Request for proposal

Enterprise capacity strengthening for FIPS Africa agri-entrepreneurs

Background

FIPS Africa implements an enterprise-led extension model that promotes the adoption of frugal agricultural technologies among smallholder farming households by working through VBAs, agrodealers, youth agri-entrepreneurs, and different service providers across the different value chains it promotes. This approach has expanded farmers' access to quality agricultural technologies, inputs and advisory services while creating livelihood opportunities for VBAs and youth.

To sustain and scale this model, FIPS Africa seeks to engage a qualified consulting firm to strengthen the technical, business, coaching and financial capacities of these entrepreneurs, FIPS Africa trainers and enterprise coaches. Preliminary observations indicate capacity gaps among VBAs, youth and women entrepreneurs in business planning, financial management, record keeping, cash flow management, costing and pricing, inventory control, marketing, customer acquisition, governance, digital business management, negotiation, and credit readiness, gaps that constrain enterprise profitability, limit business expansion and reduce access to formal financing which would affects sustainability at end of project life.

FIPS Africa trainers and enterprise coaches similarly require strengthened competencies in business adult learning methodologies, participatory facilitation, enterprise coaching, mentorship, business advisory services, enterprise diagnostics and performance monitoring.

Objectives

The overall objective is to strengthen the technical, business, coaching and financial readiness capacities of VBAs, agrodealers and youth entrepreneurs while mentoring FIPS Africa trainers, who will then support their businesses growth and scale.

Specific Objectives

1. Conduct a comprehensive Capacity Needs Assessment among target entrepreneurs and trainers.
2. Develop competency-based training curricula, manuals and toolkits.
3. Build the capacity of FIPS Africa trainers using adult business learning methodologies.
4. Provide structured coaching and mentorship to participating enterprises through FIPS trainers.
5. Support in the assessment of enterprise progress against baseline capacity levels.
6. Prepare entrepreneurs for engagement with financial institutions and investors.
7. Facilitate financial linkage meetings and forums with banks, SACCOs, microfinance institutions and other financiers.
8. Provide post-training mentorship and follow-up support.

Scope of work

- **Inception, stakeholder engagement and assignment planning**
  Undertake inception activities, stakeholder consultations and assignment planning, culminating in an approved Inception Report incorporating a refined work plan, stakeholder engagement strategy, data collection plan and risk management framework.
- **Capacity needs assessment**
  Conduct a comprehensive Capacity Needs Assessment covering business management, financial literacy, marketing, operations, leadership and governance, digital business skills, climate-smart business practices and financing readiness for entrepreneurs. The assessment will also cover business facilitation, coaching, mentorship and advisory competencies required by trainers.
- **Development of competency-based learning resources**
  Develop competency-based learning resources, including a Training Curriculum, Facilitator's Manual, Coaching Toolkit, Mentorship Toolkit, Financing Readiness Toolkit and Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit, with all materials validated in consultation with FIPS Africa.
- **Training of Trainers (ToT)**
  Design and deliver a practical Training of Trainers programme for FIPS Africa trainers, field officers and enterprise coaches. The programme will include competency assessments for each trainer and cover business planning, financial literacy, record keeping, costing and pricing, cash-flow management, marketing and digital marketing, loan management, investment readiness, climate-smart business practices, leadership and business growth.
- **Coaching and mentorship of FIPS Africa trainers**
  Provide structured coaching and mentorship to FIPS Africa trainers to strengthen their capacity to conduct enterprise visits, undertake business diagnostics and develop and implement individualized Business Improvement Plans.
- **Enterprise financing readiness assessment and support**
  Develop an Enterprise Financing Readiness Assessment Template for use with participating enterprises and provide hands-on technical support to strengthen financial statements, cash-flow forecasts, budgets, business records and statutory and regulatory compliance.
- **Business planning and financing documentation**
  Develop standardized templates and provide technical support for the preparation of bankable business plans, investment plans and pitch decks, as well as complete financing documentation packages tailored to the requirements of potential financiers.
- **Credit and investment readiness**
  Conduct credit readiness sessions incorporating mock loan interviews, investment pitch simulations and practical preparation for engagement with banks, SACCOs, MFIs and other financing institutions.
- **Financial literacy and investor/bank engagement forums**
  Facilitate financial literacy and investor/bank engagement forums that bring together

entrepreneurs and relevant financial institutions, including commercial banks, SACCOs, MFIs, government enterprise funds and impact investors.

- **Financial linkages and post-financing support**
  Facilitate direct linkages between eligible enterprises and appropriate financiers, and provide post-financing mentorship and follow-up support to promote effective utilization of financing and sustained business growth.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The successful bidder will design and implement a MEL framework covering the full assignment period, working closely with FIPS Africa staff to review, strengthen and build on existing MEL systems, tools and processes. The approach will prioritize co-creation and institutional ownership, with the bidder upgrading existing tools where appropriate and developing new tools only where gaps are identified. The MEL framework will include:

- A Results measurement framework with input, output, outcome and impact indicators, established during inception and aligned with the Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) baseline data and FIPS Africa's existing results measurement systems.

- Review and enhancement of existing MEL tools, undertaken jointly with relevant FIPS Africa staff, to improve their relevance, usability, consistency and alignment with the assignment outcomes. Where existing tools do not adequately address identified information needs, the bidder will co-design and develop complementary or new tools in consultation with FIPS Africa.

- Standardised monitoring tools, including upgraded or newly developed pre- and post-training assessments, trainer competency assessment forms, coaching and mentorship reports, enterprise performance scorecards, financing readiness assessments and participant feedback surveys.

- Tracking key performance indicators, including the proportion of entrepreneurs with bankable business plans, proper financial records, credit-ready status, successful access to financing and linkages to financial institutions. Enterprise-level indicators will also include sales, profitability, savings, business formalization and other agreed indicators of business growth and resilience.

- Capacity building and knowledge transfer to FIPS Africa staff on the use, adaptation and interpretation of MEL tools and data, to ensure that the strengthened MEL system can be sustained and utilized beyond the assignment period.

- Periodic reflection and learning sessions with FIPS Africa to review progress, interrogate emerging findings, identify implementation challenges and opportunities, and jointly refine implementation strategies.

- A final evaluation comparing baseline and endline results, assessing the effectiveness and outcomes of the intervention, documenting lessons learned and providing practical recommendations for sustainability, institutionalization and scale-up.

Deliverables

#	Deliverable	Details
1	Inception report and detailed work plan	Inception findings; refined methodology; detailed 12-month work plan; stakeholder engagement strategy; data collection plan; risk management framework; deliverables and reporting schedule.
2	Capacity needs assessment report	Comprehensive assessment of capacity needs of entrepreneurs and FIPS Africa trainers/field officers/enterprise coaches; competency gaps; priority capacity areas; recommendations for training, coaching and mentorship.
3	Competency-based training curriculum and learning materials	Training curriculum; facilitator's manual; coaching toolkit; mentorship toolkit; financing readiness toolkit; and other agreed learning resources. Materials to be validated and finalised jointly with FIPS Africa.
4	Training of Trainers (ToT) report and competency assessment results	ToT programme delivered; attendance and participation records; practical competency assessments for trainers; individual/group competency gaps; recommendations for further coaching and support.

#	Deliverable	Details
5	Coaching and mentorship framework and tools	Standardised coaching and mentorship approach; enterprise visit tools; business diagnostic tools; coaching/mentorship templates; individualized Business Improvement Plan (BIP) template; sample/completed BIPs for supported enterprises.
6	Enterprise financing readiness assessment and support package	Financing readiness assessment template; enterprise financing readiness diagnostics; strengthened financial statements, budgets, cash-flow forecasts and business records; compliance readiness checklist; enterprise financing readiness reports.
7	Bankable business and investment documentation package	Standardised templates and technical support for bankable business plans, investment plans and pitch decks; completed financing documentation packages for eligible enterprises.
8	Co-created results measurement framework	Results chain; input, output, outcome and impact indicators; definitions; baselines; targets; means of verification; data sources; frequency of measurement; roles and responsibilities. Developed jointly with FIPS Africa.
9	Upgraded and/or new MEL tools and data collection package	Joint review of existing FIPS Africa MEL tools; upgraded existing tools where appropriate; development of new tools only where gaps are identified; pre/post assessments, trainer competency tools,

#	Deliverable	Details
		coaching reports, enterprise scorecards, financing readiness tools and participant feedback instruments.
10	MEL capacity building and learning reports	Practical orientation/coaching of FIPS Africa staff on use of MEL tools, data collection, quality assurance, analysis and reporting; periodic reflection and learning session records; agreed adaptations and actions.
11	Final consolidated assignment report and handover package	Consolidated achievements and results; final set of validated training, coaching, financing and MEL tools; datasets/reports as applicable; lessons learned; recommendations; sustainability and institutionalization plan; handover to FIPS Africa.

Duration

The assignment is expected to run for a total of 12 months from contract signing, structured as a Pilot Phase approximately 6 months followed by a Scale-Up Phase, with MEL activities integrated throughout and a close-out period for final reporting and dissemination. Bidders should propose a detailed month-by-month implementation schedule against each deliverable.

Required expertise

The bidder is expected to field a multidisciplinary team with at least 7 years of experience in enterprise development, business coaching and financial inclusion programming for youth and MSMEs, including at minimum:

- An investment readiness / SME finance specialist (team lead) with 10 years' experience in financial management, investment structuring, business diagnostics and access-to-finance programming.
- A business development services / monitoring and evaluation specialist with experience designing and implementing baseline, midline and endline evaluations and results measurement frameworks.

- An agribusiness and value chain development expert with field-based experience in youth enterprise coaching and financial inclusion within agricultural value chains.
- A certified ILO Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) trainer or equivalent, with Training of Trainers experience and a track record of developing field-ready training curricula for youth and low-literacy audiences.

Bidders should submit CVs and relevant assignment references for all proposed key personnel.

Role of FIPS Africa

FIPS Africa will be responsible for:

- Facilitating access to relevant programme documents, staff, trainers and enterprise records for the desk review and capacity needs assessment
- Mobilising the necessary stakeholders, including VBAs, agrodealers, and youth entrepreneurs, to participate in the needs assessment.
- Covering costs of printing, photocopying and reproduction of training materials.
- Meeting participant-related costs, including meals, accommodation, transport, venue hire and related workshop/forum expenses.
- Covering logistics, travel and accommodation for the consultancy team as required.
- Reviewing and approving key deliverables within agreed turnaround times.

Proposal requirements

Interested firms should submit a technical proposal and a separate financial proposal addressing:

- Understanding of the assignment and proposed implementation approach for each phase.
- A detailed 12-month work plan against the deliverables in Section 5.
- Team composition, CVs and relevant experience of key personnel.
- Firm profile, relevant track record and references from comparable assignments.
- A detailed budget broken down by activity/deliverable, inclusive of applicable taxes.
- The cost proposal should also include the following:
    - a) Certificate of Incorporation
    - b) CR12
    - c) KRA Pin
    - d) Signed Conflict of Interest

Submission deadline

All proposals must be submitted via email to procurement@fipsafrica.org no later than 11th September 2026 (EAT). Proposals received after the submission deadline may not be considered.