**Highlands Resilience Activity (HRA)**

**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY** **(NOFO)**

**Project Description:** Highlands Resilience Activity (HRA) is a five-year USAID-funded Feed the Future initiative that aims to facilitate inclusive, diverse, and connected markets that enable 120,000 PSNP households in 36 woredas of six target regions to sustainably reach the graduation threshold. HRA’s strategy focuses on system strengthening, which is crucial for PSNP households, and ensuring that they have sustained income, all-year-round nutritious food, and risk-diversified livelihood paths.

**Objective of the notice of funding opportunity:** The purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity is to solicit Expressions of Interest (EOI) from prospective private and civil society organizations that are eager to innovate or expand services that contribute towards achievement of HRA result areas. **The Notice of funding opportunity is to ensure all interested and qualified organizations and entities have a fair opportunity to compete and qualify for funding.** The expression of interest should among others focus on business models or approaches that strengthen; 1) access to quality inputs and services through a last-mile agricultural and livestock inputs and service supply chain networks for PSNP HHs; 2) access to tailored and accessible agricultural extension and advisory services; 3) customized and accessible financial service solutions for PSNP HHs;4) skills and employment opportunities for PSNP women and youth in HRA target areas; 5) access, supply and consumption of year round nutritious foods for PSNP households; 6) participation in pro-PSNP market systems; 7) Increasing social accountability and delivery of basic social services mainly in the health and education sectors to PSNP households; 8) Gender Youth and Inclusion responsive solutions.

Applicants are encouraged to propose innovative yet sustainable, gender-sensitive, and inclusive approaches to addressing the issues stated above and producing results to meet the Activity’s objectives.

**Eligibility criteria:**

* Should be legally registered with valid and renewed business licenses.
* Business who has been providing and supplying quality and inclusive products and services to the market
* Commitment/interest to tailor their services and willing to establish network of last mile services for PSNP Households in respective localities.
* Commitment to share information related to the service and the business operation with mandated local government bodies and the Mercy Corps.
* The ability to cost share (in kind or cash) in the proposed initiative with a contribution of up to 50% of the total budget is desirable. Applicants that demonstrate strong ownership inform high-cost share commitments shall have high chances for success.
* Presence in HRA target regions or demonstrated willingness to adopt a business model that is appropriate for PSNP households which is tailored to the needs of marginal groups in the target regions.

**Note: *Prior experience with USAID, other US Government entities or Mercy Corps is not required for eligibility. Mercy Corps encourages applications from all potential new partners.***

**Expressions of interest and applications**

**Expressions of Interest:** applicants are required to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) summarizing the proposed business model activities, overall goal and objectives, illustrative activities, and expected results. The EOI should clearly and concisely explain the proposed business model/approach purpose, relevance, activities and expected results in support of the objectives of the Highlands Resilience Activity as set forth above. All EOIs must be submitted in the Expression of Interest Format included below. The deadline for the expression of interest will be open until **June 30,2025 closing time 11:59 PM.**

**Information session**: Information session will be conducted on 18th October 2024, 18th December 2024, and 18th March 2025.please send an email to: [hrainnovations@mercycorps.org](mailto:hrainnovations@mercycorps.org) if you are interested to learn more and have questions.

The Mercy Corps shall evaluate EOIs submitted in response to this Noice of Funding Opportunity on a rolling basis. The EOIs will be evaluated based on defined criteria.

**Full Applications:** Upon evaluation of EOIs, Mercy Corps will invite organizations that submitted EOIs to a co-creation and or provide feedback for consideration in the submission of a full application.

More on information on the NOFO and submission process can be found at www.mercycorps.org/-----

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