**Request for Expressions of Interest**

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**REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

**SHIRE VALLEY TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (SVTP) - 2**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**AS AGRIBUSINESS MANAGERS (FIRMS) OF 11 SMALLHOLDER-OWNED COMMERCIAL FARM ENTERPRISES (SOCFES) UNDER THE SHIRE VALLEY TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

**Introduction**

The Shire Valley Transformation Programme (SVTP) is a 14-year agricultural and irrigation development initiative (2018-2031), funded by the World Bank (WB), African Development Bank (AfDB), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Government of Malawi (GoM). This program is structured to boost agricultural productivity and sustainability across the Shire Valley by enabling a shift from subsistence to commercial farming for smallholder farmers.

Under the SVTP, eleven cooperatives operate as Smallholder-Owned Commercial Farm Enterprise (SOCFES), representing over 19,500 smallholder farmers across 9,643 hectares of consolidated farmland. These cooperatives support sustainable commercial agriculture through advanced irrigation systems, land management, and market-driven agricultural practices. By moving to high-value crop production, these SOCFEs aim to improve food security, enhance income levels, and support local community development.

The eleven SOCFEs are: Kambadwe, Mwana Alirenji, Mulambe, Mantchombe, Katundu, Chingalumba, Mangalangala, Nanyerere, Tchombwa, Chifunda, and Kuwala. These SOCFEs seek to engage an Agribusiness Manager that shall be a reputable Firm to manage and implement their business plans, coordinate infrastructure and resource development, and drive profitable and sustainable agricultural operations.

***Table 1: Preliminary SOCFE profiles***

| **Cooperative** | **Gross Area (Ha)** | **Members** | **Irrigation Type** | **Primary Crops** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Kambadwe** | 167.6 | 204 | Furrow, Sprinkler, Micro | Sorghum, Soybeans, Groundnuts, Mangoes |
| **Mwanaalirenji** | 832.7 | 798 | Furrow | Chillies, Cotton, Soybeans |
| **Mantchombe** | 353.7 | 626 | Overhead | Maize, Chillies, Groundnuts |
| **Mulambe** | 1,137.6 | 2,031 | Furrow | Sorghum, Soybeans, Groundnuts, Mangoes, Sugarcane |
| **Katundu** | 1,289.3 | 1,983 | Pivot, Sprinkler | Cotton, Soybeans, Chillies |
| **Chingalumba** | 1,317.4 | 1,932 | Pivot, Sprinkler | Beans, Groundnuts, Maize, Chillies |
| **Mangalangala** | 693.2 | 1,819 | Furrow | Sorghum, Soybeans, Groundnuts, Mangoes |
| **Nanyerere** | 268.8 | 363 | Pivot, Furrow | Cotton, Soybeans, Chillies |
| **Tchombwa** | 1,052.3 | 3,321 | Pivot, Sprinkler | Bird’s Eye Chili, Cotton, Soybean, Maize |
| **Chifunda** | 936.8 | 2,073 | Pivot, Sprinkler | Beans, Maize, Groundnuts |
| **Kuwala** | 1,593.2 | 4,419 | Pivot, Sprinkler | Beans, Maize, Sorghum, Chillies |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **9642.8** |  |  |  |

The Cooperative Farms will be ready at different times and therefore will also hire Agribusiness Managers at different times as indicated in Table 2:

**Table 2: Details on Cooperative Farms in lot numbers, net irrigable areas, expected time to receive water and recruitment of Agribusiness Managers.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Lot no** | **Name of a Cooperative Farm (s)** | **Net irrigable area according to Business Plan (Ha)** | **Year Expected to receive water from Secondary Pipes** | **Expected time to recruit Agribusiness Managers (6-9 months before receiving water)** |
| 1 | Kambadwe + Mwana Alirenji | 886 | 2025 | Q1 2025/Q2 2025 |
| 2 | Mantchombe +Mulambe | 1139 | 2025 | Q1 2025/Q2 2025 |
| 3 | Chingalumba | 1060 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
| 4 | Managalangala | 499 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
| 5 | Katundu +Nanyerere | 1224 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
| 6 | Chifunda | 707 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
| 7 | Kuwala | 1195 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
| 8 | Tchombwa | 863 | 2026 | Q4 2025/Q1 2026 |
|  | **Grand total** | **7573** |  |  |

In terms of Farm Management , some smaller and bigger cooperative Farms have been combined hence 8 lots have been proposed from 11 Cooperative Farms. Therefore, the Producers and Marketing Cooperative Societies of the above farms now invite eligible Agribusiness Managers (Firms) to indicate their interest in providing the Services of an Agribusiness Manager. Each applicant (firm) is expected to express interest in **NOT** more than **TWO LOTS**.

**Objectives of the Assignment**

The primary objective of this assignment is to secure the services of an experienced Agribusiness Manager, a reputable Firm to provide farm management services to 1 or more of the 11 SOCFEs. The key responsibilities include:

1. **Implementation of Business Plans**: Leading the implementation of each SOCFEs’ business plan, overseeing operational, financial, and marketing activities.
2. **Resource and Infrastructure Management**: Ensuring each SOCFE has the resources, including irrigation systems, storage facilities, and agricultural equipment, to sustain commercial operations.
3. **Operational Efficiency**: Implementing best practices in crop management, pest and disease control, water use, and productivity tracking to optimize output.
4. **Financial Management**: Establishing robust financial oversight mechanisms, complying with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), and promoting sustainable profitability for each SOCFE.
5. **Market Linkages**: Developing relationships with high-value buyers and supporting effective sales and branding strategies.
6. **Capacity Building**: Providing training for SOCFE members in modern agricultural techniques, financial literacy, and governance to support self-sustaining operations.

**Scope of Services**

The Agribusiness Manager’s scope of work will span three primary phases, each with specified tasks and expected deliverables critical to the SOCFE’s successful transition to commercial agriculture:

1. **Pre-Production Phase**:
	1. Mobilize financial resources, securing funding through SVTP grants and partnerships with the private sector.
	2. Oversee and manage the development and installation of farm infrastructure.
	3. Procure machinery, agricultural inputs, and essential equipment for farming activities.
	4. Establish the SOCFE’s operational framework, recruit required personnel and implement administrative and financial systems.
2. **Production Phase**:
	1. Oversee active farming operations, including optimized crop rotation, soil health management, and pest control.
	2. Manage irrigation systems to ensure efficient water use and schedule maintenance to enhance resilience against climate variability.
	3. Implement labour management systems to recruit, train, and oversee the workforce, adhering to labour laws and productivity standards.
	4. Maintain compliance with health, safety, and environmental standards, ensuring ESMP adherence.
3. **Post-Production Phase**:
	1. Coordinate harvest schedules and post-harvest handling practices to preserve crop quality and minimize losses.
	2. Develop and maintain strong market linkages, negotiate fair prices, and manage logistics for timely product delivery.
	3. Prepare comprehensive financial reports on revenue, costs, and profit distributions, establishing a transparent profit-sharing system for cooperative members.

**Shortlisting Criteria**

Interested firms must demonstrate their qualifications and relevant experience to carry out these services. The criteria for shortlisting include:

1. **Core Business and Years of Experience**:
	1. The firm should have a minimum of 5years’ experience in agribusiness management, focusing on commercial farming and cooperative-based agricultural models.
2. **Relevant Project Experience**:
	1. Proven experience in developing and implementing business plans for commercial farms.
	2. Expertise in the design, installation, and maintenance of various irrigation systems (furrow, sprinkler, drip, centre pivot).
	3. Experience in crop production, management, primary processing, and marketing for diverse agricultural products.
	4. Demonstrated capacity in financial management, including requisition, utilization, and liquidation of matching grants.
	5. Established networks with value chain partners, such as input suppliers, off-takers, and financial service providers.
3. **Technical and Managerial Capability**:
	1. An effective organizational structure with qualified personnel in agronomy, finance, environmental compliance, and cooperative governance.
	2. Adherence to ESMP guidelines, ensuring alignment with environmental and social compliance measures in farming operations.
4. **Compliance with World Bank Regulations**:
	1. Firms must comply with Section III, paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (September 2023) regarding conflict of interest.

**Key Personnel Qualifications**

The firm’s key personnel should meet the following qualifications:

* **Managing Director**: At least a Bachelor’s degree in Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics, or Business Administration, with a minimum of 5 years in agribusiness management and a focus on commercial operations and compliance.
* **Farm Manager**: At least a Diploma in Agriculture, Agricultural engineering or Agronomy with at least 10 years of field experience.

Firms should submit a high-level organizational structure, general qualifications, and headcount but do not need to provide CVs for key personnel at this stage.

**Submission Guidelines**

Interested Agribusiness Management Firms are invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EoI) indicating their interest in providing services for one or more of the 11 SOCFEs under SVTP. EoIs should be delivered to the address below **by 11th December, 2024** and must include:

* A cover letter summarizing the firm’s core business, relevant project experience, and technical capacity.
* Company profile and legal registration documents.
* References from previous clients with contact details and descriptions of similar project engagements.
* Brief profiles of key personnel and their qualifications.
* Outline of the firm’s proposed approach and methodology for achieving SOCFE objectives.

**Additional Information**

1. **Firms are allowed to associate with others to enhance qualifications, specifying whether the association is a joint venture or sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all partners will be jointly and severally liable for the contract.**
2. **Take note that SVTP Project Management Team (PMT) is just facilitating the recruitment process of Agribusiness Managers hence PMT is posting this REoI to help SOCFEs recruit competent Farm Managers.**
3. **It is expected that a panel of approved firms will be confirmed once Expressions of Interest are assessed. Subsequently, SOCFEs will invite firms from the panel to submit comprehensive offers to provide the services requested by each SOCFE.**

**Contact Information for Clarifications**

For clarifications or further information, please contact:

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**Submission Address**

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