

The United States Government, represented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), intends to issue a solicitation for proposals for a five year contract (base plus option) for the Trade and Accession Facilitation for Afghanistan (TAFA) project. The purpose of the project is to generate economic growth, trade and investment by improving the conditions for international and cross-border trade and transit. It is expected to help the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and the private sector to realize the advantages of greater regional and global trade linkages and export-oriented business development through assistance in three categories: 1) trade policy liberalization, 2) trade facilitation, and 3) public outreach on trade-related issues.

The project is expected to result in the Afghan Government's improved capacity to negotiate and implement regional trade agreements and make progress toward WTO accession; to increase efficiency and transparency while reducing obstacles to trade in such areas as customs, transport/transit, and border crossing operations; to expand customs revenue collections; to raise its rating on the *trading across borders* indicator in the World Bank's Doing Business survey; to enlarge its export market opportunities through adoption of international product and safety standards; and to increase understanding of and support for a liberal trade regime by the business community and the public throughout Afghanistan.

The order of magnitude for this project anticipated by this solicitation is over US\$10,000,000.

This solicitation will be accomplished using full and open competition and all interested parties will be invited to submit their proposals. USAID intends to provide the maximum flexibility to each offeror and will issue a detailed Request for Proposals (RFP). It is anticipated that the RFP will be issued in January 31, 2009 (the RFP would be posted at FedBizOpps).

Please do not consider this announcement an RFP and do not submit your proposals until the formal RFP is posted.