leadership and governance, delivery of training and nurturing of the youth) for effective delivery of the R-YES project.

Specifically, the assessment will:

a) Undertake inventory and short profiles of potential skills development institutions that will collaborate with the project  
b) Understand potential hub’s mandates, policies, organizational structures, management structures, staff competence, existing and future programs, and documenting their experience implementing projects and programs  
c) Assess alignment of the institutions’ policies and mandates with the R-YES project’s development objectives  
d) Understand the existing corporate governance structure and practices of the partnering host and compliance with best practices (including but not limited to board composition, independence of board members, board committees, use of project specific steering committees). Identify weaknesses and recommend improvements required to meet best practices.  
e) Assess technical and financial management capabilities and procedures of the partnering host and implementing partners (African Agribusiness Incubators Network - AAIN, Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum - RYAF and Rwanda Polytechnic -RP) which are expected to receive/expense programme funds per IFAD guidelines  
f) Assess the partnering host / implementing partners’ procurement capacity, specifically provide an overview of procurement policies and procedures and alignment thereof with IFAD requirements as outlined in the IFAD Procurement Handbook for Projects.  
g) Undertake a study to identify the gaps for the physical needs (hardware) and capacity needs (software) that exist and outline how these will be addressed. Take into consideration the context based on the value chain studies and labour market assessment that will occur simultaneously.  
   • undertake current inventory of training facilities and equipment available  
h) Document training courses (including business development services) offered by potential partner host in respect to identified priority value chains and nodes.  
i) Understand potential partnering host readiness to respond to industry needs as highlighted in labour markets study  
j) Assess partnering host readiness to facilitate a holistic and proactive process focused upon early-stage development of agribusiness growth  
k) Assess willingness of partnering host to interact and constructively engage with the larger farming community  
l) Assess flexibility of partnering host in developing or revising training and mentorship modules, which are the main ingredients of integrated agribusiness hubs and above all, post-mentorship support services

m) Understand gaps that need to be addressed (in terms of facility upgrade, leadership and governance, delivery of training and nurturing of the youth) for effective delivery of the R-YES project
n) Identify potential ongoing and past investments that can leverage R-YES resources
o) Identify existing and potential partnerships between the partnering host and larger farming community – including effectiveness of such partnerships
   - Undertake inventory of primary and key institutions from the larger farming communities (rural finance organizations, NGOs, input suppliers etc.) that the hub can collaborate with
p) Recommend priority areas that require upgrade or capacity strengthening for effective delivery and sustainability of R-YES objectives
q) Propose the best delivery mechanism to ensure sustainability of project results.

4. Methodology and Approach of the Capacity Assessment
   The assessment is expected to utilize methodologies that will bring out the strengths and gaps noted in Rwanda polytechnic and its affiliate colleges to deliver the integrated agribusiness hub for job creation for the youth. The methodology will involve collection of primary data from the main partnering host, the regional centres in addition to the business incubation centers. Data will also be collected from the wider farming community, Private sector institutions (Financial institutions, SMEs, ICT Centres, Processors etc)

5. Scope of Work
   The Institutional capacity assessment will be undertaken for identified partnering host, its affiliated satellite hubs and R-YES implementing (RYAF and AAIN).

6. Expected Deliverables to include:
   Key expected deliverables will include:
   a) An inception report highlighting details of the deliverables and methodologies, detailed tools, and instruments. This would include all practical operational tools that would be deployed in the assessment, the work plan including assessment and report deliveries.
   b) Questionnaire Testing - the consultant will be responsible to test the tools of the assessment. Refinement will be checked after field testing- Kilimo Trust and IFAD will provide clearance for the tools to be administered in the field
   c) First Draft Assessment Report - The outline for this delivery will be agreed in the inception report. But it should meet the assessment objectives and contain the following at minimum:
   d) Final report which details findings on all aspect of the Organizational Capacity assessment
   e) One Capacity building plan for the agribusiness hubs

7. Timeline
   This assignment will be delivered within a period of two months from start date. However, the actual consultancy costing should be based on billable days.

8. Budget:
   The consultant is expected to propose a realistic budget (which includes professional fees and operational expenses) as part of this submission.

9. Consultant’s Profile: Skills, Experience and Qualifications
   a) A minimum of a master’s degree in Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness Management, processing statistics or any other related field
   b) Minimum of 5 years’ experience conducting Organizational capacity assessments in TVETs/Agribusiness training institutions and incubation centers i.e. having undertaken at least 3 assignments of similar nature
   c) Good understanding of the relationship between agricultural value chain development concept and employment opportunities for the youth
   d) Prior experience in integrating youth in agricultural value chains
   e) Good understanding of hub or incubation center concept and the minimum facilities required.
   f) have a working experience in the East African Community
10. Application Procedure

Application documents are required to be submitted online via email: recruitment@kilimotrust.org, not later than 6th May 2020 at 4pm.

Application documents MUST include the following:

a) A letter stating why you consider your firm suitable for the assignment.

b) Brief technical proposal which include methodology on the approach and implementation of the assignment, and the work plan for implementation of the assignment.

c) Financial proposal indicating professional fee and a breakdown of expenses (unit price together with any other expenses) related to the assignment.

d) Personal CVs of leading technical personnel proposed for this assignment highlighting qualifications and experience in similar projects;

e) Please share copies of similar works done in the past, and

f) Work references - contact details (email addresses) of referees (firms for whom you’ve produced similar assignments).