



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

EOI-ACEBA-KBL-002: AGRI-GENOMIC STUDY OF CASHMERE GOATS

DAI is issuing this Expression of Interest (EOI) for Afghanistan Competitiveness for Export-Based Businesses Activity (ACEBA) located in Kabul, Afghanistan. The work will involve an agri-genomic study of cashmere goat coat color and quality (length and thickness) in order to increase the breeding of the higher value and light grey and white coat colors.

This document presents the requirements that interested vendors must provide to be invited to submit, in the next 12-month period, their detailed quotations or technical/cost proposals for procurement opportunities anticipated by DAI. Pre-qualified vendors may be invited to respond to a solicitation, and/or multiple solicitations.

Vendors must be licensed and legally organized businesses, organizations, firms, and/or universities. Individual consultants will not be considered for this EOI.

The deadline for responding to this EOI is **November 6, 2020 at 4:00 PM Kabul time**. Responses received after the deadline will not be reviewed and will be discarded by DAI, subject to the discretion of the project's management. Responses **must** be emailed to ProcurementACEBA@dai.com. Please put in the subject line of the email, "Expression of Interest – EOI-ACEBA-KBL-002"

Vendors may submit written questions regarding this EOI through the ProcurementACEBA@dai.com and **any questions must be submitted by November 3, 2020**. If your organization is interested in receiving requests to any questions submitted, please notify ProcurementACEBA@dai.com.

All information provided by vendors in response to this EOI will be treated confidentially. DAI will not use the information in any other context or setting and we will not reveal details to other parties.

Background:

The ACEBA program is a five-year program (2020-2025) that is operated from its headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan and across four (4) Regional Export Accelerators (REAs) located in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, and Herat. This project is designed to promote Afghanistan's sustainable, market-driven economic growth by enhancing the export competitiveness and market linkages of Afghan businesses. The value chains addressed under ACEBA include those that have considerable unrealized potential but have yet to receive concentrated development programming attention. Target value chains include **cashmere**, gemstones and jewelry, natural stone, carpets, and saffron. ACEBA helps Afghan Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) increase the sales-worthiness of their

products in international markets by working with businesses from the inside to help fix their production processes, increase their productivity, and export products that meet international demand at competitive prices.

Improvements in the herd mix of cashmere goats can help suppliers and processors earn additional revenue. Afghan cashmere is predominantly dark brown, yellow and fawn, colors that are difficult to dye to produce different colors. The most marketable cashmere harvested within Afghanistan now is light grey, which makes up only an estimated 30% of the total harvest in the western region, white cashmere (the most valuable color) makes up about 3% of western cashmere harvest. Increasing the percentage of goats producing light grey and white cashmere within the herd mix while culling animals with lower yield and less desirable colors would result in both greater revenue gains for producers if a premium were paid to incentive a shift in production, and better sales for processors.

ACEBA is currently conducting a large study of cashmere goat herds in Afghanistan among both settled and nomadic herders that includes understanding herd sizes, how decisions are made regarding feeding and breeding, availability of food, and herd migration patterns. Key information for this study is as follows:

- Data collection will be conducted by a local veterinary organization.
- Data will be collected from 150 herds in two phases, one beginning by mid-November and a second to resume in the spring.
- Average herd sizes are estimated to be 200 to 400 goats per herd.
- There are three breeds of cashmere goats in Afghanistan and most herds will have two to three of the breeds in each herd. The herdsmen know how to identify the breeds.
- The common breeds are
 - o Asmari and Gujari - low quality, short length and diameter, poor quantity of 150- 180 gm and with dark and gray color of cashmere, and
 - o Cork Watani, which is a local name – higher quality producing 300-400 gm of white and light grey colors of the cashmere, the length is 30-40 mm, the diameter is 14-19 mm.

Illustrative Activities:

As part of this study, ACEBA would like to incorporate an agri-genomic study of cashmere goat coat color and quality (length and thickness) in order to increase the breeding of the higher value and light grey and white coat colors. ACEBA is seeking expressions of interest from qualified universities and service providers (and combinations thereof) to assist the Afghan field team and veterinary service provider with the following:

1. Advise on appropriate technology to use for this study (i.e. WGS or CMA);
2. Design a trait cataloguing and collection process (which will be conducted by the Afghan teams and must start by mid-November), including advising on any equipment needed;
3. Conduct DNA extraction, sequencing, and analysis to inform an animal improvement breeding program to be delivered to the herdsman to be implemented by the Afghan teams.

Note that travel to Afghanistan is not required.

Obligation

DAI will not reimburse respondents for the costs incurred with preparing a response, nor does issuance of this EOI obligate DAI to award a subcontract or purchase order. If a Vendor is found to have made false or misleading claims or statements, obtains confidential information, or receives improper assistance, DAI reserves the right to reject an EOI submitted by or on behalf of a vendor.

Clarification of Submissions

DAI may require a respondent to submit additional information in order to better judge a response.

Factors for Considerations

Responders are expected to write an explanation about how they can address each of these areas of interest by DAI, which will be used as a way to determine if Vendors shall be pre-qualified.

- Describe or confirm ability to provide services described above.
- The vendor is registered and licensed in the U.S. to perform the work outlined above.
- Illustrative CVs of individuals on staff, or available to the vendor, who can perform work outlined above. (CVs should be attachments separate of the PowerPoint, but personnel qualifications should be summarized in the PowerPoint).
- Three past performance descriptions illustrating relevant experience delivering the required services. (Note that there is a high preference for vendors who have prior experience conducting similar work with goats and/or experience working with nomadic herdsmen.)
- A comparison, pros/cons of the two technologies for the study (i.e. WGS and CMA)
- A brief outline of the process to be followed to conduct the study, including timelines to process samples.
- An estimate of the cost (note that a detailed budget will be requested of the successful vendor.)

Response Format

Vendors must complete their responses, in English, following the specifications outlined below. The vendor may submit responses in **Power Point format of no more than 15 slides**. The response format consists of three sections:

1. **Vendor profiles:** University/Service Provider name, address and phone number, form of registration / incorporation, number in years in conducting this type of activity, number of employees (full and part-time), name of Managing Director, brief history of organization, etc.
2. **Factors for consideration:** Please respond to the factors for consideration listed above. CVs can be attached separately.
3. **Client reference:** Include three Client References, each reference must include the following:
 - a. Client name, address, point of contact name, telephone number, email and
 - b. Description of similar work performed and period of performance

Notification Process

Upon receipt and review of expressions of interest, DAI will notify successful vendors, if any, who have been selected for pre-qualification.