REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Consultant for the Agriculture, Youth, and Technology (AYuTe) Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025, 4th Round

1. General Information

The purpose of this request for proposal is to invite applications from potential contractors to provide consulting services for organizing the Agriculture, Youth, and Technology (AYuTe) Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025.

The terms of reference include background information, desired methodology, objectives, timeframe for completion of the assignment, and a list of deliverables. This document also outlines the expertise Heifer International Ethiopia is seeking for this activity and provides guidance on how to submit a proposal to complete the assignment.

Heifer International Ethiopia anticipates awarding a three-month contract for the organization of the challenge. Payments will be made based on Heifer's submission and approval of deliverables. The award agreement will include a payment schedule with specific deliverables and all payments.

Applicants are encouraged to seek clarification of expected deliverables prior to preparing and submitting their proposals.

2. Background

About Heifer International

Since 1944, Heifer International (an international non-governmental development organization) has worked with more than 52 million people around the world to end hunger and poverty in a sustainable way. Heifer currently operates in 19 countries across Africa, Asia, and the Americas, including the United States, supporting farmers and food producers to strengthen local economies and build secure livelihoods that provide a living income.

Working with rural communities across Africa for 50 years, Heifer International supports farmers and local food producers to strengthen local economies and build secure livelihoods that provide a living income. Heifer’s foundation was built on the belief that ending hunger begins with giving people the means to feed themselves, generate income and achieve sustainable livelihoods for their households. Heifer’s global vision for 2020 - 2030 is to close the living income gap for additional 10 million families. This vision is a focused approach for the African continent to support at least 6 million smallholder farmers in Africa reach sustainable living income.

For more information, please visit: https://www.heifer.org.

About Heifer Ethiopia Country Program

Heifer Ethiopia commenced operations in Ethiopia in 2004, forging partnerships with both international and local development organizations to enhance agricultural practices.

Heifer Ethiopia's Programmatic areas: Heifer Ethiopia's programs focus on agricultural development that leverage agribusiness value chains, including poultry, horticulture, small ruminants, dairy, and honey production to drive sustainable growth. Additionally, we prioritize climate resilience initiatives to mitigate the impacts of environmental challenges on farming communities. A core aspect of our mission is to create opportunities for entrepreneurship, thereby fostering job creation. Through strategic interventions in livelihoods improvement programs, we aim to empower individuals and communities for long-term economic stability.

Heifer priority focus areas: Heifer's priority focus areas include women, youth, smallholder farmers, and the environment. Through long-term partnerships with institutional donors and foundations, we are dedicated to enhancing the livelihoods of these target groups through agricultural development initiatives. Our programs aim to empower women, engage and support youth, strengthen smallholder farming communities, and promote environmental sustainability. By aligning our efforts with these key areas, we strive to create lasting positive impacts on individuals, communities, and ecosystems.

About Agriculture, Youth, and Technology (AYuTe)

In 2021, Heifer launched AYuTe NextGen, an agribusiness innovation initiative designed to catalyze ground-up innovation that address challenges faced by smallholder farmers at scale, providing the incubation and catalytic financing needed for these businesses to scale. AYuTe (Agriculture, Youth and Technology) combines the power of African youth with the many possibilities of emerging technologies to support smallholder farmers across the continent grow their businesses and incomes.

Central to the initiative is the AYuTe Africa Challenge, competition that encourages the development of agritech businesses, particularly by young Africans who might not otherwise engage in agricultural innovation. The competition awards cash grants to the most promising young agritech innovators across Africa, it aims to be one of the most ambitious agriculture competitions on the continent. The program also seeks to elevate agriculture as a desirable career for young Africans with several opportunities for leveraging and integrating technology from farm to market, making the sector more attractive to the next generation of farmers. Heifer International's support for these innovators also extends to leveraging innovative capital and strategic partnerships to help the AYuTe Africa Champions translate this funding into business expansion strategies.

The aim of AYuTe Ethiopia competition is to harness the power of Ethiopian youth to develop emerging technologies that can make a positive difference for smallholder farmers in Ethiopia.

Following the successful execution of the 2024 edition of AYuTe Africa Challenge Ethiopia, Heifer Ethiopia seeks the services of a consultant to design and implement the 2025 edition of the Challenge.

3. Description of Expected Professional Services

The implementation period for the AYuTe Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025 is from March 21, 2025 to June 21, 2025.

3.1. Purpose

The purpose of hiring a consultant for the AYuTe Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025 is to design and implement a competition that identifies and rewards innovative start-up ideas with the potential to address the challenges facing smallholder farmers in Ethiopia. This initiative, part of Heifer's AYuTe Africa Challenge, aims to foster innovation from the ground up, promote businesses that can scale solutions for smallholder farmers, and promote agriculture as an attractive career among young Africans. The consultant will play a critical role in ensuring the effective organization and execution of the Challenge to achieve these objectives.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Consultant

The Consultant is expected to provide the following deliverables and produce both hard and electronic versions of the campaign tools, under the guidance of Heifer's Communications Manager and/or MEL Manager:

Strategic Counsel and Coordination

- Provide technical support and strategic planning around goals and objectives.
- Provide updates around key upcoming activities, events, tactics, and outreach.
- Provide in-depth stakeholder map that is critical to audience segmentation for the Heifer Country team.
- All resources needed (transport, accommodation, advert and data collectors' expenses, etc.) should be the responsibility of the consulting firm.

Project implementation

- Develop and design the competition strategy of AYuTe Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025.
- Develop a comprehensive workplan for the competition.
- Design a communications strategy and develop communication materials (Brochures, leaflets, booklets, banners.
- Communicate with relevant stakeholders to discuss on the strategy and detailed plan.
- Monitor project progress
- Ensure timely delivery and maximum project impact, including working with Heifer Ethiopia program teams to maintain and ensure adherence to reporting and monitoring tools and processes.

- Provide thorough due-diligence, progress updates, and final/full report on top finalists and the entire process of event, including recommendations on winning startups companies to receive cash grant.

Media Strategy and Coverage to Raise Awareness

- Develop a comprehensive media strategy:
    - Create a detailed media strategy designed to raise awareness of the AYuTe Africa Challenge. The strategy should include clear objectives, target audience identification, key messages, and media outreach tactics to maximize visibility and engagement across a variety of media platforms (social media, television, radio, print, and online).
    - Provide top-tier media list: Identify and provide a comprehensive media list of top-tier journalists, media houses, influencers, and relevant industry contacts who can amplify the messaging around the AYuTe competition. This list should include media outlets that serve the target audience, with a focus on those that cover innovation, youth empowerment, and entrepreneurship and smallholder agriculture.
- Develop and disseminate press kit to major press houses:
    - Design a press kit that includes key information about the AYuTe Africa Challenge, its goals, key dates, competition details, and profiles of key stakeholders (e.g., competition finalists, judges, and organizers). This press kit should be designed to be easy to share and compelling for both traditional and digital media.
    - Ensure that the press kit is distributed to key press houses, journalists, bloggers, and influencers on relevant platforms to ensure that the AYuTe competition receives extensive media coverage.
- Content development and messaging: Identify opportunities for creating and delivering inspiring and compelling messages to attract multimedia content about youth innovation and challenge. This includes:
    - Identify key media opportunities: Identify key moments and opportunities throughout the competition (before, during, and after) to develop and deliver compelling messages that will attract multimedia content. This could include feature stories, interviews, behind-the-scenes content, or special event promotions that highlight youth innovation, entrepreneurship, and the importance of the AYuTe Africa Challenge-Ethiopia.
    - Create compelling contest content: Develop a comprehensive content package for the AYuTe Challenge, ensuring that all materials align with the goals of the Challenge. This should include high-quality written, audio, and visual content that is cohesive, engaging, and relevant to the target audience. Content should be tailored for different platforms (e.g., TV, social media, radio, print) to maximize reach.
    - Identify broadcasting platforms: Identify and map appropriate broadcast platforms for both dissemination and live broadcast of the AYuTe competition to ensure broad exposure to potential audiences in different regions.
- Take ownership of the entire process and assume full responsibility for creating and broadcasting, promotional and advertising materials across various channels including social media, television, radio, and print media outlets.

- Ownership and Responsibility:
    - Full ownership of media execution: Take ownership and full responsibility for the entire process of creating, executing, and monitoring of all media-related activities associated with the AYuTe Challenge execution, and monitoring of all media-related activities associated with it.
    - Media outreach and channel diversification: Lead the creation and distribution of promotional and advertising materials across a variety of channels, including but not limited to social media, television, radio, and print media outlets. The Media Consultant will ensure that each channel is optimized for its specific audience and that the message resonates with the competition's target audience.
- Media interviews and engagement:
    - Arrange media interviews/ live chat/ fireside chat with winners and the Country Director (pre- and post-competition). This includes setting up key interviews with key media outlets to highlight the importance of the AYuTe competition, its goals, and its impact on youth innovation.
- Press Releases**:** Create at least three (3) press releases:
    - Announcing the launch of the AYuTe competition.
    - Announcing the top five finalists in the competition.
    - Announcing the winners at the conclusion of the competition. Each press release should be strategically timed and pitched to relevant media outlets for maximum coverage.
- Media Coverage and Reporting: Ensure broad media coverage of the AYuTe competition across multiple platforms, including radio, TV, print, and online. This should include interviews, feature stories, and event coverage.
- Top-Tier News Coverage:
    - Secure at least 10 top-tier mass media platforms (including national TV channels, top newspapers, and major online news outlets) for press releases and events.
    - Online media engagement: Target for at least 10 publications and one prominent online news outlet to extend the reach of the AYuTe competition and engage with digital audiences.
- Comprehensive Media Engagement Report: Provide a detailed post-campaign media engagement report. This report should include insights into media coverage, reach, audience engagement, and recommendations for improving future media campaigns. The report should include qualitative and quantitative data on media placements and mentions.

Social Media/ Digital

- Paid media adverts promoting the national competition and increased followership of country team social accounts (minimum of four (4) sponsored ads)
- Creation of new, refreshing and engaging copy and visual content, including stories that profile the champions, show impact and generate engagement i.e. video documentary of

winners, competition process, graphics etc. (minimum of two (2) videos and ten (10) graphics per month)
- Provision of winners' bio, pictures and details to be used on the regional AYuTe website page
- Build asset library of images, videos of winners and necessary Heifer key stakeholders
- Recruit at least four (4) online (YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) influencers to promote the competition
- Banner ads on Heifer AYuTe website with high affinity with the target audience
- Curate monthly engagement reports covering the different Heifer country social pages

Stakeholder Engagement/Events

- Coordinate and implement at least one (1) live chat/ fireside chat with winners and Country Director.
- Identify, engage, and ensure onboarding of selection committees and judges.
- Coordinate and facilitate the pitching events that take place as part of the competition.
- Organize a bootcamp training session for the top ten competitors for five days aimed at equipping them with essential skills to effectively present their ideas.
- Facilitate Heifer Ethiopia's ability to engage and leverage the support of local stakeholders who have expressed interest in sponsoring and financing AYuTe events and champions. This will include private banks, other private sector enterprises, Government organizations such as the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The goal is to ensure timely and effective partnerships that contribute to the success of AYuTe initiatives.
- Identify additional awareness opportunities (side events or an event with potential partners with similar objectives) for the competition e.g. panel discussion.
- Commit to identifying and selecting appropriate venue/platform for the award ceremony, and organize, coordinate, and manage the award ceremony, including the negotiation of fees and payment.
- Organize high-level grand finale and winners' prize award event, curating a digital-savvy immersive agritech experience for not less than 100 invitees.

Competition Report

- For every physical or virtual activity, send a detailed report which will include pictures, an attendance sheet, and other appendixes in line with agreed reporting templates.
- Prepare and submit in a timely basis a thorough and in-depth post-competition/engagement narrative report of the AYuTe Africa Ethiopia Challenge 2025 that details the activities, impact, outreach, results, expectations, overall event process, recommendations, and key learnings. The narrative report must be accompanied by a financial report.

4. Duration

The implementation period for the AYuTe Africa Challenge Ethiopia 2025 is from March 21, 2025 to June 21, 2025. The final award ceremony will be held on June 19, and the reporting period will follow in June.

5. Expected deliverables of the consultant

- An inception report with a detailed and comprehensive activity/work plan for the competition, outlining key milestones, timelines, roles and responsibilities, resource requirements, risk mitigation strategies, and expected outcomes. Develop and share reports (timely updates, monthly reports, quarterly, and end-of-project reports) throughout the challenge that shall describe all project activities such as insights, learnings, and recommendations.
- Regular Progress/Challenges update Report: Develop and share timely updates, including monthly, quarterly, and end-of-project reports detailing activities, insights, challenges, learnings, and recommendations.
- Identify, select, and onboard appropriate partners from Financial Institutions, relevant Government Organizations (e.g., MoLS, MoA), and Private Sector enterprises, and secure their commitment to sponsor and financially support AYuTe events and champions.
- Competition and communication strategy designed and developed.
- Engage relevant stakeholders to facilitate discussions on the strategy and detailed plan.
- Comprehensive competition activity/work plan developed.
- Engaging, compelling, and impactful communications and promotional materials on youth innovation designed and developed.
- Develop coherent and relevant content for the AYuTe competition and identify appropriate broadcast platforms for its broadcasting and dissemination.
- Ensure Heifer Ethiopia and relevant Government counterparts' visibility in all communications through appropriate branding and logos.
- Conduct a boot camp training sessions for an intensive mentoring and training of the candidates.
- Developed use existing Heifer web platform to house information about the competition and the winning solutions.
- Provide comprehensive lists (with relevant details) of judges and selection committee members involved in the selection of innovative competitors.
- Successful virtual pitch events coordinated and finalized.
- Due-diligence and summary report on the top finalists from the pitch events and recommendation of the winning startup company to receive the cash grant.
- Produce concise video clips of the AYuTe winners, showcasing their accomplishments, innovations, and contributions.
- Exploit the media effectively (TV, Radio, Print and Online).
- An appropriate venue/platform for the award ceremony selected and the award ceremony organized, coordinated, and managed (including negotiation of fees and payments).
- Develop and share reports throughout the project lifecycle (including final report) which include all project activities such as insights, learnings, and recommendations.

6. Expected Roles of Heifer Ethiopia

- Finalize and sign the contract with the consultant.
- Participate in project inception meeting with the consultant.
- Participate in weekly progress meetings with the consultant.
- Provide technical guidance and support
- Review and validate all resources that will be proposed by the consultant before deployment.
- Ensure that all payments are done as stated in the contract.

7. Methodology

It is envisaged that the methodology used during this youth agritech innovation challenge will include, but not necessarily limited to the following:

- A national call for application to the youth in agritech space
- Launching ceremony
- Business boot camps
- Pitching competitions
- Coaching and Mentorship
- Business Incubation
- Gala awards ceremony
- Post-award mentorship
- Conduct after-challenge lessons learnt documentation

8. Required Skills, competence, and experience

- Legal status recognized by the Government.
- A minimum of 10 years of experience with a proven professional record working in organizing similar competitions.
- The consultant should have a relevant educational background in journalism, communication, marketing, and an ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Accurate, creative and versatile writing skills, including digital media.
- Ability to either own or access necessary technological assets and skilled personnel, including up-to-date video and camera equipment and experienced camerapersons.
- Good understanding of the issues relating to youth, innovation, agriculture and competition
- Ability to analyze information quickly and easily for audiences.
- Demonstrated ability to work with minimum supervision, be dynamic, proactive, and creative.

- Excellent oral and written English and Amharic communication skills. Working knowledge of other local languages preferable.
- Strong national and regional media contacts and demonstrable experience getting stories picked up by print and broadcast.
- Strong ability to see newsworthy stories quickly and easily.
- Experience in creating engaging social media assets and image editing.

9. Application Process

All interested individuals or firms will submit their organization's profile with the following information:

Technical Proposal

- **General information**
    - Organization or highly experienced individuals overview highlighting related assignments completed with client name, contact person and mobile number
    - Capacity statement
    - Legal registration to work in Ethiopia
- **Technical Approach**
    - A detailed methodology on how the assignment will be conducted, including implementation strategy, media and visibility plan, project participants selection procedures, quality control strategies, etc.
    - List and briefly describe the team and its proposed personnel, indicating what role each proposed individual will have; CVs of team members to be provided in an attachment. Maximum of 3-pages CV for the Lead Consultant (who will lead the assignment) highlighting related assignments completed, role in the completed assignment. 2 paragraphs short CV for other team members (who will be involved in the assignment) highlighting related assignments completed and roles.
    - A clear and comprehensive workplan (draft), outlining the major activities, people responsible and time schedule.
    - Organizational or individual capacity statement, including past experiences and activities related to the theme of the study. Reference information must include the location, award numbers, and a brief description of work performed.
    - At least three references from other clients for which similar assignments were undertaken with contact information for each.

Financial Proposal

- Itemized budget

- Narrative explanations of line items

Annexes

- Documents in favor of previous relevant projects
- Organization's/Firm's Certificate, TIN and VAT registration
- A summary of previous similar assignments undertaken within the last 3 years is preferable

Interested individuals or firms legally eligible to implement this assignment in Ethiopia are invited to submit a proposal. Please include the name of the person in your organization who will be involved in this contract, as well as your telephone and email contact information.

10. Instructions for Submission of Proposal

- Bids must be accompanied by renewed trade license/certificates, VAT, TIN Registration Certificate and other supporting letter/s that they have paid the taxes for the government.
- Bidders should submit Technical and Financial proposals separately by clearly marking them as such.
- Besides, a previous relevant experience supported with letter of recognition from client/s is/are mandatory.
- Bidders should submit their proposals in wax-sealed envelopes to the Heifer Ethiopia office on or before March 5, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in person to the following address:

  Heifer Project International Ethiopia
  Location: Gurdshola behind Top Ten Hotel/ around Ethiopian Athletics Federation
  Yeka Sub-City, Woreda 9
  House No. New
  Telephone: (+251) 9 54 84 80 98
  Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Proposals received after the submission deadline will not be considered. Bidders are responsible for ensuring their proposals are submitted according to the instructions stated herein.

11. Selection Criteria

Proposal evaluation focus	Percentage
Legal credentials (Renewed license, VAT registration certificate (If the company is VAT registered), TIN certificate)	Accept/Reject

Accuracy and relevance of the proposed technical approach and methodology	20%
Completeness of proposal according to the RFP (general information, activity plan, budget, team expertise, organizational structure, etc.)	20%
Proposed team: expertise and competencies to address project components supported with the relevant documents (CVs)	20%
Relevance organizational experience and capability to implement/manage the assignment supporting with a testimonial /recommendation letters	20%
Bank statement for two years with at least three (3) million Birr turnover (transactions)	20%
Total	100%

12. Passing Mark

The pass mark will be 70% and above.

The technical committee will evaluate the technical proposal based on the above criteria and the financial proposal of the bidders who have passed the technical evaluation will be opened and the lowest bidder will be selected.

13. Validity of Proposals and Pricing

Proposals submitted shall remain open for acceptance for 120 days from the last date specified for receipt of the proposal. This includes, but is not limited to pricing, terms and conditions, service levels, and all other information. If your organization is selected, all information in this document and the negotiation process is contractually binding.

14. Bid Currency

Applicants are required to submit their price for the service in Ethiopian Birr.

15. Award Process and Contract Mechanism

No.	Activity	Due Date
1	Performance Period	90 days (21 March – 21 June 2025)
2	Proposal Submission Deadline	5 March 2025
3	Selection Committee review	6 - 7 March 2025
4	Notification of award	10 March 2025
5	Award agreement and signing	20 March 2025

16. Payment Modality

- **Thirty percent (30%) of the total fee,** will be paid within ten (10) business days after submission of the Inception Report (as defined in the TOR and Heifer Ethiopia's reasonable acceptance thereof.

- **Thirty percent (30%) of the total fee** shall be paid within ten (10) business days of the Contractor's submission of the First Round List (as defined in the TOR) and Heifer Ethiopia's reasonable acceptance thereof.

- **Forty percent (40%) of the total fee,** to be paid within fifteen (15) business days of Contractor's delivery of all deliverables (as defined in the TOR) and successful completion of all services, submission of the Final Report, and Heifer Ethiopia's receipt and reasonable acceptance thereof.

17. Limitations

This TOR does not constitute a commitment to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in preparing a response to this TOR, or to procure or contract for any services or supplies. Heifer International reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in response to this TOR at Heifer International's sole and absolute discretion.