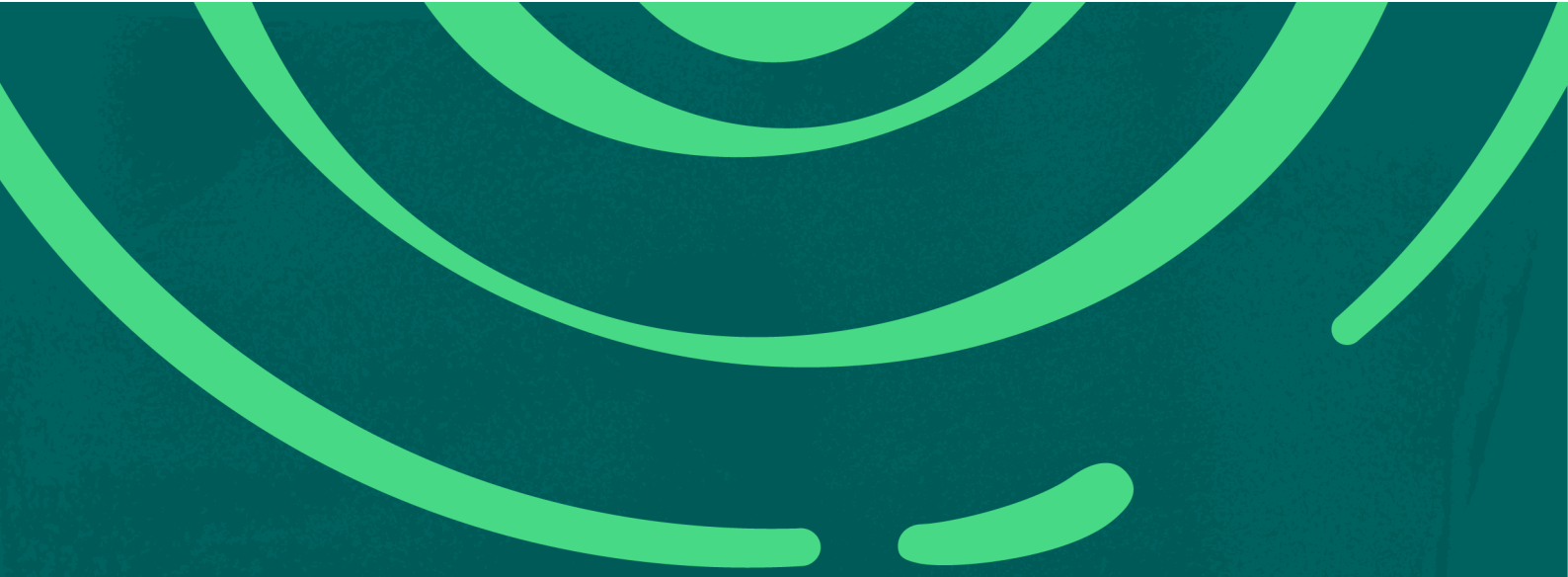




Selection Guidelines

Impact Evaluation for the 'Growing Together Program'

7th April 2025

IDH



idh
transforming markets



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1. Introduction

Stichting IDH (“IDH”) accelerates and up-scales sustainable trade by building impact-oriented coalitions of front running companies, civil society, governments, knowledge institutions and other stakeholders in several commodity sectors. We convene the interests, strengths and knowledge of public and private partners in sustainability commodity programs that aim to mainstream international and domestic commodity markets. We jointly formulate strategic intervention plans with public and private partners, and we co-invest with partners in activities that generate public goods (<https://idh.org/about>).

These **Selection Guidelines** are for the restricted tender procedure (this “**tender procedure**”) for the Letter of Assignment (the “**Contract**”) to **conduct baseline, mid-term and end-term evaluations to meet the partnership requirements between IDH and The Norwegian Agency for Development Corporation (NORAD) for the 'Growing Together' program**, funded by Norad and implemented by IDH, in collaboration with private and public actors.

This tender procedure is subject to the Dutch Procurement Law 2012 (Aanbestedingswet 2012 or “Aw **2012**”), and more specifically to the provision regarding the restricted tender procedure (Article 2.27), and the Directive 2014/24/EU. This tender procedure consists of two phases (the (i) **Selection Phase** and (ii) the **Tender Phase**) after which the Contract will be awarded.

These Selection Guidelines do not cover the entire tender procedure, but they cover the period from the publication of the Selection Guidelines on TenderNed to the invitation of the selected Interested Parties (as defined below) to the tender. For the next phase of this tender procedure (the Tender Phase), Tender Guidelines will be provided.

IDH reserves the right to update, change, correct, extend, postpone, withdraw, or suspend these Selection Guidelines or any subsequent document related to this tender procedure, the time schedule, or any decision regarding the selection or Contract award. Additionally, IDH reserves the right to make any decision subject to conditions which may follow from, amongst others: a complaint of a third party, a ruling by the ‘Autoriteit Consument en Markt’, an advice from the ‘Commissie van Aanbestedingsexperts’, a notice or decision by the European Commission, a court judgement, or an instruction by the European Investment Bank (EIB). Also, the decision(s) can be a consequence of any other matter which may influence the feasibility of the project in a negative matter, financially or otherwise. IDH reserves the right to exclude an Interested Party from this tender procedure in the event of a possible and/or suspected risk of distorted competition and/or in the event the level playing field between Interested Parties may be compromised. IDH reserves the right to suspend or annul this tender procedure at any moment in time. (Potential) Interested Parties cannot claim compensation from IDH, any affiliated persons or entities, in any way, in case any of the afore-mentioned situations occur.

By submitting a Request to Participate (as defined below), the Interested Party accepts all terms and reservations made in these Selection Guidelines, including its annexes and subsequent information and documentation in this tender procedure.



2. Definitions

Assignment	The assignment as described in Chapter 3 of these Selection Guidelines.
Contract	The agreement between IDH and Consultant(s) to be signed upon awarding of the Assignment, also referred to as the Letter of Assignment, or LoA, or (Framework) Agreement.
Consultant	The applicant who has been awarded the Contract by IDH at the end of this tender procedure, based on the most economically advantageous offer.
ESPD-form (in Dutch 'formulier UEA')	The European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) form – is the European standard form that is used for tender procedures. The ESPD form is a declaration by the Applicant about its financial condition, ability, and suitability for the purpose of this tender procedure.
Grounds for Exclusion	As described in Chapter 6.2 of these Selection Guidelines.
IDH	Stichting IDH, the contracting authority.
Interested Party	Any company that has requested to participate in this tender procedure by submitting questions and/or a Request to Participate in response to and in accordance with these Selection Guidelines.
Request to Participate	Request to Participate submitted by the Interested Party to IDH in response to these Selection Guidelines.
Selection Phase	The first phase of this tender procedure, which aims to shortlist a minimum of five (5) Interested Parties and invited to participate in the Tender Phase, in accordance with Dutch Procurement Act 2012. If more than five (5) Interested Parties qualify based on exclusion grounds and suitability requirements, a further selection will be made to determine the final five (5).
Tender Guidelines	The document that will be published at the start of the Tender Phase which will support the selection of the Consultant.
Tender Phase	The second and last phase of this tender procedure, which aims to award the Assignment to the selected Consultant.



3. Assignment information

3.1. The Assignment and its objectives

With this tender procedure, IDH aims to select an independent party **to conduct an overall evaluation of the Growing Together program including:**

- a. Developing an evaluation design for baseline, mid-term and end-term to sharpen and validate focus areas of the evaluation.
- b. Conducting a mid-term and end-term evaluation using the criteria described in this Assignment.

Below is a summary of the program:

Program name	Growing Together	
Program start and end dates	Start: 1/1/2024	End: 31/12/2028
Program location	Ethiopia and Tanzania	
Program objectives	The Growing Together program aims to contribute to increased food security by increasing the production of healthy foods by small-scale food producers, optimizing the value chains of food companies for growth through investment and food trade, and strengthening food production landscapes to withstand climate shocks.	
Target beneficiaries	1. Small scale food producers 2. SMEs in food processing and trade.	
Themes / Sector	Sectors: 1. Cereals: Maize and Rice 2. Pulses: Common beans 3. Edible oil seeds: Sunflower and Soybean Themes: 1. Food security i.e., availability, access, and stability of food. 2. Growing inclusive food SMEs with increased economic participation of small-scale food producers, women, and youth. 3. Investment in food value chains. 4. Climate resilience of food systems	

3.2. Program Background

IDH is implementing the 'Growing Together' program in Ethiopia and Tanzania that is funded by Norad. The program aims to transform local food markets of cereals, pulses, and oil crops to improve food security and grow local economies by promoting the growth of inclusive agri-food SMEs. By Growing agri-food SMEs, the program aims to increase the productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers and increasing economic participation of women and youth in food value chains.

The value chain focus of the program is on cereals (maize and rice), pulses (common beans and soybean), and edible oil crops (sunflower and soybean). These are the commodities that determined the geographical focus and selection of partners SMEs and large companies in Tanzania and Ethiopia. Through the primary commodities, the program will also strengthen complimentary commodities



(vegetables, fruits and tubers) produced in mixed or rotation cropping systems with the anchor commodities to improve food security and climate resilience of food systems.

Implementation of the program is through SMEs and sector platforms as the primary change agents in selected food value chains. IDH co-creates and co-funds projects with SMEs and sector platforms to drive sustainable and commercially viable solutions to the challenges and opportunities in food systems by changing business practices. Changes in business practices are scaled across the sector, both nationally and regionally, through convening platforms. These platforms transform sector practices by leveraging knowledge and insights generated from projects under the program. The stakeholder groups involved in delivery of the program are:

1. Eighteen (18) SMEs and large companies (10 in Tanzania and 8 in Ethiopia) in selected value chains with influence and/or potential to impact to food security, climate resilience, and inclusion of small-scale food producers with intentionality for economic participation of women and youth.
2. Two (2) sector platforms (1 in Tanzania and 1 in Ethiopia) that will influence changes in business practices at scale, as well as sector coordination and regulatory policies that strengthen food security.
3. Three (3) implementing partner organizations that provide specialized technical assistance support to agri-food SMEs and sector platforms to optimize their value chains for improved food security in the targeted countries i.e.:
 - a. The International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, (CIAT), provides advisory input on climate resilient production landscapes and gender.
 - b. Rikolto international provides business development services to SMEs to develop urban markets and strengthen farmer organizations and sector platforms.
 - c. The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) that provides business development services to SMEs on structured grain trading and insights on food markets and trade.

3.3. Intervention logic and theory of change

The theory of change of the Growing Together program prioritizes transforming African food systems through a business-led approach to achieve food security. The program will contribute to the transformation of targeted food value chains to be economically viable, inclusive of smallholder farmers and SMEs, and climate resilient through five (5) intervention pathways:

1. Convening private and public sector actors in different forms (e.g., sector platforms, food system alliances etc.) to unlock sustainability and buying commitments from the private sector, and influence policies and the enabling environment. These coalitions also form an important channel for disseminating insights and best practices.
2. Optimizing business models of food companies through projects informed by diagnostics that guide the design of innovative projects with positive outcomes for businesses, farmers, and the environment.
3. Facilitating investment by increasing the investment readiness of SMEs and linking them to a dedicated network of IDH partner funds and financial institutions to access capital for growth.
4. Building resilience of food production landscapes by using a production landscape lens to promote more climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable practices through public and private extension models.
5. Generating intelligence and driving, learning from standardized data methodologies to generate valuable insights and learnings on optimizing business models and steering sector governance

These interventions pathways will contribute to 4 impact results below if the assumptions behind the change pathways in the Theory of Change (ToC) will hold (*Refer to Annex 4 for details on the result measurement framework with the KPI Dashboard*):



Impact Result	Summary of Assumptions
Impact result 1: Small-scale food producers increase food production and incomes by improving land use, diversifying production, increasing yield, reducing costs, and getting better prices in the market.	Optimized and innovative SMEs business models for sourcing and service delivery to small scale food producers will enhance services to farmers, increasing their loyalty and supply. This will lead to positive outcomes at the farm level, such as increased production, improved practices, and more stable market access.
Impact result 2: Competitive food value chains led by food processing companies and SMEs that support small-scale food producers and empower women to participate commercially in food value chains.	SMEs will be motivated to change their business models due to the benefits of increasing local sourcing and processing, which enhance quantity, quality, and supply stability. Additionally, this reduces their exposure to international price shocks and other supply chain risks, such as transport and foreign exchange.
Impact result 3: Food processing is driven by local sourcing that incentivizes market-driven production and creates job opportunities.	- Unlocking finance will enable SMEs to become more inclusive, support sustainable farming practices, and scale their operations. Operating at a larger scale will enhance the competitiveness of value chains through increased commercial food production and trade. - Convening coalitions private and public players at sector and landscape levels will actively engage a more actors and influence changes in policies and sector norms.
Impact result 4: Food production landscapes (foodscapes) have increased agro-biodiversity, water, and soil health to mitigate climate shocks that reduce food production	Incorporating climate resilience and regenerative agriculture technologies and practices into the extension models of SMEs and public players will enhance access to improved services for farmers. This will result in greater adoption of these practices and increased climate resilience of food systems in production landscapes.

3.4. Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation will seek to: a) assess progress against set objectives including outputs and outcomes; b) assess program impact on the targeted groups (small scale food producers, SMEs, and production landscapes); and c) assess effectiveness of the program interventions d) answer the key learning questions of the program and identify lessons learnt/best practices that can be used to inform future designs and similar interventions. Outcomes of the evaluation will inform (1) IDH and the program partners (SMEs, sector platforms, and implementing partner organizations) on adaptations to be made in projects, and (2) Norad on the progress, impact, and effectiveness of the program in realizing the intended impact.

The impact evaluation will focus on achieving the following objectives that are detailed in the key evaluation questions in section 3.3:



1. Advise on the scope and quality of baselines and learning questions, assessing their relevance, coherence, and effectiveness to inform and validate program intervention strategies and design adaptations.
2. Conduct a mid-term evaluation based on OECD DAC criteria, assessing relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and inform sustainability and scaling strategy. This evaluation will inform the adaptation to the program on the following considering sectoral and contextual specifics:
 - Inform improvements in program Theory of Change and partnerships to realize the intended impact results.
 - Advise the program focus on sustainability and scaling of successful projects and ensuring a successful exit.
3. Conduct an end-term evaluation of the program using the OECD-DAC criteria to establish outcomes, impact, and lessons learned from program i.e.:
 - Present the observed intended and intended outcomes of the program and the conditions that contributed to the outcomes.
 - Assess and reflect on the scope and quality of the program in answering the learning questions.

3.5. Scope of Evaluation

The Growing Together program will conduct a baseline, mid-term evaluation, and end-term evaluation. IDH has already completed a baseline, and this assignment will assess the quality and scope of that baseline information. If necessary, additional baseline information may be collected as part of this assignment.

A mid-term evaluation will be done by the selected partner after 3 years (from October 2026) of project implementation. The mid-term evaluation will focus on learning and integrating the lessons for the remainder of the program. Overall, it will be a light evaluation on the entire program and reflecting on the baselines and progress reported to identify and strengthen elements that need consideration. It will explore two intervention pathways in more detail: (1) Sustainable production landscapes and (2) facilitating investments.

The end-term evaluation will be a final evaluation that takes place after sixty (60) months (from October 2028). This evaluation will be more extensive for accountability to Norad. It should establish the extent to which the program impact results have been achieved reflecting on the baselines and data reported in the program period and identify why this has (not) been the case. Attention will be given to systemic changes and scaling, focusing on two intervention pathways: (1) convening and (2) generating knowledge and insights. These pathways facilitate sector-wide changes in the other intervention pathways of the program i.e., transforming value chains, facilitating investments, and promoting sustainable production landscapes.

3.6. Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions presented below are an initial list formulated using the criteria of ‘additionality’ of Donor Committee on Enterprise Development (“**DCED**”) of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, equality, and sustainability and scalability. In addressing these questions, the evaluation will emphasize presenting a balanced representation of what is going well, what is not going for learning. The actual (smaller number of) key evaluation questions will be confirmed during the inception phase:

Relevance and Coherence:

- **Fit:** How relevant are the project’s transformation strategies, plans and actions within the wider partner landscape in enhancing the position of smallholder producers (including women) and (food) processors?



- **Coherence:** How coherent are the interventions carried out by the program and how consistent are the interventions with other actors' interventions in the same context? Which interventions were aligned, or less aligned, initiatives of food system actors?
 - **Internal** – Did the program pillars of convening, transformation of value chains of SMEs, mobilizing investment, and building resilient production landscapes, and generating knowledge and insights for learning strengthen each other?
 - **External** – To what extent are the interventions, commodity focus, and geographical concentration contributing to or leveraging the priorities of the government, private sector and other NORAD funded programs?
- **Partnership strategy:** How adequate is the project's engagement with governments and coordination with other partners (at various levels) to focus and prioritize its work? What partnership modalities have been most effective? What has been the added value that convening supported by the Growing Together program in changing business, sector, and landscape resilience practices at scale?
- **Program strategy:** How relevant is the program strategy (i.e., SMEs and food companies as change agents, sector platforms and initiatives for sector influencing, convening change alliances, and Innovation and Investment Development Hub to sustain and scale the interventions) to transform local food markets, improve local economies, improve food security, and increased small-scale farmers' incomes?

Effectiveness and Efficiency:

- Were the output and outcome level results outlined in the program theory of change realized, or expected to be realized and to what extent? Is the program theory of change confirmed (or not) by the program results? A special focus in the evaluation should be given to:
 - a. Growing food SMEs: What has been the (perceived) added value of the program to operations of food companies that contribute to the impact results? Did SMEs grow impact or their operations?
 - b. Food production landscapes: How have the activities of the program contributed to climate resilience of farmers and SMEs, and better environment in production landscapes?
 - c. Facilitating investment: If and how have the activities of the program influenced the business practices regarding access to finance for the SMEs and farmers?
 - d. Knowledge generation and learning: How effective has the program's data solutions and analysis been in driving adoption and behavioural changes in business practices and sector governance? To what extent were these program learning questions answered?
 1. How effective are Agri-SMEs' smallholder-inclusive business models in increasing local and regional food security?
 2. Which Agri-SMEs business models and business practices are effective in mobilizing finance for SMEs and smallholder farmers in the value chain?
 3. How successful are coalitions of Agri-SMEs with smallholder-inclusive business models in promoting climate-smart agricultural practices in production landscapes?
 4. Which gender equality practices at business and farm are impactful in increasing economic participation of women and youth drive the business performance of Agri-SMEs?
 5. What are the critical factors that facilitate public-private coalitions at sector level for sustainable production landscapes?
 6. Which business practices of SMEs and climate resilience technologies contributed to i) increased adoption for climate resilient practices and ii) increased incomes for small holder farming households?

Sustainability and Scale Up:

- To what extent have sustainability considerations (technical, financial, institutional) been integrated in program design and implementation phases?
- How adequate are the program's approach in contributing to national agricultural and food policies that create enabling environments needed for sustainability and scale up (including system/capacity strengthening, building national ownership and national budget allocations)?



- To what extent does the project effectively support the scale-up of proven business cases for field-level innovations? This should be assessed in two dimensions: a) Numerical Outreach: Scaling in terms of reaching a larger number of beneficiaries. b) Sectoral Change and Institutionalization: Changing the rules of the game in the sector and deepening the change through institutionalization.
- Are there any risks related to the sustainability of gains achieved in strengthening market systems in various contexts that the project must address?

3.7. Approach and Methodological requirements

It is expected that applicants describe and justify an appropriate evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the inception report. Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the applicants and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the tender. Applicants shall to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address them. A gender responsive approach/methodology, methods, tools and data analysis techniques should be used.

Detailed primary outcomes, including indicators and measurement plans, data collection efforts, and an approximate timeline (including the number of data collection rounds), are outlined in the RMF and the program MEL plan. These will be provided and should be considered when elaborating the approach in the Inception Report.

3.8. Evaluation Management

The evaluation process will be overseen by an advisory committee that will support the design and implementation of the evaluation assignment by a team of evaluation consultants. The key responsibilities of each party are outlined in the following table:

Stakeholder	Key roles and responsibilities
Evaluator	• Ensure feedback from the advisory committee on the design of the evaluation and the progress is correctly addressed. • Implementation of the evaluation, including securing methodological requirements, data collection, analysis, reporting, and learning. • Coordination of the evaluation, including the final report and presentation of findings.
IDH Evaluation Advisory Committee	• Ensure the strategic relevance of the deliverables to the program and compliance with methodology and data requirements of the donor, IDH RMF. • Contribute to the identification and provide contact information of key stakeholders that need to be consulted / interviewed during the evaluation. • Facilitate the coordination of field visits and the evaluator's travel locally, when required. • Liaise with the implementing partners to support the evaluation exercise and ensure all key stakeholders provide feedback to the evaluation. • Review and provide timely feedback to the inception report, data collection tools and evaluation report.

3.9. Deliverables

The deliverables of this assignment will be:



Deliverables of assignment	Deadline
Inception Report in pdf, editable word document and a summary PowerPoint with: • Updated research design and methodology, detailing sampling approach, evaluation matrix, data collection tools, and analysis plan. • Updated work plan and timeline, including information regarding fieldwork logistics and outlines of mid-term and end-term evaluation report.	15 th Dec 2025
Baseline review including scope and quality of baselines and learning questions and needs for additional baseline information. To be delivered in PDF and editable word document and summary PowerPoint	30 th Mar 2026
Mid-term evaluation report with supporting annexes of data collection tools, raw data, list of stakeholders consulted, list of references and data sources, data analysis records and rating systems. To be delivered in PDF, editable word document, and summary PowerPoint.	30 th Nov 2026
Validation of findings	15 th Dec 2026
Learning session with key stakeholders	30 th Jan 2027
End-term evaluation report with supporting annexes of data collection tools, raw data, list of stakeholders consulted, list of references and data sources, data analysis records and rating systems. To be delivered in PDF, editable word document, and summary PowerPoint.	30 th Oct 2028
Validation of findings	15 th Nov 2028
Learning session with key stakeholders	15 th Dec 2028

4. Description of Selection Procedure

This tender is subject to the rules of the Dutch Procurement Law 2012, specifically the restricted procedure (*'niet openbare procedure'*). The award of the Contract will take place after a tender process that consists of two phases: the (i) Selection Phase and the (ii) Tender Phase. In this Chapter, the Selection Phase will be described. More details on the Tender Phase will be provided with the publication of the Tender Guidelines.

4.1. Motivation under Dutch Procurement Act 2012

Choice for a Letter of Assignment with one consultant

IDH considers the Contract to be one indivisible contract and has therefore decided to procure it as such. The decision to not divide this single contract into two (or more) partial contracts, or lots, was based on the following aspects:

- a) The mid-term and end-term evaluations are highly interrelated, with the mid-term evaluation providing essential insights that the end-term evaluation relies on, ensuring a cohesive and continuous assessment process;



- b) IDH has the experience that onboarding a new partner for drafting an evaluation is a time-consuming process; doing this twice subsequently offers too great a time burden for both the contracting party as well as the IDH professionals;
- c) further cost-efficiency is expected since the contracting partner will be able to use the experience of the mid-term evaluation for the end-evaluation;
- d) IDH has a strong preference for one strategic partner that follows up with IDH during the whole period as well as having a partner that in drafting the end-term evaluation is aware of the background of strategic choices as made at the mid-term evaluation and enhances quality of understanding of the evaluation experts throughout a multi-year partnership and implementation process;
- e) Combining the evaluations into a single contract has minimal effect on the number of market parties from the SME sector that can compete. Any market party capable of performing one evaluation is likely capable of performing both, given the interrelated nature of the tasks. Additionally, for the contracting party, a single contract is preferable due to staff experience and reduced risk. This approach allows for more efficient management, utilizes staff expertise effectively, and reduces the risk of inconsistencies between evaluations, ensuring a thorough and dependable assessment.

4.2. Duration and Value of the Letter of Assignment

IDH intends to enter the Letter of Assignment with the selected Consultant for a period of three (3) years with an estimated total value of **EUR 370,000**. The amounts are to be considered excluding VAT.

During the Tender Phase, the shortlisted Interested Parties will be invited to submit a quotation for the Assignment. More information will be shared with the publication of the Tender Guidelines.

In accordance with Chapter 1 and 10 of the Selection Guidelines, IDH reserves the right to update and/or change the estimate at its sole discretion, if deemed necessary.

4.3. Tender procedure schedule

The schedule below indicates the timelines for this tender procedure:

(i) Selection Phase

This tendering procedure starts with the Selection Phase. In this phase, the Interested Parties can qualify for participation in the Tender Phase. The selection of the shortlisted Interested Parties will be based on an assessment of exclusion grounds and suitability requirements. During this phase, a minimum of five (5) Interested Parties will be shortlisted and invited to participate in the Tender Phase, in accordance with Dutch Procurement Act 2012. If more than five (5) Interested Parties qualify based on exclusion grounds and suitability requirements, a further selection will be made to determine the final five (5).

	Tender process	Timeline
1	Publication of Selection Guidelines on TenderNed	7 April 2025
2	Closing date questions on Selection Guidelines*	21 April 2025
3	Publication of information notice	28 April 2025
4	Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest*	16 May 2025, 5 p.m. CET



5	Provisional selection of shortlisted Interested Parties that will be invited to participate in the Tender Phase	30 May 2025
6	Selection of shortlisted Interested Parties that will be invited to participate in the Tender Phase	6 June 2025

The dates specified above at 2 and 4 shall be construed as **deadlines. Questions that are not submitted **before the respective deadline will not be considered** unless this is in the interest of this tender procedure and at the sole discretion of IDH. **Requests to Participate submitted after the respective deadline will be returned and will not be considered in this tender procedure.***

(i) Tender Phase

Tender process		Timeline
7	Publication of Tender Guidelines on TenderNed	10 June 2025
8	Closing date questions on Tender Guidelines	17 June 2025, 5 p.m. CET
9	Publication of information notice	24 June 2025
10	Deadline for submission of proposals	22 July 2025, 5 p.m. CET
11	Presentations from the applicants – if applicable	28 July – 6 August 2025
12	Provisional award of the Contract	8 August 2025
13	Award of the Contract	9 September 2025

More information on the schedule of the Tender Phase will be shared in the Tender Guidelines. IDH reserves the right to update the schedule in the Tender Guidelines if deemed necessary.

After the deadline to Request to Participate has passed, the IDH Evaluation Committee will evaluate the Requests to Participate.

The Requests to Participate will first be tested for completeness:

- The absence of the documents referred to in Chapter 5 of this document can lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure. This is also the case when one or more Grounds for Exclusion apply to an Interested Party.
- IDH reserves the right to reject the proposal if there is any indication of unlawful, unethical, or otherwise inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to corrupt practices, collusion or coordination of proposals with other market parties.

4.4. Questions

Questions regarding the assignment or these Selection Guidelines must be submitted in accordance with the Tender procedure schedule (Chapter 4.3), via TenderNed, with the express mention “Questions tender - Evaluating the Growing Together Program”.

Questions must be submitted in the English language and using the Model Question Form, attached to these Selection Guidelines as Annex 3.

The submitted questions will be grouped, anonymized, and combined in an information notice. This notice will be published on TenderNed in accordance with the schedule above.

Please note the following:



- Questions that are deemed confidential by the Interested Party must be clearly indicated as such in the Model Question Form. If IDH agrees that a question is indeed confidential, the question will be answered separately. However, if the answer to the question could result in an advantage of the Interested Party, the question will be aggregated and published in the general information notice. IDH will notify the Interested Party beforehand and will give the Interested Party the option to withdraw the question.
- The responsibility for the timely and accurate submission of the questions lies with the Interested Party. When IDH indicates that questions have not been received by IDH before the indicated deadline, the Interested Party must demonstrate that the questions were sent in a timely manner.
- Any inaccuracies, omissions, discrepancies, or objections to the content of any of the documents related to the Selection Phase, including appendices must be submitted in this round of questions. In case the above are not addressed before the deadline of the question round, this will result in a forfeit of the Interested Party's right to invoke these matters before or after the selection of the Interested Parties who will be invited to the Tender Phase.

4.5. Requests to Participate

The Request to Participate must be submitted via the TenderNed Platform in accordance with the Tender procedure schedule (Chapter 4.3).

The Request to Participate should be drafted and submitted in accordance with all requirements of these Selection Guidelines. Please see Chapter 5 for an overview of all documents that must be submitted with the Request to Participate.

4.6. Tender conditions

The following terms and conditions apply:

- The Request to Participate deadline is a firm date. **Requests to Participate that are not received in accordance with the Tender procedure schedule (Chapter 4.3), will not be considered.** Interested Parties are solely responsible for the timely and correct delivery of the Request to Participate.
- If the Interested Party is of the opinion that the Selection Guidelines, or any of its annexes contain omissions, errors, contradictions or is otherwise flawed in any way, the Interested Party must report this in writing in accordance with Chapter 4.3 of these Tender Guidelines. Failing to do so will result in a forfeit of the Interested Party's right to invoke these matters after the selection of the shortlisted Interested Parties.
- By submitting a Request to Participate, Interested Parties declare to unconditionally agree to the content and the procedures mentioned in these Selection Guidelines and any other terms and conditions that are applicable to this tender procedure.
- The submitted Request to Participate is regarded as an irrevocable offer.
- By taking note of the Request to Participate and the particulars included therein, IDH assumes no responsibility or liability for any (price) particulars, or errors, included therein.
- Requests to Participate that contain reservations are not permitted and will lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure.



- Every Interested Party can only submit one (1) Request to Participate. The Interested Party that submits more than one (1) Request to Participate will be excluded from this tender procedure.

4.7. Presentations in tender phase

Shortlisted Interested Parties may be invited to present their proposals as part of the evaluation process. Invitations for presentations will be issued following an initial assessment of the written proposals. Details regarding presentations will be communicated at the next stage through the Tender Guidelines.

5. Proposal requirements

All documents referred to in this Chapter must be submitted. The absence or incompleteness of any of the documents referred to in this Chapter can lead to exclusion from further participation in this tender procedure.

The following documents and information must be submitted by the Interested Party, handled in the indicated sequence and numbering. Only complete Requests to Participate that include and address all elements will be considered:

1. An expression of interest (10 pages max) with the following details:
 1. **Consultant background and profile:** Presentation of the company/team of consultants, date of incorporation of the consulting company, specialization(s) and fields of expertise, services, country(ies) of operation(s), and suitability for the assignment.
 2. **Track record:** please include the following table and fill it in with information on relevant work completed which is of similar nature to the scope of the work requested in this TOR.

Name of the consultancy	Client	Date (from/to) during which the assignment was carried out	Value of the contract	Type of consultancy (ex. Baseline / midline / endline / Program / Portfolio / research / survey / evaluation)	Summary of activities, tasks and services provided	Contact details of client representative

3. **High level technical approach and budget:** Summary of the approach including evaluation design, data collection and analysis, and overall budget indication.
4. **Products to be delivered:** Highlight which products will be delivered (e.g. inception, mid-term evaluation, and end-term evaluation reports) in-line with deliverables specified in section 3.10. Provide more detail on how these will be presented and well-synthesized to the commissioner and beyond.
5. **Team composition:** Clear description of the project team, relevant experience of team members, task and time allocated per team member. For this section, please list the name and surname of the consultants proposed as part of the evaluation team and describe:
 - their experience in results-based management, in conducting evaluations or any other research activities.
 - their technical and language skills.
 - their role in the evaluation team, the main tasks they will execute and the time they are expected to be involved.

Note: Preference will be given to applications that offer evaluation teams rather than individual consultants



2. Request to Participate form (attached hereto as Annex 1).
3. Completed and signed ESPD-form, as further described in Chapter 5.1 of the Selection Guidelines.
4. Model Reference Declaration (attached hereto as Annex 2), which must include a maximum of 3 client references.
5. Copy of most recent (audited) financial accounts.
6. An extract of the entry in the local Chamber of Commerce or comparable register in the country of establishment, as further described in Chapter 5.3 of the Selection Guidelines.

The forms included in Annexes 1 and 2 must (as applicable) be fully completed and legally signed. Incomplete and/or incorrect completion of these forms and/or not legally signing them **will lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure**.

Documents to be submitted on request

IDH may at any time request the Interested Party to provide supporting documents regarding the information submitted with the ESPD-form. Interested Party must be able to provide the requested evidence within seven (7) calendar days from the date of the message sent via TenderNed upon first request by IDH. IDH will in any case request the Interested Party(s) whom it intends to select for this tender procedure – as well as any third parties on whose capacity these Bidder(s) have relied – to submit the supporting documents in accordance with Article 2.89 of the Public Procurement Act 2012. These supporting documents are as follows:

- 'certificate of good conduct for tendering' (or '*Gedragdsverklaring aanbesteden*'), as referred to in Article 2.89 Paragraph 2 Dutch Procurement Law, issued by the Minister of Justice or a comparable document from the country of establishment issued by a judicial or authorized government body regarding the grounds for exclusion as referred to in Article 2.86 Dutch Procurement Law, as described in Chapter 5.3 of these Selection Guidelines, which at the time of submission is not older than two (2) years.

IDH therefore advises you to check before subscribing whether you can provide the required supporting documents to IDH within seven (7) calendar days and, if necessary, to take timely steps to obtain the required supporting documents.

Procurement Conduct Declaration

A Procurement Conduct Declaration (GVA) is a statement from the Minister of Security and Justice indicating that no objections exist against the involved natural person or legal entity in connection with bidding for public contracts. As of April 1, 2013, a GVA is required for bidding on a procurement procedure. GVA applications are submitted directly to Centrale Organisatie Voor Opdrachtgevers (Central Organization for Contracting Authorities) ("**COVOG**").

It is expressly pointed out that the application period for the GVA can be at least 8 weeks. Once issued, the GVA is valid for two (2) years. Therefore, it is important – if the candidate/consortium/third party does not yet have a GVA – to apply for it in time.

Data and Documents from Other Member States

IDH also accepts data and documents from another EU Member State that serve an equivalent purpose or demonstrate that the exclusion grounds do not apply to the Interested Party.

5.1. ESPD-form in accordance with the template on TenderNed

The ESPD-form can be made by the ESPD-tool in TENDERNED. The ESPD-form can be made by the ESPD-tool in TenderNed. The outcome is a PDF file of the ESPD-form which must be submitted. The ESPD-form must be completed and signed by a legally authorized representative. The ESPD-form is a uniform statement, in accordance with the Dutch Procurement Law.



The absence of the signed and completed ESPD-form will lead to the exclusion from further participation in this tender procedure. In the event that the Interested Party is a consortium of companies, each company participating in the consortium must submit its own signed and completed ESPD-form. The absence of even only one of the ESPD-forms of the companies participating in the consortium will lead to the exclusion from further participation in this tender procedure.

5.2. References

The Interested Party must provide client references (including name of the client and contact details) that may be contacted by IDH in the evaluation procedure. Furthermore:

- All reference client projects must have been finalized within the last five (5) years.
- References may be in the process of being commissioned, provided that the assignment is finished.
- One reference can cover more than one Suitability Requirement.
- References must be related to projects with mid-line and end-line evaluation

5.3. Documentary evidence

The Interested Party will provide the additional documentary evidence as mentioned below:

- An extract of the entry in the local Chamber of Commerce or comparable register in the country of establishment: the Interested Party must prove that it is registered in the professional or trade register in accordance with the regulations of its country of establishment. This extract must reflect the current status of the Interested Party and may not be older than six (6) months at the time of application.
- A 'certificate of good conduct for tendering', as referred to in Article 2.89 Paragraph 2 Dutch Procurement Law, issued by the Minister of Justice or a comparable document from the country of establishment issued by a judicial or authorized government body regarding the grounds for exclusion as referred to in Article 2.86 Dutch Procurement Law.

The Interested Party guarantees that these certificates correspond with the actual situation of the Interested Party at the time of application. The certificate of good conduct for tendering may not be older than two (2) years at the time of application.

6. Evaluation of the Requests to Participate

After the deadline to submit a Request to Participate has passed, the IDH Evaluation Committee will evaluate the Requests to Participate.

The Requests to Participate will first be tested for completeness. The absence or incompleteness of the documents referred to in Chapter 5 (Documents to be submitted) of the Selection Guidelines can lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure. The absence of compliance with all compulsory requirements can lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure.

If the Request to Participate is complete, the Evaluation Committee will check the Request for any reservations made by the Interested Party. Requests to Participate that are subject to reservation are not permitted and will be excluded from further participation in this tender procedure.

If the Request to Participate is submitted timely, correctly, and without reservation, it will be evaluated against the Grounds for Exclusion and Suitability Requirements described in Chapters 6.2 and 6.3. The (application of) the Interested Party must meet the requirements set out in this chapter.



If more than five (5) Interested Parties submit a valid Request to Participate and pass the exclusion grounds and suitability requirements assessment, a further selection will be made according to Chapter 6.4 of these Selection Guidelines.

6.1. The Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee has been assigned the task to evaluate the Requests to Participate and, during the Tender Phase, will also make the Contract award decision based on their knowledge of the purpose of the Assignment and the required technical specifications. The Evaluation Committee consists of the following 5 (5) representatives:

- IDH M&E team (3)
- Representative from program technical team (1)
- IDH finance controller (1)

6.2. Grounds for exclusion

Applicants shall be excluded from participation in this tender procedure if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) They are the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by court, or for an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings.
- c) they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- d) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the IDH can justify;
- e) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, or with those of the Netherlands or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- f) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization, money laundering or any other illegal activity.
- g) they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct,
- h) *conflict of interest (see below).*

Applicants must confirm in writing that they are not in one of the situations listed above.

1. Applicants shall further observe the highest standards of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts, including without limitation:
 - a. Not making use of child labor or forced labor and/or practice discrimination and respecting the right to freedom of association and the right to organize and engage in collective bargaining, in accordance with the core conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO).
 - b. Respecting basic social rights and environmental aspects.



- c. Having zero-tolerance for corruption and financial irregularities.
- d. Having zero-tolerance for inaction to sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH).

Conflict of Interest

Applicants shall not have a conflict of interest in submitting a tender application to IDH. Conflict of interest refers to any situation where an applicant's application may be compromised or not impartial and objective for reasons involving family, personal life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other connection or shared interest with another person. Should the applicant suspect any potential conflicts of interest on its part, it shall submit a written statement setting forth all conditions and circumstances of such potential conflict(s) of interest to IDH together with its application.

A conflict of interest that cannot be solved effectively by less restrictive means constitutes an optional exclusion ground to an applicant, pursuant to article 2.87(1)(e) of the Dutch Procurement Act.

6.3. Suitability Requirements: Technical ability

The Interested Parties will show to the best of their ability that they fulfil all Suitability Requirements as stated in this Chapter. Requests to Participate that do not meet such requirements may not be considered as viable options and will be assessed within the standard they set in accordance with the selection criteria below which might result in theml being **excluded from further participation in the tender procedure**.

6.3.1. Technical Competence and Professional Experience

For the execution of the Services under the Contract, the Interested Party must demonstrate the ability to meet the experience requirements outlined in the following experience requirements:

- 6.3.1.1 Demonstrated expertise in results-based management, and in conducting evaluations.
- 6.3.1.2 Demonstrated track record in conducting evaluations in the field of value chain development, food security, private sector development, investment development, and climate resilience programs.
- 6.3.1.3 Demonstrated expertise in quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis.
- 6.3.1.4 Demonstrated understanding of the social, political, economic, cultural, and historical context and dynamics of the region where the program's operations take place.
- 6.3.1.5 Demonstrated capacity to collect primary data and understanding of the context and sensitivities in regard to data collection in Ethiopia and Tanzania.
- 6.3.1.6 Demonstrated expertise on data collection with small scale food producers, business employees, production landscapes, and multistakeholder platforms.
- 6.3.1.7 Demonstrated experience in sense-making sessions, presentations of evaluation or research findings to different targeted audiences.
- 6.3.1.8 Capacity to operate in and understand the following languages: English, Swahili and Amharic.

To prove compliance with the experience requirements, Interested Parties must submit references using the Model Reference Declaration Form (Annex 2). All reference client projects must have been



finalized within the last five (5) years. Each reference project must clearly indicate on the Model Reference Declaration Form which experience requirement(s) the reference statement pertains to, within the maximum 500 words description limit. It is acceptable for a single reference project to cover multiple experience requirements.

The Interested Party may rely on a different reference project for each experience requirement, but this is not required. The Interested Party may also rely on the same reference project for multiple or all experience requirements. If the Interested Party relies on the same reference project for multiple or all eligibility requirements, it is sufficient to submit one reference statement that applies to the eligibility requirements under which the reference is used. The reference statement must indicate which eligibility requirements the reference statement relates to.

IDH reserves the right to verify the provided reference projects. The Interested Party is obliged to cooperate with this verification.

6.4. Additional selection

If, based on the exclusion grounds and eligibility requirements described in Chapters 6.2 and 6.3, there are more than five (5) Interested Parties eligible for the Tender Phase, IDH will reduce the number of Interested Parties to five (5). The selection will be based on the two additional selection criteria elaborated below.

In the context of the selection, Interested Parties must submit references using the Model Reference Declaration Form (Annex 2). Each reference project must clearly indicate on the Model Reference Declaration Form which selection criteria(s) the reference statement pertains to, within the maximum 500 words description limit. It is acceptable for a single reference project to cover multiple selection criterion. These may be different references than those relied upon for the suitability requirements (Chapter 6.3), but this is not required. Interested Parties may also rely on the same references for the selection as those relied upon for the eligibility requirements.

Interested Parties are requested to provide an explanation of the reference projects and demonstrate the relevance of the acquired experience for the execution of the current assignment. IDH emphasizes that it is up to the candidate to clearly articulate and substantiate the relevance of the experience.

6.4.1. Selection Criteria

Submitted references will be assessed on the extent to which the experience gained in the reference project is relevant and comparable to the work IDH is expecting in line with these Selection Guidelines. The more the specific characteristics of the reference project align with the specific characteristics of the work under the Contract, the more relevant the experience.

The Interested Party must provide a clear explanation of the reference project, substantiating the relevance and comparability of the acquired experience.

The reference projects submitted must have been completed to the satisfaction of the client within the past five (5) years.

1. Technical Approach and Methodology

The selection will consider how the approach, methodology, and products to be delivered fits the country and program context and delivers quality feedback to the evaluation questions without undue burden to the program team.

2. Experience with Comparable Work

In the context of this selection criterion, at least the following will be considered:

- The extent to which the work carried out in the reference is substantively comparable to the work included in the scope of the Assignment as described in Chapter 3 of these Selection Guidelines.



- Whether the reference involved evaluations within the agriculture, food systems and private sector actors.
- The degree of comparability of the nature and scope of the work in the reference with the expected work under the Assignment.

These aspects are provided as guidance for Interested Parties and should not be considered (sub)selection criteria. The aspects are not listed in order of importance nor are they exhaustive.

3. Experience in Conducting Evaluations for a comparable client

In the context of this selection criterion, at least the following will be considered:

- The extent to which the organization for which the evaluations were performed in the reference is comparable to IDH, for which the Assignment will be executed.
- The degree of comparability of the nature and scope of the organization in the reference with IDH.

These aspects are provided as guidance for Interested Parties and should not be considered (sub)selection criteria. The aspects are not listed in order of importance nor are they exhaustive.

4. Team composition

The selection criteria will consider the variety of expertise in the team meets the technical requirements of the impact pathways of the program and understands the socio-economic contexts of the program countries.

5. Budget

The proposed budget must comprehensively cover all costs necessary for the execution of the assignment, including but not limited to expert fees (senior and junior), travel, and other relevant expenses linked to each deliverable. The budget should clearly indicate the allocation of time between senior and junior staff to ensure transparency regarding the level of expertise involved. This also allows for a fair assessment of value for money.

These weights assigned to these criteria in the evaluation will be as follows:

Selection criteria	Weight
1. Technical Approach and Methodology	30%
2. Experience with Comparative Work	20%
3. Experience in Conducting Evaluations for a comparable client	10%
4. Team composition	20%
5. Budget	20%

Please note: The extent to which the Interested Party substantiates the selection aspects, influences the scores awarded for the explanation. The following aspects are considered:

Specific	Is the explanation clearly, fully, and concretely described?
Measurable	Is the justification supported by concrete examples or experiences, making it clearly described and easy to verify?
Acceptable	Does the explanation fit within the context of the Assignment and is it acceptable?
Realistic	Is the explanation realistic and achievable?

6.4.2. Assessment of additional selection



A maximum of 5 points can be scored per selection criterion (for a total of 10 points), according to the following scale. The weighting between the selection criterion is equal. The members of the Evaluation Committee will assign the number of points to an Interested Party for each assessment aspect by consensus.

Points	Grade
5 points	Excellent
4 points	Good
3 points	More than sufficient
2 points	Sufficient
1 point	Mediocre
0 points	Does not meet the requirement

6.4.3. Selection of Interested Parties

The five (5) Interested Parties with the highest final scores will be invited to submit a bid during the Tender Phase. If the final scores of two or more Interested Parties are equal, the highest score on selection criterion 2 (Experience in Conducting Audit Services for a comparable client) will determine the ranking. If this score is also equal, the highest score on selection criterion 1 (Experience with Comparable Work) will determine the ranking. If the scores of the Interested Parties on both selection criteria are equal, a draw will determine which Interested Parties will be invited to submit a bid.

If one or more selected Interested Parties withdraw during the Tender Phase, IDH reserves the right to invite one or more Interested Parties who were not initially selected to submit a bid. In this case, the ranking resulting from the scoring of the additional selection criteria will be followed.

The decision not to invite an Interested Party to the Tender Phase will be communicated in writing to the respective Interested Parties in accordance with the schedule described in Chapter 4.1 of these Selection Guidelines.

7. Communication and Confidentiality

The Interested Party will ensure that all its contacts with IDH, with regards to the tender, during the tender procedure take place exclusively TED. The Interested Party is thus explicitly prohibited, to prevent discrimination of the other Interested Parties and to ensure the diligence of the procedure, to have any contact whatsoever regarding the tender with any other persons of IDH. If deemed necessary, IDH reserves the right to communicate with the Interested Parties via email.

The documents provided by or on behalf of IDH will be handled confidentiality. The Interested Party will also impose a duty of confidentiality on any parties that it engages. Any breach of the duty of confidentiality by the Interested Party or its engaged third parties will give IDH grounds for exclusion of the Interested Party, without requiring any prior written or verbal warning.

All information, documents and other requested or provided data submitted by the Interested Party will be handled with due care and confidentiality by IDH. The provided information will after evaluation by IDH be filed as confidential. The provided information will not be returned to the Interested Party.

8. Disputes

Any dispute between the parties involved in the tender procedure that arise from the tender procedure, will be submitted to the competent court in Utrecht, the Netherlands.



The Interested Party can object against the decision on the selection of the shortlisted Interested Parties by means of an interim proceeding filing with the civil court in Utrecht, the Netherlands, within six (6) calendar days after receiving a written notification from IDH, in which it states its intention. By refraining from filing an objection, the Interested Party is deemed to have waived its rights to object to the aforementioned decision. Any rights of the Interested Party under this tender procedure will lapse.

In the interest of fast and good progress, each Interested Party is urgently requested to provide IDH with timely notification of any legal measures taken, for example by sending the summons.

9. Miscellaneous

9.1. No remuneration

IDH respects the effort and time that Interested Parties are expected to put into this Selection Phase and throughout the tender procedure. However, IDH has to use its financial means as economically as possible. Therefore, IDH will not remunerate Interested Parties for their participation.

9.2. Policies

IDH has a limited number of internal policies and strategies relevant to this tender procedure, which include communication policy, safeguarding and privacy policies. These policies and strategies will be made available to the selected Consultant at the Contract signing stage. IDH expects the Interested Parties to acknowledge and adhere to these policies or similar standards.

10. Disclaimer

IDH reserves the right to update, change, extend, postpone, withdraw, or suspend these Selection Guidelines, this tender procedure, or any decision regarding the selection of the Interested Parties or subsequent Contract award. IDH is not obliged in this tender procedure to make a Contract award decision or to conclude a Contract with a participant.

Participants in the tender procedure cannot claim compensation from IDH, any affiliated persons or entities, in any way, in case any of the afore-mentioned situations occur.

By handing in a Request to Participate, **the Interested Party accepts all terms and reservations made in these Selection Guidelines, and subsequent information and documentation in this tender procedure.**

11. Annexes

Annex 1: Request to Participate Form – template

Annex 2: Model Reference Declaration – template

Annex 3: Model Question Form - template

Annex 4: Result measurement framework