

Request for Proposals

RFP Number:	RFP_WA-02-001-2023
Issue Date:	February 01, 2023
Question deadline	February 07, 2023
Deadline for submissions	February 10, 2023
Description:	Identify a contractor, specializing in data platforms, to provide carbon sequestration offset services to cashew farmers benefiting from PRO-Cashew interventions.
For:	West Africa Pro-Cashew Project
Finance by:	USDA
Implemented by:	CNFA
Point of Contact	Service Achat / Procurement Service Phone : +225 27.22.53.22.16 procurement@cnfa-procashew.org

Section 1: Introduction, Technical Background and Reference Term

1.1: Introduction: PRO-Cashew is a five-year program funded by USDA to promote the cashew value chain in West Africa. PRO-Cashew is implemented by Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA). The program started in 2019 and is implemented in five West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. It aims to increase farmers' productivity and efficiency and boost cashew trade by improving harvesting and post-harvest techniques and supporting supply chain linkages between farmers and agribusinesses in the five countries of intervention.

PRO-Cashew initiates this call for proposals to identify a Contractor, specializing in data platform, to provide access to carbon credit through carbon sequestration to cashew producers benefiting from PRO-Cashew interventions in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. From this intervention, the producers will benefit from carbon credit and increase their awareness of the environmental impact.

The Contractor must be well aware of the complexity of the carbon credit market access mechanism and develop a specialized data management tool to allow producers and partners to take ownership of their data for informed decision-making and manage performance indicators of the plantation's productivity through the data management tool. In addition, to allow producers to make additional income through carbon credit, this tool would be used to collect data on carbon sequestration in cashew trees. The tool will also determine the amount of carbon sequestered from each plantation annually.

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Offerors must ensure that CNFA receives their offers in accordance with the instructions, terms, and conditions described in this call for tenders. Failure to comply with the instructions described in this tender may result in the disqualification of a bid.

1.2: Description of the activity: This activity aims to provide partners/beneficiaries a carbon sequestration compensation service through their cashew plantations in the intervention areas of the PRO-Cashew project. The following are the main activities:

- 🔴 Set up a system of support and data management tool to provide a carbon sequestration compensation service for cashew producers;
- 🔴 Facilitate producer organizations to collect data on carbon sequestration and quantify carbon sequestered by cashew trees;
- 🔴 Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation, and update the data management tool with up-to-date information;
- 🔴 Improve producers' income and decision-making through the data management tool in the countries of intervention.

1.3. Methodology The methodology adopted to carry out this activity is set out below:

- **Scoping phase:** The selected Contractor will participate in a scoping meeting with PRO-Cashew technical staff. During this meeting, the Contractor will present their experience, tools, methodology, and workplan. PRO-Cashew will share a list of farmers' and partners data for the intervention.
- **Software management system presentation phase:** The Contractor will present at length the functionalities of the software master data management system and the monitoring and evaluation system, the business model for the viability and sustainability of the compensation service to proceed with validation by PRO-Cashew.
- **Refinement phase of the methodology and the data to be collected for monitoring performance indicators:** It will be a question of making a simulation based on the available data of partners and producers. This simulation will make it possible to readjust and ask, if necessary, to set up data management to fill in the 34 key performance indicators of the PRO-Cashew producers.
- **MoU signature phase:** Following these working sessions and practical demonstrations in the field, an MoU will be signed with the Contractor to present the main lines of collaboration as well as the commitments of the stakeholders to ensure long-term support after the project ends.
- **Client Administrator training phase:** This phase will allow the Contractor to train administrators selected by the PRO-Cashew project. It will enable the project team administrators to understand better how the application works to monitor and analyze the data collected and evaluate the performance of producers.
- **Validation phase:** The data collected will be monitored and analyzed with the support of the Contractor by the PRO-Cashew team.

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- **Implementation phase and sustainability:** The beneficiary partners of the project, including individual producers, cooperatives and producer groups, NGOs, and other public or private structures wishing to collaborate in this framework, will be put in touch with the Contractor to strengthen their partnerships through a memorandum of understanding allowing the autonomous and sustainable management of the service through a proven business model.

1.4. Deliverables and submission dates

Description of the deliverable	Delivery date (estimated)
Scoping session report	April 10, 2023
Data management tool workplan	April 25, 2023
Develop a Data management Tool	June 15, 2023
Client Administrator Training Report	July 3, 2023
Data monitoring and analysis dashboard	August 15, 2023

1.5: Period of activity: The period of contracting to achieve the monitoring dashboard is planning to run from April 2023 to August 2023, however the service provider will get into partnership agreement with the project for none disclosure agreements and to assist the collaboration with the PRO-Cashew partners.

1.6. Contractor's requirement

The selected Contractor must have the following profile:

- Be a legal entity with at least five (5) years in the design and development of data collection software or application in Africa;
- Have proven experience in supporting farmers' organizations in the collection of agricultural data;
- Have evidence of quantification control of carbon sequestration in cashew plantations or other crops per the requirements of carbon credit certificates in Africa;
- Have solid experience and knowledge of farmer cashew production practices and the function of cashew producers' organizations.

1.7. Roles and Responsibilities

PRO-Cashew:

- Mobilize technical expertise to support organizations in the implementation of a reliable information, data collection, and analysis system for the benefit of actors in the sector;
- Create conditions for sharing experiences between partner organizations in the different PRO-Cashew intervention countries;
- Provide producers data in the PRO-Cashew intervention countries in the first year;
- Support producer organizations in the collection and analysis of production and marketing data;
- In discussion with the Contractor, PRO-Cashew will develop a (financial) sustainability strategy beyond the project lifetime to ensure the data collection and carbon credit continues to support producers;
- Contribute to the production of necessary training materials and other manuals to improve cashew production and quality and build the capacity of producers;

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- Design and promote a system of collection and information, particularly on productivity and market issues in the value chain in the countries covered by PRO-Cashew;
 - Connect the Contractor with authorities and other beneficiary partners who can benefit from the same services as needed;
 - Facilitate the entry of producers and their organizations into the carbon credit market to generate additional income.

Contractor:

- Offer, implement, and maintain the data collection software/tool with all its features;
- Identify and develop secure data sharing with existing data platform such as Cashew IN platform;
- Identify and create opportunities for access to external funds, including carbon credit market.

1.8. Expected results.

- 🔥 The Data Management Software/Tool has integrated data collection to monitor target indicators through the system's field data collection.
- 🔥 Collect data to estimate the quantities of carbon sequestered from cashew trees.
- 🔥 Provide a list of plantations eligible for carbon credit offsets according to the requirements of carbon credit certifications.
- 🔥 Provide a list of opportunities to sell carbon credits for a better income for cashew producers in the PRO-Cashew intervention countries.
- 🔥 A business model and a viable collaboration framework for an effective and sustainable partnership are put in place.
- 🔥 Cashew producers have access to the data management software/tool to improve their yield, and decision-making.

Section 2: Instructions to Offerors

2.1 Deadline and protocol of the offer: Bids must be received no later than **February 10, 2023**, at 17:00 GMT. Offers must be submitted by email to the following address: procurement@cnfa-procashew.org. Please refer to the tender number in any response to this tender. Offers received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will only be considered at CNFA's discretion. The cover page of this solicitation summarizes the important dates in the solicitation process. Applicants must strictly adhere to the deadlines provided to be considered for award.

2.2 Questions: Questions regarding the technical or administrative requirements of this call for tenders can be submitted no later than **February 07, 2023**, at 17:00 GMT by email to CNFA Pro-Cashew at the following address: procurement@cnfa-procashew.org. Questions and requests for clarification - and responses thereto - that CNFA considers may be of interest to other bidders will be circulated to all addressees of the call for tenders who have expressed an interest in bidding.

Any verbal information received from employees of CNFA, or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any question regarding this call for tenders.

2.3 Evaluation and Award: The bid will be awarded to the bidder with the best bid for the project. Any award resulting from such a call for tenders should be in the form of a contract. This price is subject to the terms and conditions of the PRO-Cashew project as set out in Annex 5. The selected offeror must meet the eligibility requirements and will be determined by a trade-off analysis as the best value based on the application of the evaluation criteria below. The determination of the best value for money will take into account technical and financial proposals, i.e., the best approach and expected results in combination with a reasonable cost. The proposed costs must clearly reflect and correspond to the degree of sophistication of the technical approach.

The relative importance of each individual criterion is indicated by the number of points below:

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Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
Technical approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methodology, general tools proposed, business model (20 points)• Proposed Implementation plan/workplan (10 points)	30 points
Previous performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of accompanying certificates from at least two farmers' organizations for the collection of similar data in the cashew sector (20 points)• List of experience and qualifications of staff members proposed to carry out the activity (20 points)	40 points
Cost Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of budget headings (20 points)• Alignment between budget headings and mission objectives (10 points)	30 points
Total des Points	100

Proposals for best offers are requested. It is intended that the award will be made solely on the basis of these original proposals. However, CNFA reserves the right to carry out any of the following actions:

- CNFA may conduct negotiations with and/or seek clarification from any offeror prior to award;
- While preference will be given to bidders who can meet all the technical requirements of this tender, CNFA may issue a partial award or divide the award among several Contractors, if this is in the best interest of the Pro-Cashew project;
- CNFA may cancel this call for tenders at any time.

The award will only be awarded to the entity that submits a proposal in response to this call for tenders. CNFA will not issue awards to different offerors, entities or third parties other than the selected offeror(s). CNFA plans to award a fixed-price contract to the successful offeror.

2.4 Cost proposal: Prices must be presented in CFA francs. Offerors are required to submit the proposed payment terms and proposed payment schedule, if applicable. Failure to submit the proposed payment terms may result in disqualification of the offer. Offers must remain valid for at least sixty (60) calendar days after the submission deadline. Offerors are requested to provide their tenders on official letterhead, in accordance with the format provided in Annex 4.

2.5 Proposal Format Instructions: All proposals must be formatted in accordance with the following requirements:

- (a) French or English language
- (b) Include the name of the person, agency or organization, date, tender number and header or footer page numbers throughout the document.
- (c) The technical proposal shall be submitted in the format provided in Annex 3.
- (d) The cost proposal must be submitted in the format provided in Annex 4.

A full proposal will include the following documents:

- (a) A proposal checklist (Annex 1).
- (b) A letterhead cover letter from the company, signed by an authorized representative of the bidder (Annex 2).
- (c) A complete technical proposal in response to the evaluation criteria in section 2.3 and in the format provided in Annex 3.

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- (d) A complete cost proposal in response to the conditions of section 2.4, the evaluation criteria of section 2.3, and in the format provided in Annex 4.
 - (e) A copy of the tenderer's business license/trade register.
 - (f) Proposed Team's CV describing relevant experiences in relation to data collection and carbon sequestration.
 - (g) Three contacts for referrals from organizations/individuals for which the offeror has successfully completed similar work.

Annex 1 - Bid Checklist and Bid Instructions

To assist bidders in preparing their proposals, the following checklist summarizes the documentation to be included in a bid in response to this FLR:

- (a) A proposal checklist (Annex 1).
- (b) A letterhead cover letter from the company, signed by an authorized representative of the bidder (Annex 2).
- (c) A complete technical proposal in response to the evaluation criteria in section 2.3 and in the format provided in Annex 3.
- (d) A complete cost proposal in response to the conditions of section 2.4, the evaluation criteria of section 2.3, and in the format provided in Annex 4.
- (e) A copy of the tenderer's business license /trade register.
- (f) Proposed Team's CV describing relevant experiences in relation to data collection and carbon sequestration.
- (g) Three contacts for referrals from organizations/individuals for which the offeror has successfully completed similar work.

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Annex 2 - Cover letter from the offeror

The following cover letter must be placed on letterhead and completed/signed/stamped by a representative authorized to sign on behalf of the offeror

A: USDA Pro-Cashew
 Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture
 LG Building, Avenue Boga Doudou, II Plateaux Vallon Abidjan

Reference: RFP_WA-02-001-2023

Mr. Procurement Officer:

We, the undersigned, hereby provide the attached offer to perform all work necessary to carry out the activities and requirements described in the aforementioned call for tenders. Please find our offer attached.

We hereby acknowledge and accept all conditions, special provisions and instructions included in the aforementioned tender. We further certify that the company below - together with its principal managers and all products and services offered in response to this RFP - are eligible to participate in this procurement in accordance with the terms of this application and USDA regulations.

In addition, we hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief:

- We have no close, family or financial relationship with CNFA or Pro-Cashew project staff;
- We do not have close, family or financial relationships with other bidders who submit proposals in response to the aforementioned call for tenders;
- The prices of our offer have been set independently, without consultation, communication or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- All information contained in our proposal and all supporting documents are authentic and accurate.
- We understand and accept the CNFA's prohibitions against fraud, corruption and bribery.
- We understand and accept the CNFA's prohibitions regarding financing or association with individuals or organizations engaged in terrorist or human trafficking activities.

We hereby certify that the attached representations, certifications and other representations are accurate, current and complete.

Authorized signature:

Date:

Vendor Name:

Contractor address:

Telephone:

Taxpayer Identification Number:

Official name associated with the bank account (for payment):

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Annex 3 - Technical Proposal (Page limit – Max 10 pages)

Technical approach (30 points)

- Describe your approach to providing carbon sequestration offset services in the plantations of producers benefiting from PRO-Cashew interventions as well as monitoring and managing the data collection tool?
- What technical elements will you focus on? What methodology would you use, if it is different from the proposed methodology?
- Is there an existing software/application used to manage farmers data either in carbon credit sequestration or other
- How would you empirically ensure that the result has an impact?
- The proposal should provide details on the analysis that will be performed, and clearly indicate the details of data entry management, validation checks (logic and consistency), and other data processing activities.
- The proposal should indicate who will be responsible for the design of the application/monitoring and should describe the topics covered, the duration accepted and the logistical and administrative support required.

Past performance (40 points)

List the team members who will carry out the work and detail their experience and qualifications (attach CVs), see table below. Please indicate who will manage the team, what company resources will be used, and the partner organizations you propose to work with. In addition, please provide a brief description of previous work on similar activities and provide certificates from at least two farmers' organizations for the collection of similar data in the cashew sector.

<i>Names of staff</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Field of activity</i>	<i>Experiences</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Activities</i>

Annex 4 – Cost proposal (30 points)

The amount of the budget requested must link with the objectives of the project. The applicant shall allocate the budget according to the activities listed in the program terms of reference.

The bidder must provide a cost proposal with detailed items in the general cost categories. The offeror may suggest additional cost categories if necessary, if the budget items do not fall within a specific cost category. Please submit a budget for each evaluation

Cost elements	Unit	Quantity	Unit costs	Total cost	Notes
1. Personnel/Work					
2. Equipment					
3. Transport					
4. Communications					
7. Other direct costs					
TOTAL BUDGET					

Note: Any payment terms and schedule are subject to negotiations following CNFA's evaluation of offers.

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Annex 5

5.1 Ethical and Business Conduct Requirements: CNFA is committed to integrity in procurement, and only selects suppliers based on objective business criteria such as price and technical merit.

CNFA does not tolerate fraud, collusion among offerors, falsified proposals/bids, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this procurement, barred from future procurement opportunities, and may be reported to both USDA and the Office of the Inspector General.

Employees and agents of CNFA are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation from current or potential vendors or suppliers in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported to USDA and the Office of the Inspector General. In addition, CNFA will inform USDA and the Office of the Inspector General of any supplier offers of money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation to obtain business.

Offerors responding to this RFP must include the following as part of the proposal submission:

- Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with CNFA or project staff. For example, if an offeror's cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
- Disclose any family or financial relationship with other offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the offeror's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the offeror must state this.
- Certify that the prices in the offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- Certify that all information in the proposal and all supporting documentation are authentic and accurate.
- Certify understanding and agreement to CNFA's prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact PRO-Cashew Project with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations. Potential violations may also be reported directly to CNFA via email at FraudHotline@cnfa.org or you may make an anonymous report by calling the CNFA Global Complaint Hotline at 202-991-0931.

5.2 Terms and Conditions: This solicitation is subject to CNFA's standard terms and conditions. Any resultant award will be governed by these terms and conditions; a copy of the full terms and conditions is available upon request. Please note the following terms and conditions will apply:

- (a) CNFA's standard payment terms are net 30 days after receipt and acceptance of any commodities or deliverables. Payment will only be issued to the entity submitting the offer in response to this RFP and identified in the resulting award; payment will not be issued to a third party.
- (b) No commodities or services may be supplied that are manufactured or assembled in, shipped from, transported through, or otherwise involving any of the following countries: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria.
- (c) Any international air or ocean transportation or shipping carried out under any award resulting from this RFP must take place on U.S.-flag carriers/vessels.
- (d) United States law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. The supplier under any award resulting from this RFP must ensure compliance with these laws.
- (e) United States law prohibits engaging in any activities related to Trafficking in Persons. The supplier under any award resulting from this RFP must ensure compliance with these laws.
- (f) The title to any goods supplied under any award resulting from this RFP shall pass to CNFA following delivery and acceptance of the goods by CNFA. Risk of loss, injury, or destruction of the goods shall be borne by the offeror until title passes to CNFA.
- (g) The offeror is prohibited from providing certain telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as a critical technology as part of any system, produced by the following covered companies, and their subsidiaries and affiliates, in the performance of any resulting award: Huawei Technologies Company; ZTE Corporation; Hytera Communications Corporation; Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company; Dahua Technology Company; and any other company as determined by the United States Government. The offeror certifies it will not provide covered telecommunications equipment or services to CNFA in performance of the resulting award. If covered telecommunications equipment or services are offered, the offeror must disclose it.

5.3 Disclaimers: This is a Request for Proposals only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate CNFA, the PRO-Cashew Project, or USDA to make an award or pay for costs incurred by potential offerors in the preparation and submission of an offer. In addition:

- (a) CNFA may cancel RFP and not award;
- (b) CNFA may reject any or all responses received;
- (c) Issuance of RFP does not constitute award commitment by CNFA;
- (d) CNFA reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on offeror failure to follow RFP instructions;
- (e) CNFA will not compensate offerors for response to RFP;
- (f) CNFA reserves the right to issue award based on initial evaluation of offers without further discussion;
- (g) CNFA may negotiate with short-listed offerors for their best and final offer;

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- (h) CNFA reserves the right to order additional quantities or units with the selected offeror;
- (i) CNFA may reissue the solicitation or issue formal amendments revising the original RFP specifications and evaluation criteria before or after receipt of proposals;
- (j) CNFA may modify the specifications without issuing a formal notice to all offerors when the revisions are immaterial to the scope of the RFP;
- (k) CNFA may choose to award only part of the activities in the RFP, or issue multiple awards based on multiple RFP activities;
- (l) CNFA reserves the right to waive minor proposal deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition;
- (m) CNFA will contact all offerors to confirm contact person, address, and that the bid was submitted for this RFP;
- (n) CNFA will contact all offerors to inform them whether or not they were selected for award;

In submitting a response to this RFP, offerors understand that USDA is not a party to this solicitation and the offeror agrees that any protest hereunder must be presented – in writing with full explanations – to the PRO-Cashew Project for consideration. USDA will not consider protests regarding procurements carried out by implementing partners. CNFA, at its sole discretion, will make a final decision on any protest for this procurement.

5.4 Source/Nationality/Manufacture: All goods and services offered in response to this RFP or supplied under any resulting award must be in accordance with the United States Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), [22 CFR §228](#).

Offerors may not offer or supply any commodities or services that are manufactured or assembled in, shipped from, transported through, or otherwise involving any of the following countries: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria.

5.5 Taxes and VAT: As an organization that is implementing a project on behalf of USDA, CNFA is exempt from being charged VAT, customs duty or fee, excise tax, road tax, or any other form of tax or tariff for goods and services purchased for USDA funded activities. As such, CNFA is exempt from being charged VAT, customs duty or fee, excise tax, road tax, and any other form of tax or tariff for goods and services purchased for USDA funded activities. As such, offerors agree to exclude VAT or any similar taxes or fees from its cost proposal.

5.6 Eligibility: By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the offeror certifies that it and its principal officers are not debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the U.S. Government. CNFA will not award a contract to any firm that is debarred, suspended, or considered to be ineligible by the U.S. Government.

5.7 Delivery: N/A

5.8 Warranty: N/A