



AVC 2017 BLANKET ACTIVITY ANNOUNCEMENT (BAA)

Issuance Date: March 1, 2017
Closing Date: October 31, 2017, 4:00 PM
Announcement Number: BAA-AVC-002

Introduction:

The US Agency for International Development started using Broad Agency Announcements as an innovative procurement tool in 2016 to invite interesting parties to collaborate when facing a development challenge that does not have a clear solution and presents an opportunity for innovation. DAI, as the implementer of the USAID-funded AVC Activity, is following USAID's lead and piloting the use of a Blanket Activity Announcement (BAA), which is a customization and adaption of Federal Broad Agency Announcements as described in FAR 35.016.

I. SUMMARY

Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI) is implementing the five-year (August 1, 2013 to July 31, 2018) USAID's Agricultural Value Chains (AVC) activity under the Feed the Future initiative, the U.S Government's Global Hunger & Food Security initiative.

The AVC activity announces this Blanket Activity Announcement (BAA) to organizations interested in submitting concept papers or Business Canvas Models that present innovative ideas that improve food security through strengthened value chains in the Southern Delta of Bangladesh. This is an initial announcement to engage organizations that maybe interested in designing and implementing small to large business development initiatives in collaboration with AVC.. Because a BAA is not an instrument but a method to communicate, this approach gives AVC tremendous flexibility in crafting the final relationship with the partner. It is a method to reach out to a potential partner and, literally shoulder to shoulder, co-create and co-design a development solution based only on an initial idea (concept paper). The BAA will allow AVC and the selected partner(s) to create a future relationship that could be in the form of public-private partnership, Memorandum of Understanding, or a specific, hand-crafted agreement that is appropriate to the particular relationship. Based on the resulting Market Actor Agreement, AVC can use the most appropriate funding mechanisms through AVC grants and procurement. Should a funded award be reached as a result of this BAA, the award, whether it is a procurement or a grant, will be considered competitively awarded based on this BAA.

DAI, on behalf of USAID anticipates partnering with approximately 8 organizations and finding ways to creatively fund partner collaborations from successful applications submitted in response to this BAA. The submission Period for this BAA will be eight months. All concept papers/Business Canvas Models will be reviewed once a month on an ongoing basis throughout the year. At the discretion of DAI, concept papers/Business Canvas Models received after the

first round of evaluations may be considered on a rolling basis or as part of another round of evaluations.

The period of performance of the small projects under the BAA concept note may be 4 – 12 months. The total amount of funding currently available for awards under this BAA is approximately USD \$1,000,000.00. The number of partner agreements and awards and amount of available funding is subject to change and DAI reserves the right not to formulate a Market Actor Agreement or not to make any awards as a result of this BAA.

Potential responders are encouraged to submit concept paper(s) or Business Canvas Models from AVC’s geographic focus area. The geographic focus under consideration is twenty southern districts in Barisal Division (Barisal, Bhola, Jhalokati, Pirojpur, Barguna, Patuakhali), Dhaka Division (Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur), and Khulna Division (Jessore, Jhenaidah, Magura, Narail, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Chuadanga, Meherpur). This list of districts is referred to simultaneously as the “USAID’s Feed The Future Zone of Influence – FTF-ZoI” area and “the Southern Delta of Bangladesh.” **Activities outside the geographic focus area will not be considered¹.**

This BAA is seeking to engage potential partners through concept papers or Business Canvas Models that propose innovative approaches to address the opportunities and constraints associated with agribusiness in the FTF-ZoI. Responders may choose among a range of initiatives or scale up small projects that have demonstrated success. Responders must demonstrate success in addressing the identified constraints for each food and non-food value chain (natural fibers, flowers, potatoes, vegetables, pulses, tomatoes, ground nuts, and mangoes). Special attention and consideration will be given to innovative ideas that involves women’s participation.

II. OBJECTIVE

The goals of the AVC activity will be achieved through inclusive business and economic growth, strengthening agricultural market systems, upgrading value chains with new technology and innovations, and building local capacity to sustain improvements beyond the life of the project. The AVC project will look at different market actors along the southern delta agri-business food and non-food value chains (input suppliers, producers, post-harvest handlers, transporters, processors, traders, retailers and consumers and address opportunities and constraints associated with agribusiness of the FTF-ZoI).

The following are some of the objectives of the AVC activity:

- Start-up or expand *new technologies, products or services* for the agricultural sector that make it easier and cheaper to execute activities along the value chain.
- Start-up or expand *improvements in processes or systems* for implementing activities throughout the value chain.

¹ Applicants procuring commodities from the FTF-ZoI and or providing services to the target zones will be considered.

- Research, development, testing and implementation of *approaches, activities or technologies* for understanding and influencing consumer demand for higher quality products.

III. POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Below are some illustrative examples of activities:

- Facilitate developing and piloting of new agriculture loan products by commercial banks and micro finance institutions,
- Establish safe food brands, including application of performance based supply chain management practices,
- Provide business to business services to value chain actors that could include ICT, marketing/promotional, transport, business consulting, etc., services
- Use of social media/interactive SMS/cell phone system to improve communication, knowledge and adherence to good farming practices and to stimulate demand for healthy products, and
- Increase research and development for cutting edge scientific, technological and other innovations for new design expertise for agribusiness in the Southern Delta, e.g., small scale farm mechanizations, harvesting, storage, packaging, transport, grading and sorting, and/or other improvements.

IV. RESPONDERS ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only registered Bangladeshi entities (private sector organizations, businesses, NGOs, foundations, research institutions, universities, associations, producer groups and/or cooperatives, etc.) are eligible to apply for USAID AVC funding under this BAA. Responders currently located in the target districts and engaged with agricultural development activities are highly encouraged to submit a concept paper. **Special attention will be given to women owned organizations.**

The following entities are **not eligible** for consideration:

- Any non-Bangladesh non-governmental organization
- Any entity whose name appears or is debarred and excluded on the “System for Award Management;
- Any “Public International Organization” (PIO);
- Any third country non-governmental organization;
- Any foreign government;
- Any governmental agency;
- Any entity affiliated with AVC-DAI directors, officers, or employees;
- Any military organizations;
- Any political party organization;
- Any government sponsored cooperatives;
- Any labor unions; and
- Individuals.

V. INSTRUCTIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Overview of the Process

Responders are required to first submit short concept papers or Business Canvas Models (see below for instructions) to AVC Concept Review Department (avcconcept@dai.com). Responders will then receive instructions on whether or not to proceed with a full proposal. Technical comments provided on the concept paper should guide the submission of the full proposal.

NOTE: PLEASE Do not submit a full proposal. Only upon receipt of positive feedback on the concept paper or Business Canvas Model from AVC, the responder will be requested to co-develop a Market Actor Agreement.

AVC Finance and Grants Manager will be responsible for the management of the proposals review and award process. Issuance of this BAA does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the AVC, nor does it commit AVC to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any concept papers/Business Canvas Models and/or proposal.

B. Deadline for Questions

Any questions concerning this BAA can be submitted by e-mail to avcconcept@dai.com on a rolling basis and both questions and answers will be publically posted on AVC's website on a monthly basis.

Any prospective responder desiring an explanation or interpretation of this BAA must request it in writing to allow a reply to reach all prospective responders before the submission of their concept papers or Business Canvas Models. Oral explanations or instructions given will not be provided. Any information given to a prospective responder concerning this BAA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective responders as an amendment to this BAA, if that information is necessary in submitting concept papers or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective responder. Please continue to check <http://www.avcbd.com> for this information.

C. Concept Paper Instructions

The AVC activity invites interested eligible parties to submit concept papers or Business Canvas Models for innovative projects designed to improve food security in the "USAID's Feed the Future Zone of Influence – FTF-ZoI" through an innovative approach to strengthening market systems. Proposed concepts should address key constraints associated with agribusiness in the FTF-ZoI and help achieve the AVC activity's objective of inclusive business and economic growth.

Concept papers or Business Canvas Models must be submitted as three-page Word documents, single-spaced, in Times New Roman 11 point font with a minimum of 1-inch margins. Applicants may use the Concept Paper Form (See Annex A for template) or Business Canvas Form (See Annex B for Template) and answer all questions within the concept form.

D. Concept Papers/Business Canvas Model Evaluation Criteria

Concept papers/Business Canvas Models will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the BAA, appropriateness of subject matter, and innovativeness. Responders are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to the goals and objectives of the Agricultural Value Chains activity. Concept papers/Business Canvas Models will be evaluated based on the following specific criteria:

- a. Conformity to AVC Activity Objectives.** Is the proposed activity in line with AVC activity objective of inclusive business and economic growth in agri-business in the FTF-ZoI? Does it involve one of AVC's value chains (natural fibers, flowers, potatoes, vegetables, pulses, tomatoes, ground nuts, and mangoes)? What is the likelihood that the activity will help meet AVC activity targets and further objectives in a sustainable manner?
- b. Technical Approach.** Is the technical approach feasible in the given time period with the given resources? Is the technical approach innovative? Will the technical approach facilitate market-driven solutions?
- c. Sustainability Analysis.** What is the probability that the activities will be sustainable over the long term without continued external support?

E. Market Actor Agreement Instructions

Submission of Concept papers/Business Canvas Models is the first step in the BAA process. Only responders whose concept papers/Business Canvas Models are accepted will then be invited to co-create a full Market Actor Agreement with AVC. Invitations will be sent to those who meet the evaluation criteria listed above.

VI. SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

All concept papers must be in English and shall be submitted electronically (signed, stamped and scanned) or in hard copies (signed and stamped) no later than **October 31, 2017 at 4:00 PM Dhaka Time** to any of the following addresses:

- **Email:** avcconcept@dai.com.
- **Dhaka Office:** Finance and Grants Manager, House No.5, Road No. 78, Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212
- **Jessore Office:** Finance and Grants Manager, Jagorani Chakro Foundation Building, 46, Mujib Sarak, Jessore 7400
- **Barisal Office:** Finance and Grants Manager, Doyal Tower, 1st floor (South side), Bangla Bazar, South Alekanda, Sahid Nazrul Islam Sarak, Barisal 8200
- **Faridpur Office:** Finance and Grants Manager, 2nd floor (east part), Tonmoy-Chinmoy Neer, 5/A, Khan Bahadur Ismail Road, Charkamlapur, Faridpur 7800

Concept papers over three pages will not be considered. Please include the name and contact details of your organization representative in the concept paper. In case the submitted concept

paper meets AVC criteria, the responder will be notified of the results with the standard AVC relevant templates for the responder to complete. The responder will be required to submit (1) one soft copy and two (2) hard copies of the full proposal to the attention of AVC Finance and Grants Manager at the addresses listed above. The proposal submission deadline will be determined in the notification to the responder.

Issuance of this BAA does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of DAI, nor does it commit DAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal . DAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposal submitted. Further, DAI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this BAA.