

Invitation for Expression of Interest

Project:	Technical Assistance Services to the Modern Cooking Facility for Africa (MCFA)
Project Countries:	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
Sector:	Clean cooking
Funding sources:	Modern Cooking Facility for Africa, financed by Sweden and the European Union
Type of contract:	Consulting Services
Type of notice:	Invitation for Expression of Interest
Issue date:	15 March 2023
Closing date:	28 April 2023 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET)).

Assignment Description: The overall objective of the Modern Cooking Facility for Africa (MCFA) programme is to accelerate access to modern, higher-tier clean cooking services (CCS) for consumers in the six Project Countries. MCFA will do this by incentivising private companies, so called cooking service providers (CSP) to establish or scale up existing innovative sustainable local businesses in these African countries to create a local market for high-technology clean cooking solutions. Further information on the MCFA is available at <https://moderncooking.africa/>.

In April 2022 the MCFA launched its first call for proposals (MCFA1) inviting interested companies selling modern cooking solutions to compete for funding¹. The MCFA1 received a good response, with 44 applications meeting the basic eligibility criteria received in the Pre-Qualification stage across the six country programmes. Qualifying applicants were subsequently invited to take part in the Final Application stage which was completed in February 2023. Due diligence of the highest-ranking applicants and their project proposals is currently ongoing and Nefco expects to sign the first MCFA financing agreements during summer 2023. Nefco expects to launch a second funding round in late 2023 with the aim of building a portfolio of in total 15-18 MCFA investee companies.

The financial incentives offered by the MCFA will be complemented with targeted technical assistance (TA) offered to the CSPs. The scope of offered TA will include basic business fundamentals and formalization, strategy, finance, and human resource management but also support to the CSPs in implementing their gender action plans to meet the ambitious MCFA targets.

Nefco is now looking to procure consulting services from a qualified consulting company/organisation or a consortium of companies/organisations (Consultant) to support the MCFA programme as a service provider to provide technical assistance services to the MCFA investees (Assignment).

The overall objective of this Assignment is for the Consultant to deploy targeted technical assistance, including business coaching and mentoring services for CSPs to help underpin implementation of their business plans and to address specific challenges related to achievement of the CCS targets under MCFA agreements.

¹ For further information, please see the [MCFA1 Pre-Qualification Guidelines](#).

In order to meet the objectives of the Assignment, the Consultant shall undertake the following main activities/tasks:

- Task 1: Establishment and organisation of the processes and procedures for technical assistance provision, including familiarising itself with MCFA programme requirements, policies and project documents.
- Task 2: Identification, prioritisation and agreement with Nefco on the provision of TA to contracted CSPs.
- Task 3: Provision of technical assistance to CSPs based on the needs identified and prioritised by Nefco in consultation with CSPs will be agreed between Nefco and the Consultant during Task 2 and subsequently through implementation monitoring. Technical assistance will be targeted at measures which support delivery of the MCFA CCS targets.

The overall scope of the technical assistance provision includes, but is not limited to:²

- a. Development support for business and strategy;
- b. Process improvement, shipment and clearance;
- c. Financial modelling and key performance indicators for business;
- d. Sales operations, including adopting PAYGO operations;
- e. Credit operations, credit assessment;
- f. Operational and logistical value chains including inventory management, warehousing and field operations; distribution networks;
- g. Local content/value creation; and
- h. Development of environmental and social policies, gender and Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) policies; development and implementation of gender action plans including hiring/human resources development etc.

Nefco will enter into a framework agreement with the selected Consultant under which the technical assistance assignments for specific CSPs will be called off based on the TA needs identified during Task 1 and subsequently through implementation monitoring.

Assignment Start Date and Duration: The Assignment is expected to start in September 2023 and be completed at the latest by Q4/2025.

Maximum Budget Available for the Assignment: Up to EUR 300,000 (exclusive of VAT).

Funding Source: Modern Cooking Facility for Africa, financed by Sweden and the European Union.

Eligibility: There are no eligibility restrictions on the nationality of the Consultant.

Consultant Profile: The Consultant will be a consulting company/organisation or a consortium of companies/organisations with in-depth experience from providing technical assistance/capacity building to private companies in the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking space in the disciplines forming part of this assignment, i.e. business development and strategy, environmental and social safeguarding and gender mainstreaming. Experience from clean cooking/energy access results-based financing (RBF) instruments will be required. The Consultant having a physical in-country hub in one of the Project Countries particularly in Zambia, from which one or more assigned experts would be available to carry out the Assignment outlined above is considered a significant advantage.

² Carbon finance related TA is excluded from this assignment.

In terms of previous experience and financial standing, the Consultant or lead consultant in case of consortia should demonstrate the following minimum criteria:

- A minimum of 2 contracts of similar annual value, nature and complexity implemented in the last five years; and
- A minimum average annual turnover of EUR 750,000 for the last three years.

Based on the fields of expertise and the tasks mentioned above, it is envisioned that the team of the Consultant should consist at least of the key experts listed below:

- Team Leader with at least 10 years of comprehensive experience in managing similar technical assistance assignments in Sub-Saharan Africa and prior experience from projects/programmes funded by international financiers in the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking space;
- Business and financial advisor(s) within the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking sector with at least 5 years of experience in similar assignments related to business development and strategy;
- Technical advisor(s) with at least 5 years of experience in the provision of TA to private sector companies in the clean cooking sector, experience with PAYGO systems will be a distinct advantage;
- Gender Specialist(s) with at least 5 years of expertise in gender mainstreaming and in providing technical assistance to private companies, preferably in the energy access/clean cooking sector;
- Environmental Specialist with at least 5 years of expertise in conventional environmental issues and specific experience from providing TA on environmental matters to private companies within the clean cooking/energy access sector.

It is further expected that the team of proposed experts has excellent analytical, report writing and communication skills in English. Sufficient fluency in French and Portuguese on team level, is required.

Submission Requirements: Interested Consultants are hereby invited to submit their Expressions of Interest for the purposes of being shortlisted. To assess the qualifications and competence of the Consultants seeking to be shortlisted, the information submitted should include the following:

- Company profile, organisation and staffing for the Assignment;
- Clearly indicated information on the minimum requirements defined above;
- Details of experience in similar assignments, including their locations (especially assignments in DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, and/or Zimbabwe or references from other Sub-Saharan African countries); and
- CVs of key experts available to work on the Assignment.

The above information should not exceed 12 pages, excluding CVs.

Next steps: Based on the documentation received, Nefco will prepare a shortlist of the interested Consultants. Nefco will also be responsible for the possible procurement and contracting of the consulting services in question.

Notes:

1. The shortlist of qualified and experienced Consultants will be made from responses to this notification. The shortlisted Consultants will be asked to submit technical and financial proposals, from which the highest-ranked Consultant will be selected.

2. Nefco will evaluate received Expressions of Interest only from those Consultants that meet the minimum criteria defined above. The shortlist selection criteria are:

- Consultant's experience from providing technical assistance/capacity building to private companies in the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking space in the disciplines forming part of this assignment – 35%
- Consultant's experience from clean cooking/energy access results-based financing (RBF) instruments – 15%
- Qualifications and competence of the Consultant's team as described in the Consultant Profile Section – 50%.

The preliminary timeline is as follows: Nefco expects to distribute a Request for Proposal, including Terms of Reference with specific evaluation criteria among the shortlisted Consultants in May 2023. The expected submission deadline for Consultants' proposals is July 2023 and the assignment is expected to start during September 2023.

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted in English in one pdf file by email to Nefco at procurement@nefco.fi with copy to heli.sinkko@nefco.int with subject: "MCFA TA Service Provider - Expression of Interest" to reach Nefco no later than 28 April 2023 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET)).

Questions and Answers

Any questions on this Invitation for Expression of Interest shall be provided in writing to Nefco by e-mail: at procurement@nefco.int with copy to heli.sinkko@nefco.int no later than 4 April 2023 after which all questions will be compiled by Nefco without any editing in the form they are sent to Nefco. Answers to the questions will be published at <https://www.nefco.int/procurements/>.

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Nefco reserves the right not to procure any services.