



Development of Uganda's Aquaculture Sector

Call for project proposals for: Development of Uganda's Aquaculture Sector

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kampala

Duration: 4 years

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kampala (EKN) is initiating and funding a project within its Private Sector Development portfolio, aimed at the inclusive development of Uganda's aquaculture sector. Accordingly, EKN invites interested organizations to submit comprehensive project proposals for its implementation.

Please find below the context and main features of the envisaged project. Key criteria that will be used in the selection process are described in this paper.

The project's total budget is capped at a maximum of 6 million euros for a four-year duration. Prospective applicants should note that the final award of the project is not guaranteed and may be subject to unforeseen circumstances. Furthermore, annual budget approval is contingent upon the availability of sufficient funds as allocated by the budget legislator.

Questions on the planned intervention/this document can be submitted by email KAM-OS@minbuza.nl until 22 July 2025.

Answers to the aforementioned questions will be published on the website by 29 July 2025.

Submission deadline for full proposals: 31 August 2025 at 12:00 EAT to KAM-OS@minbuza.nl



July 2025

Call for Proposals for the Development of Uganda's Aquaculture Sector

Background

The aquaculture sector is one of Uganda's fastest growing sectors, with the potential of catalyzing economic growth and development. With over 25% of its surface covered in fresh water, Uganda has a unique advantage for more investment in the aquaculture value chain.

The Netherlands is one of Uganda's biggest sources of investment. Dutch companies in Uganda are mainly involved in agriculture, with the majority providing agricultural inputs, animal feeds, infrastructure and expertise to Ugandan small holder farmers.

In recent years, Uganda's aquaculture industry has also attracted Dutch investment, with two significant projects in the value chain. In 2024, Yalelo Uganda, a Dutch investment in cage fish farming has announced the expansion of their farm. Additionally, De Heus is constructing a fish feed plant near Jinja City, with a capacity of 50,000 tons annually, with the aim to supply quality fish feed to farmers in Uganda and the East African region. These investments have encouraged other agri-businesses to view aquaculture as a promising area for both trade and investment.

With these large investments, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development from the Netherlands and the Minister of State for Fisheries signed a Letter of Intent in October 2024, which renewed the cooperation between Uganda and the Netherlands to jointly develop Uganda's aquaculture sector. The main areas of focus include: improving aquaculture production and productivity, post harvest handling and value addition, and increasing market access and competitiveness.

With this in mind, the Embassy has engaged with other development partners running projects in the aquaculture value chain and commissioned a study (by Lattice Consulting) to identify existing gaps. The findings of these engagements have been used to formulate the scope described in this call for proposals.

In order to translate the Letter of Intent into concrete actions, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has decided to support a project that will focus on the development of the aquaculture value chain in Uganda. The project will be managed in close consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries and will focus on stimulating investment in the sector while also meeting the indicators set out in Uganda's NDP4 and the Embassy's Multi-Annual Country Strategy.



Context / Situational Analysis

The aquaculture sector in Uganda offers significant potential to contribute to the country's economic growth and food security needs. Despite notable improvements in aquaculture development over the recent years, the sector in Uganda is still underperforming relative to its potential. Structural and systemic barriers, such as insufficient infrastructure, limited access to markets, weak regulatory frameworks, and gaps in technical expertise, constrain growth and hinder the realization of sustainable aquaculture practices.

Market structure & players

In Uganda, most of the fish consumed still comes from wild capture fisheries, the majority of which is sourced from Lake Victoria. According to the FAO, wild fish capture has held steady at roughly 400,000 metric tons annually over the past 15 years, though some experts believe this figure might be overstated. Uganda's population is projected to double from 49.3 million to 100 million by 2050, meaning that the demand for affordable white protein will rise sharply, despite the lake's carrying capacity already having been reached. Aquaculture—through lake cages and land-based ponds—offers a viable pathway to meet this growing need without putting further pressure on wild fish stocks.

Apart from Lake Albert and Lake Victoria, fish farming is not prominent on Uganda's other lakes. The Lake Victoria Basin dominates Uganda's aquaculture sector, responsible for approximately 99.6% of cage farming and about 93.5%¹ of total output. This is primarily driven by a small number of capital-intensive, established operators. The aquaculture sector in the Lake Victoria basin is relatively new, with approximately 89% of operators having started their business after 2015.

Growth in cage farming has been driven primarily by large-scale commercial operators, while pond farming has expanded mainly through government-led initiatives. Cage farming now accounts for 99% of national aquaculture production. Although 25,000 ponds and 5,000² cages are officially registered in Uganda, many are not in active use—particularly pond farms, which are often established through support programs but abandoned once external assistance ends. For pond farming, professionalism is highly lacking, with low skill levels, low commercialization, and a high dependency on donors for free inputs. Due to these structural challenges, pond farming is unlikely to substantially grow in the coming years without long-term investment in capacity building and a change in farmer attitudes.

¹ RVO report 2022 - based on EU True Fish and MAAIF sources

² MAAIF report, 2024



Within the aquaculture sector, there is a clear divergence between large farmers backed by foreign soft loans or capital and smaller farmers with limited access to finance. Aquaculture offers significant economies of scale, but it requires substantial capital to establish and operate. However, banks are generally reluctant to lend to fish farmers due to the perceived risk, leaving many small-scale farmers unable to invest in productivity-enhancing technologies. Significant capital and operating expenditures also mean that wild catch production remains less costly than farmed fish, making it difficult for farmers to establish a stable foothold in the domestic market. Most farms are price takers, with prices largely dictated by middlemen (intermediaries and traders) based on prevailing market rates. Mid-sized and smaller farms struggle to compete domestically, with pond farmers in particular facing low prices. Even larger farms operate on slim margins and rely on regional exports for higher returns.

Sector employment

Over 77%³ of jobs in Uganda's aquaculture sector are concentrated in fish trade, transportation, and processing, rather than in fish production itself. In both capture fisheries and aquaculture, most employment is found upstream and downstream of primary production. These secondary activities—such as trade, processing, and transport—are largely carried out by women and youth, while men tend to dominate the production stage. However, secondary activities typically offer lower financial returns. Rather than displacing existing jobs in the fisheries sector, aquaculture investments provide a valuable supplement by creating new opportunities for fishing communities that currently depend on unlicensed activities with limited alternatives.

Domestic and foreign market demand

Fish and fish products are the third highest value exports from Uganda after gold and coffee. The government has a target of USD 698 million worth of fish exports in 2024/25, or 13,000 tons of fish (2024, UFPEA, BOU, MAAIF). However, this income is primarily from wild-caught fisheries, not aquaculture. Nevertheless, Uganda is currently leading aquaculture production in the region. Possessing the second largest proportion of Lake Victoria, it also has a lot more growth potential than competing markets such as Kenya, since suitable aquaculture sites are not yet a limiting factor to growth. Aquaculture represents 2.4%⁴ of the total formal export value of Uganda, with some of the large commercial farms exporting more than 70% of their production. Poor infrastructure and the low production capacity prevents smaller farmers from doing the same and procuring better prices for their fish by exporting.

³ African Policy Dialogue factsheet on Uganda's agro-industrialization, hosted by INCLUDE/EPRC

⁴ MAAIF DTIS Report 2021



As a member of the East African Community (EAC), Uganda benefits from tax exemptions on fish traded within the bloc. All fish caught and landed by vessels registered in EAC states are officially exempt from taxes. However, non-tariff barriers remain a major challenge. Some countries apply duties inconsistently, raising the cost and time of cross-border trade. For example, Kenya imposes tariffs on Ugandan fish and levies on feed imports, despite EAC rules. While most exporters know their rights, few have the resources or influence to challenge these violations.

Developing the domestic consumer market is critical to the long-term sustainability of the sector. However, domestic consumption remains low, with only 10–30% of aquaculture production sold within Uganda. A key reason is the negative perception of farmed fish, particularly regarding its price and taste. Farmers themselves reinforce this distinction through branding and separate points of sale for farmed and wild catch. As a result, most production is exported to Kenya and the DRC, where professional traders can purchase in larger volumes than local buyers, making exports more commercially viable. Regional markets also tend to pay in US dollars, giving farms the hard currency needed to import aqua feed—their largest input cost—and other essential equipment. With over 70% of feed still imported and domestic supply insufficient, dollar earnings through exporting thus also help hedge against foreign exchange losses.

Project design

The project will be designed as follows:

- The project duration will be 4 years.
- The current funding available for this project is maximum 6.000.000 euros.
- The project will be supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands through the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda.
- Implementation of the project will be managed by the Embassy of the Netherlands, in close consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries.
- The project partner will consult with MAAIF/DAMD to implement the program activities to achieve the desired outputs.
- The project partner will coordinate its activities with other development partners in the sector to ensure complementarity and non-duplication. (Regular coordination meetings are to be held with other development partners and MAAIF when need arises).
- Both Ugandan and Dutch private sector players will be involved in the project and will be encouraged to contribute in kind to the realization of the project objectives.



Problem statement

Over the years, Uganda has seen steady growth in the aquaculture sector. This growth has been attributed to various interventions, such as NAADS-OWC sector support, GOU support to farmers through supply of quality seed and feed, support from CARITAS in Northern Uganda, and China-South to South-FAO small holder farmers interventions in Eastern Uganda. Additional contributions have been made by GATSBY, EU, and GIZ, amongst others.

These interventions have played a key role in driving aquaculture growth in Uganda. But despite this progress, Uganda's aquaculture sector continued to face challenges that prevent it from realizing the sector's full potential. These include: (1) Limited access to high quality fish seed, (2) Lack of affordable quality fish feed, (3) Limited technical expertise along the value chain, (4) Limited access to affordable financing to address high cost of start-ups, (5) Low access to market support services, (6) A weak enabling environment, and (7) Inadequate private and public investment in the sector. In recognition of these constraints and challenges, there is need for holistic and decisive strategic interventions that will reduce bottlenecks and drive aquaculture production to meet the development goals and aspirations of Uganda's Vision 2040.

Objectives

The project partner must define clear objectives for the development of the sector, under this project. For guidance, these objectives must align with the Netherlands Government Policy letter on international development of 20 February 2025 (refer to the annex), the Embassy's Multi Annual Country Strategy (MACS, which will be revised this year), the Letter of Intent signed between Uganda and the Netherlands, the NDP IV, and challenges identified in existing reports.



Scope

The scope of the intended project should include the following:

1. Scope of the Intervention

a. Strengthening input supply for aquaculture production

Access to quality and affordable inputs remains a challenge for the development of the aquaculture industry. Access to high quality fingerlings and feed remain an impediment for fish farmers to attain profitability and business growth. Access to equipment is also a bottleneck. The availability of high quality, indigenous genetics for tilapia is lacking in the industry. The development and distribution of these genetics will be highly beneficial for farmers to ensure that there is a high feed conversion rate for the available fingerlings on the market.

b. Improving aquaculture production and distribution

As stated in the context above, Uganda is leading in aquaculture production in the East African region with large commercial farms exporting over 70% of their production. Poor infrastructure and the low production capacity prevents smaller farmers from doing the same and procuring better prices for their fish by exporting. By improving farm management practices and engaging in collective bargaining, fish farmers would be able to benefit from economies of scale and increase their incomes.

c. Skills development and capacity building

In order to enhance skills and professionalism in the aquaculture sector, it is important to build the capacity of various stakeholders in the value chain. In order to ensure the sustainability of the project, training should not only be provided to fish farmers but also the district agricultural extension officers. Hands-on training will help to improve farm management practices, increase the adoption of modern fish farming technologies, provide tailor-made content to improve productivity and profitability of farmers in the sector, and strengthen the farmers' ability negotiate competently with buyers.

d. Domestic market development and consumer awareness

The domestic market for farmed fish has the greatest potential for fish farmers in Uganda. Domestic consumption of farmed fish remains low due to affordability by consumers. By conducting domestic market development efforts, this project can increase domestic consumption of farmed fish which will in turn increase the nutritious uptake of fish.



e. *Access to financial services*

Lack of sufficient capital remains a considerable barrier to entry for farmers who aspire to engage in aquaculture in Uganda. The cost of commercial credit remains high, with interest rates above 16% per annum. Cheaper financing alternatives through the agricultural credit facility exist, however, the farmers that are in most need of this financing do not qualify for it under current requirements. Additionally, there exist no insurance options for aquaculture farmers that can help de-risk their investments.

f. *Enabling environment for sustainable aquaculture*

In order to support the development and to strengthen the aquaculture sector in Uganda, it is important to ensure that there is an enabling environment for investment in the sector. This includes ensuring that government policies are supportive towards fish farming activities, there are limited barriers to trade, and that there is enough capacity to regulate the industry by ensuring sustainable and good business practices.

2. Proposed Geographical Scope

- a. *Areas of Production:* The selection of the geographical scope of the project should ensure that the beneficiaries have moderate access to key inputs for aquaculture development i.e., cage fish farmers must be located next to large freshwater bodies such as Lake Victoria (which has been identified as the best freshwater lake for cage fish farming in Uganda). Preference should be given to areas with active aquaculture investments.
- b. *Access to Markets:* The chosen areas for implementation should have decent access to markets through physical infrastructure, like roads that have already been developed. The distance from the farms to the market must be economically viable for the aquaculture farmers as well.
- c. *Linkages to Dutch-funded programs:* The Netherlands funds several programs related to food and nutrition security and private sector development. The aquaculture project should develop strong linkages to these programs if possible and utilize already available contacts. For example, many programs work through cooperatives and SACCOs. For a list of programs supported by the Netherlands, please refer to Annex 1 and 2.



- d. *Linkages to private sector investments:* There are several large investments in the aquaculture sector by both Dutch and other companies. These include a fish feed factory (De Heus) that will be commissioned in September 2025 in Njeru, the largest fish farm in Uganda in Buikwe District (Yalelo), and other investments by Ugandan companies. It is important that this project leverages off these type of investments, by increasing demand for inputs and/or engaging with the companies to invest in their value chains alongside the project.

Project Oversight

The project will have an oversight structure in place to monitor implementation and guide the project partner(s). There will be an Advisory Committee and a Technical Committee (consisting of members from MAAIF, EKN, and the project partner(s)).

The roles of these committees are described as follows:

- a) Advisory Committee
 - Advise on the scope, content, efficiency and effectiveness of the interventions
 - Discussion on alignment of project strategic objectives to national plans and policies of Uganda and the Netherlands
- b) Technical Committee
 - Coordination of project interventions with other projects supported by GoU or development partners
 - Monitoring of activities
 - Ensuring stakeholder engagement

Indicators

The project should report on indicators that are related to private sector development and food and nutrition security, in line with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs' results frameworks and Uganda's fourth National Development Plan. The indicators relevant to this project have been outlined below. Proposals advised to include a combination of both Dutch and Ugandan indicators. Please note that this project does not have to report on all the indicators below and can also add indicators that have not been specified.



Policy Theme	Result Areas	Indicators
Private sector Development	Strengthening the business climate	1.A. 'number of companies with a supported plan to invest, trade or provide services' (IATI code XXX001)
		1.B. 'average compound annual revenue growth rate of individually supported MSME's' (IATI code XXX002)
		1.E. 'Number of MSMEs gaining new or improved access to a value chain' (IATI code XXX0005)
		1.F. 'Number of direct jobs supported in individually supported MSMEs' (IATI code XXX0006)
		1.G. 'Number of direct beneficiaries supported to have raised incomes' (IATI code XXX0007)
		1.L. 'Number of strengthened Organisations contributing to a sustainable local business climate' (IATI code XXX0012)
	Strengthening trade for development	2.C. 'Value of export of products and services (in euros) by individually supported MSMEs (in developing countries)' (IATI code XXX003)
		2.I. 'Number of companies (including MSMEs) that meet firm-specific, national, or international sustainability standards' (IATI code XXX0009)
		2.K. 'Number of end users with access to new or improved infrastructure' (IATI code XXX0011)
		2.O. 'Number of MSMEs that benefit from improved customs / border services' (IATI code XXX0015)



Food and Nutrition Security	Strengthening the Financial Sector	3.J. 'Amount of mobilised private finance (in thousand EUR)' (IATI code XXX0010)
		3.Q. 'Number of MSMEs that obtain financial services' (IATI code XXX0017)
	Ending Hunger and Malnutrition Sub-result area A: Malnutrition	Outcome A.1.1. Number of people with a more diverse and adequate diet
		Reach A.2.3. Number of people indirectly reached
	Improving the performance, sustainability and resilience of small holder farming systems Sub-result area B: Productivity and Income	Outcome B.1.2. Number of small-scale fish producers (SSFPs) (disaggregated by male/female) who progressively close the yield gap
		Reach B.2.1. Number of SSFPs directly reached with activities aimed at structural/systemic improvement of their agricultural performance
		Reach B.2.2. Number of SSFPs directly reached with activities aimed at temporary/partial improvement of their agricultural performance
		Reach B.2.3. Number of SSFPs indirectly reached
	Improving the enabling environment for food and nutrition security Sub-result area D: Knowledge and Innovation Systems	D.1. Number of SSFPs (disaggregated by male/female) applying new technologies/practices that aim to transform food systems towards desirable outcomes
		D.3. Share of supported international partnerships (aimed at transformation of food systems) with participation of Dutch knowledge institutions



NDP IV Indicators	Conduct surveillance and certification of fish farms and farmed fish processors, register and license fish farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of fish farms and farmed fish processors certified and licensed annually.• Percentage increase in registered fish farmers per year.
	Build capacity of the operators of hatcheries to respond to the demand for quality fingerlings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage increase in the production volume of quality fingerlings from supported hatcheries.• Number of hatchery operators trained and demonstrating improved capacity in quality fingerling production.
	Build capacity of out growers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of out growers trained and applying improved aquaculture practices.• Percentage increase in yield or profitability for supported out growers.
	Support national and regional feed processors to produce quality fish feed, with feed processing equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volume (in tons) of quality fish feed produced by supported national and regional feed processors annually.• Number of feed processors adopting new or improved feed processing equipment



Targeted beneficiaries

1. **Fish farmers:** Small to medium sized fish farmers (as defined by the Uganda MSME Policy 2015) with the potential to scale up their investments in aquaculture and become profitable or increase their profitability and economic viability. Preference for those who have been in business for more than 1 year.
2. **Gender considerations:** The project should target gender parity to ensure women are equally represented throughout aspects of the project. With women participation in the aquaculture sector limited to trading in fish and fish products, efforts should be made to reduce barriers that hinder their participation in other aspects of the value chain, to ensure a more equal economic benefit to both women and men.
3. **Youth:** Youth remain a core cross-cutting focus area for Dutch development support around the world. Through the NDP IV, the Government of Uganda has also identified youth unemployment as one of the strategic indicators it needs to address. The project should include the empowerment of youth through skills development and job creation.
4. **Inclusion and non-discrimination of other vulnerable groups:** It is important for the project not to discriminate against marginalized or vulnerable groups including farmers with low influence, people with disabilities and other minorities. The project partner must have strong frameworks in place to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and ensure that there are avenues to address discrimination should it arise.

Risks

All risks identified must include: (i) a description of the risk, (ii) probability of the risk occurring, (iii) potential impact on outputs of the activity, and (iv) mitigation measures and residual risks. The project partner must identify risks in the following categories:

- a. Contextual risks
- b. Project risks
- c. Organizational risks (Monitoring and evaluation risks / Financial and administrative management / Quantity and quality of capacity available for the project)
- d. Risk of fraud and corruption (In country of implementation / In project / Within implementing organization)
- e. Risks of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and other forms of misconduct (In organization / In project activities / In implementing organizations)
- f. Climate change and its effects.



Submissions

To participate in this call, the following must be submitted before the deadline:

1. A proposal of maximum 20 pages detailing:
 - Organizational background and experience in managing similar projects. (3 pages max)
 - Description of proposed project including the objectives, scope, anticipated results, and the theory of change (allowance will be given to deviate from the predetermined scope highlighted in this call with adequate justification). (11 pages max)
 - Probable stakeholders and implementing partners to involve, such as Ugandan Government Ministries, Departments and agencies, other development projects in the sector, private sector (NL and Ugandan) and knowledge institutions. (3 pages max)
 - A brief risk analysis indicating risk description, assessment level, impact of risk, mitigation, and residual impact. Risks should include organizational risks, project risks and context risks. (3 pages max)
 - A brief sustainability and exit plan. (1 page max)
 - Professional references that can confirm work on previous projects.
2. Summarized financial proposal on 1 page including
 - Estimated costs for project implementation (minimum 50% on activities);
 - Estimated technical staff costs (maximum 20%);
 - Estimate support staff costs;
 - Estimated costs for investments/construction;
 - Estimated costs for overhead.;
 - Budget to be broken down into budget categories aligned with the main project outcomes;
 - To be presented in a table showing the main budget lines per calendar year.
3. Annexes containing:
 - Profiles of project managers
 - Registration of the organization
 - Organigram
 - Corruption/fraud policy
 - SEAH policy
 - Financial health of the organization
 - Corporate Social Responsibility/Responsible Business Conduct policy (optional)



Selection Process

The submitted proposal will be reviewed by a committee and the winning consortium will be invited to develop a full proposal. The committee will consist of:

- The Embassy of the Netherlands in Uganda (2 persons)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries of Uganda (2 persons)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (1 person)
- Invest International / Netherlands Enterprise Agency (1 person)

Selection of Program Implementer

The prospective partner should meet the following minimum requirements:

- a. The lead partner has proven experience in the management of single-projects of USD 5 million or more in which the lead partner is the lead (or contract) party. The following information is required: name of the project, thematic area, main results, total budget (including currency) and the contact details of the contact person of the donor organization.
- b. Applicants should have an office in Uganda or willing to establish an office in the first three months of implementation.
- c. The lead partner has submitted the following documents:
 - Annual financial statements for the last three years (2022, 2023 and 2024)
 - Organizational chart
 - Audit reports and management letters of the last three years
 - Registration certificate in Uganda (if applicable see b)
 - Corruption/fraud/SEAH policy
 - Corporate Social Responsibility / Responsible Business Conduct policies (optional)
- d. The lead partner should preferably be an (I)NGO, Foundation or Consultancy Company (with no investments in the sector) and should have proven experience with the implementation of aquaculture sector development projects in one country at a comparable scale in terms of finance. Details of projects need to be submitted and include at least: duration, budget (including currency), donor, objectives, strategy, and planned/achieved results. Private sector companies with investments in the sector are not eligible to participate in the consortium.



- e. The applicant will declare that:
- The allocated budgets to the consortia partners are indicative and can be changed when deemed necessary by the lead partner (after consulting EKN) or EKN
 - The composition of consortia partners may change when deemed necessary by EKN or the lead in consultation with EKN.
- f. The applicant declares that the project will be implemented by the applicant itself (with partners if applicable) and that it will not simply act as an intermediary channel to provide financing to other implementing parties, or subcontract those to execute most of the work. At least 40% of the activity budget should be implemented directly by the project staff of the applicant and eventual consortium partners.
- g. EKN has a preference for consortia if well organized. If the application is submitted by a lead party on behalf of a consortium, the application must include a partnership agreement signed on behalf of all consortium partners (the lead party and all co-applicants), which has been concluded with a view to implementing the activities for which a contribution/grant is requested, in any case laying down undertakings on:
- how each of the consortium partners will contribute to the consortium's activities;
 - how decisions are made within the consortium;
 - how costs and risks will be shared among the consortium members;
 - how the consortium members will ensure that the lead party fulfils the obligations towards EKN in respect of the contribution/grant, including responsibility for the joint aggregated reports (including IATI-compliant reports);
 - how the consortium members will keep each other informed, in particular concerning their financial health;
 - how the partnership can be adapted; both in composition and in budget allocation to the different partners.
 - the role of each of the consortium members in monitoring and evaluating progress in the activities for which a contribution/grant has been received.
- h. EKN will not accept a consortium in which activities and budgets are divided between the partners without a clause that these allocations are preliminary and can be amended at any time during the project implementation if requested by EKN or judged necessary by the consortium lead and approved by EKN. This



clause needs to be explicitly mentioned in the partnership agreement, the submitted proposal and the final full proposal.

- i. Applicants (and possible consortium members) should declare having a pre-employment scanning (including on SEAH) in place; The applicant (and possible consortium members) should declare to include this specific requirement in the possible contract with the subcontractors.
- j. A state-aid test could be part of the assessment process.

Awarding criteria

The awarding criteria to select the best concept will be as follows:

	Criteria	Weight
1	<p>Description of the proposed project including the objectives, scope, anticipated results and the theory of change</p> <p>Special consideration will be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear description of how investment in the areas identified will lead to growth of the sector with evidence presented in a concise manner• Identification of stakeholders who are critical for the development of the sector and defining the roles they will play in the project• Clear and concise strategy for implementation of the project objectives• Alignment with the Letter of Intent for the development of the aquaculture sector in Uganda signed by the governments of the Netherlands and Uganda (see Annex 3)• Realistic estimation of the number of direct beneficiaries per project component, disaggregated by gender• Involvement of private sector actors (both NL and Ugandan) in project implementation• Strategy and approach to attract investment in the aquaculture sector• Access to finance strategy for SMEs in the sector (start up and growth stage financing)• Demonstration of sustainability to ensure gains are not lost after project completion• Clearly defined roles of all consortia partners• Well defined risks and mitigation measures	65%



2	Financial proposal Special considerations given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment to the narrative concept submitted• Alignment of cost centres and outcome areas identified• Clear depiction of overheads and personnel costs	5%
3	Relevant experience of the organizations/partners in managing similar projects Special consideration given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proven experience of all consortia partners in the Ugandan aquaculture sector• Networks within the aquaculture sector in Uganda (government, private sector and development partners)• Proven experience in managing projects funded by the Government of the Netherlands or similar development partners• Track record of managing projects of a similar size and scope Consortia will be preferred over single applicants (consortia may score higher).	18%
4	Demonstrated knowledge of the Ugandan aquaculture value chain Special consideration given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated understanding of the aquaculture sector in Uganda, its challenges, and opportunities for growth	10%
5	References check <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of at least two written references, preferably from development partners or stakeholders in the aquaculture sector, who can elaborate on their experience working with your organization in similar projects	2%



Expected timelines for project development

The expected timelines for development of this project are as follows:

Activity	Date (on or before)
Call for Proposals advertised	15 July 2025
Deadline for questions on call	22 July 2025
Answers to questions to be communicated to all parties (on the website)	29 July 2025
Deadline for submission of full proposal	31 August 2025
Notification of award to develop proposal	20 September 2025
Final proposal submission	15 October 2025
Contract signing and start of project	15 November 2025

Communication

- All questions and enquiries regarding this call for proposals are to be submitted by email to KAM-OS@minbuza.nl
- Complete proposals must be in English and must be submitted electronically to: KAM-OS@minbuza.nl with “Call for Proposal - Bilateral Project to Develop Uganda’s Aquaculture sector” in the subject field.
- All participants in the call will be notified by email when a decision has been made.
- All participants in this call must confirm whether they may have conflicts of interest related to the requested services.



Annex 1

Summary of Private Sector Development Programs supported by the Netherlands

1. EMATA:

EMATA aims to bring digital and affordable financial products to farmers in East Africa. They follow a three step approach to financing smallholder farmers: 1) Data collection; partnering with cooperatives and aggregators to digitize day-to-day operations for free with its MIS system; 2) Turn data into credit limits using machine learning; EMATA uses alternative credit scoring algorithms to identify good farmers and offer loans they can afford; 3) Provide affordable, digital loans: Farmers receive instant, affordable, digital loans to invest in the productivity of their farms.

2. WEADS:

Women Entrepreneurs Development Support (WEADS) program, managed by the FSME association, aims to support women entrepreneurs in several agri-value chains to build entrepreneurial capacity and manage their agribusinesses sustainably. This activity aims to: 1) support SMEs to achieve sustainable entrepreneurship and an improved local business environment; 2) enhance market competitiveness; 3) increase resilience to shocks such as pandemics, and 4) improve the institutional capacity of women-owned SMEs to be investor ready and empowered to deal with negative patriarchal societal-imposed gender biases (such as women not being allowed to own assets like land).

3. Y-Connect

This 2 year program worth 1.2 million euros is managed by AVSI Foundation. It focuses on skilling 1700 youth from refugee and host communities around the Nakivale refugee settlement in Isingiro District. The program trains both in-school and out-of-school youth on agri-business skills and provides them with a small grant to kick-start their business ideas. It also provides business development services like coaching and mentorship to the beneficiaries.



Annex 2

Summary of Food and Nutrition Security Programs supported by the Netherlands

1. Common Ground for Restoring Resilience of Highland Farmer Communities (CommonGround) – implemented by WENR | November 2022 – April 2027.

- This project introduces a paradigm shift towards bottom-up sustainable development of the (smallholder) agricultural sector using integrated planning as the organizing principle, to restore degradation prone watersheds and farming systems in the Ugandan highlands.
- CommonGround uses a participatory approach (Participatory Integrated Planning (PIP)) to empower farmers to become self-reliant and to farm and manage the land in balance with nature.
- Key results:
 - Improved wellbeing of smallholders (increased food availability, access and diversity); targets 150,000 households.
 - Farm land converted to sustainable land use; targets 12,500 Ha.
 - Inclusive and functional local markets in the watersheds; targets 4 markets in the watersheds.

Geographic Coverage

Ugandan highlands areas of Kigezi, Mt Elgon, and Rwenzori.

2. Building Resilience and Inclusive Growth of Highland Farming Systems for Rural Transformation (BRIGHT) – implemented by IFDC | January 2022 – December 2027.

- BRIGHT aims at increasing smallholder farmers (SHF) income and resilience to climate and market shocks in the degradation prone highland regions of Uganda.
- The starting point is the vision and ambitions of SHF and building support to the farming systems and a number of value chains.
- Sustainable land use is an important component of the project as it is key for both climate resilience and production.
- Key results:
 - Increased resilience, nutritional outcomes and income of SHF; targets 106,560 households.
 - Farmland converted to sustainable use; targets 106,560 acres.



- Improved inclusive household decision-making; targets 106,560 households practicing joint decision-making.
- Improved profitability of farming systems; targets 78,840 farm households to increase their on-farm profitability.

Geographic Coverage

Ugandan highlands areas of Kigezi, Mt Elgon, and Rwenzori.

3. Inclusive Livestock Development for Smallholder Farmers (INCLUDE) – implemented by SNV | April 2024 – March 2029.

- INCLUDE is building on lessons learned from its predecessor projects TIDE and ISDAP, maintaining what worked while at the same time adapting to specific development challenges for integrated livestock farming systems.
- The project adopts a farming systems approach, integrating livestock and crops, with livestock as an intervention entry point, through a participatory approach.
- Key results:
 - 75,000 smallholder farmers with increasingly resilient livelihoods who progressively realize a living income.
 - Increased SHF productivity and access to markets: 90,000 smallholder farmers with increased productivity and market access.
 - Increased SHF sustainable land use: 37,500 acres of agricultural land under improved management.
 - Contribution to improved access to nutritious food: 300,000 school-going children consuming milk or milk-based foods.

Geographic Coverage

Fort Portal/Rwenzori district area (North of Mbarara) covering subdistricts Kabarole, Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo, Bunyangabu, Kamwenge and Kitagwenda. The Kigezi region covering sub-districts Kabale, Rukiga, Rubanda, Kanungu, Rukungiri as well as the districts Mitooma and Buhweju.

4. Agricultural Governance Results Improvement Project (A-GRIP) – implemented by Cordaid | November 2023 – October 2028.

- A-GRIP aims at increased service delivery in land management and agricultural extension by local governments (LG) to reduce the risk of land grabbing, increased



sustainable agricultural production by SHF, improved resilience against climate and market shocks and enhanced food security. The A-GRIP program aims to achieve several key outcomes:

1. Improved service delivery in land management and agricultural extension by local governments (LG) to reduce the risk of land grabbing.
 2. Increased sustainable agricultural production by SHF.
 3. Enhanced resilience against climate and market shocks.
 4. Improved food security.
- The project will finance local governments based on achieved results, delivery of services in the field of land tenure rights, and agricultural services.
 - The project will do this in collaboration with the main EKN funded food security projects that work with the Local Governments.
 - Key results:
 - 400,000 households will be more secure in their land tenure;
 - 500,000 directly reached (246,000 through EKN funded projects and 254,000 in out scaling); 5,447,000 inhabitants indirectly reached with agricultural extension services (based on 2025 population projections).

Geographic Coverage

16 districts in Busoga, Elgon, Kigezi, Lango and Rwenzori regions

5. Integrated and Sustainable Production for Inclusive and Resilient Economies in Busoga and Lango Sub-Region (INSPIRE) – implemented by GOAL & WENR | August 2024 – July 2029.

- INSPIRE consortium is implemented by GOAL with Wageningen Environmental Research (WENR), in collaboration with technical partners Resilience BV and Agriterro.
- The project aims at increased sustainable agricultural production, income, and resilience to climate change and market shocks.
- The project promotes sustainable land and water management practices, including low-cost irrigation.
- Key results:
 - 200,000 SHF households with increased income and/or production.



- SHF households have increased production volume, quality, sales and profit (disposable income); targets 200,000 SHF households who progressively close the yield gap.
- Increased area under sustainable land use; targets 80,000 Hectares of farmland under at least 2 conservation practices.
- District policy decisions, trade and market conditions changed in favour of SHFs and farmer organizations; targets 9 districts with examples of SHFs putting market systems issues on the district policy/ agenda with a positive outcome for SHFs.

Geographic coverage

Lango and Busoga

6. Dairy And Horticulture Credit Fund Limited (DHCL) for Low-Cost Investments at Smallholder Farms – Implemented by PCP Uganda | October 2022 – September 2028.

- DHCL enhances access to finance for smallholder farmers and Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the dairy and horticulture sectors.
- The project is currently under review, looking to diversify to other value chains supported by newer EKN projects including coffee, beans, maize, potato, and various livestock enterprises.
- PCP finances SACCOs for onward lending these target groups.
- EKN projects provide technical support to the SACCOs to develop credit products, and support SHFs and MSMEs to make efficient use of the available credit.
- Key results:
 - Increased appropriate and affordable credit available for smallholder farmers; targets 12,000 loans SHF and MSMEs.
 - Increased SACCO membership through individual and farmer groups; targets at least 16,000 new farmers joining the SACCOs as a result of the DHCL intervention.

Geographic coverage

Kigezi, Rwenzori, Elgon, Lango, Busoga.



7. Farmers' Organisations for Rural Transformation (FORT) – To be implemented by Agriterra | 2024 – 2029

- FORT aims at strengthening and enhancing the performance of farmer institutions/organizations, making them functional centers of service delivery for smallholder farmers especially in production, marketing, and agri-finance.
- It aims at strengthening the capacity of the new and existing farmer institutions/organizations and enabling them to offer quality and appropriate services to smallholder farmers.
- The program will focus on interventions that strengthen and revitalize the farmer institutions/organizations thus enabling them address challenges of production, post-harvest handling, marketing and financial access in an integrated manner, taking climate risks as an essential element.
- Key results:
 - SHF enhance their incomes by increased production, post-harvest handling and marketing (target minimum 200,000 households).
 - SHF livelihoods become more resilient to market (input-output) failure (target 200,000 households).

Geographic coverage

Kigezi, Rwenzori, Elgon, Lango, Busoga.



Annex 3

Letter of Intent between the Government of the Netherlands and the Government of the Republic of Uganda on Strengthening Ugandan Aquaculture (please find attached)

Annex 4

The Netherlands' Multi-Annual Country Strategy for cooperation with Uganda 2023-2026. (please find attached)

Annex 5

The Netherlands Government Policy letter on International development, February 2025. (please find attached)

Annex 6

Action plan for a multi-annual Aquaculture development program in Uganda (please find attached)