



Clean Cooling Network

Food & Health
Future-proofed, sustainable cold-chains



CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

COLLABORATORS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE SUSTAINABLE COOLING AND COLD CHAIN SOLUTIONS (SCCS) PROGRAMME IN KENYA (“SPOKE SCALING”)

INTRODUCTION

The **African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)** is a leading development research think tank committed to leveraging Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) policies to advance sustainable development across Africa. ACTS is the lead Kenya delivery partner for the SCCCS programme, working in collaboration with the **Africa Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Cooling and Cold-Chain (ACES)**, a pioneering institution dedicated to accelerating the adoption of sustainable cooling and cold-chain solutions in Africa’s agriculture and health sectors.

The SCCCS has created a systems-scale approach to deliver efficient, inclusive and climate-friendly cooling and cold-chain solutions and a comprehensive suite of services delivered through specialised Centres of Excellence. Work has led to the first physical Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Rwanda (ACES). To extend its impact, ACES was designed with a “Hub and SPOKE” model with SPOKES being developed in strategic locations across the continent to flow the knowledge, training and support out to other markets. Specifically, these SPOKES house the local/near to market training and community support to put into practice and demonstrate real-world solutions.

Over \$35m in overseas development aid from the UK Government (Defra) since 2020 has supported activities to design and develop the foundational build stages of the toolkits, training and modelling resources which underpin the CoE and SPOKE model. These have been developed in such a way to enable scale-up and deployment through a reference and replication approach, designing the process maps, operating manuals, governance and implementation architecture necessary to support adoption through deployment and implementation.

These reference materials have been built out of years of detailed needs assessments, dedicated research, development of bespoke training programmes and products that can now support adoption through CoE and the hub and SPOKES model and a hybrid online and physical approach.

The SPOKES are in-country delivery vehicles, led by in-country expert partners, and are an integrated part of meeting the ambition of the SCCCS Programme objectives. The first SPOKE pilot and reference SPOKE is in Kenya, implemented by ACTS. Activities to date have developed and refined a business model to enable the delivery of a sustainable cold chain to a community in Kiambu County through Lari Horticulture Farmers’ Cooperative Society (LHFCS) with over 200 smallholder farmers registered and many already earning over 50% higher returns on their produce, thanks to improved quality, extended shelf life, and access to premium markets. Building on the work to date, a second community engagement programme was recently launched within the Kenya reference SPOKE.

The SPOKE catalyzes uptake of sustainable cold chain through development of community business models which are tested and validated through a “Try Before You Buy” (TBYB) approach. Through a



staged approach, activities support communities through training and capacity building to develop financeable and scalable business models that underpin decisions to invest in community cooling hubs. Under the TBYB model, participating communities are given an opportunity to test and refine their business models using real-life cold-chain technologies over a defined period. This allows them to better understand operational requirements, technology suitability, and long-term sustainability needs before making investment decisions.

Through Danish Government support, key achievements and learnings to date from the Kenya SPOKE are now being tested, validated and scaled through replication across a wider range of Communities in Kenya over the next three years to accelerate the delivery of sustainable cold chain investments to smallholder producer communities across the country.

EOI FOR COLLABORATION IN SPOKE DELIVERY

ACTS invites Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from qualified and interested organisations to be considered as collaborators in the delivery of the scaling ambition of the Kenya SPOKE in line with project deliverables.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

This call is open to a broad range of actors. ACTS particularly welcomes Expressions of Interest from applicants who meet the following criteria:

1. Be a registered entity that could be not-for-profit or commercial
2. Have an operational presence in at least three counties within the geographic scope listed below.
3. Demonstrate experience and a proven track record in supporting market-driven horticultural and other temperature-sensitive value chains and market systems development underpinned by robust business models.
4. Experience in structuring financeable business models and engagement with financing actors.
5. Demonstrate understanding of sustainable cold-chain systems and their role in enhancing market integration within horticulture.
6. Have a proven track record of promoting gender equity, social inclusion, and environmentally sustainable practices within their operations and programmes.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The Kenya SPOKE Project targets major horticultural-producing counties across Kenya with strong potential to establish and scale the Community Cooling Hubs model. The selected counties are strategically identified based on horticultural production volumes, market access potential, and opportunities to strengthen cold-chain systems for smallholder farmers and local enterprises.

Priority counties include Baringo, Bungoma, Kajiado, Kiambu, Kisii, Machakos, Makueni, Meru, Murang'a, Nakuru, Narok, Nyamira, Nyandarua, Taita Taveta, and Trans Nzoia.



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HOW TO APPLY

Interested parties are requested to complete the Expression of Interest (Eoi) application template available on the ACTS website outlining the following.

1. Organisation profile - including type, mission, and areas and structure of operation
2. Relevant experience and track record in market-led agrifood value chain development, highlighting their work on business models that underpin these efforts, including integration of cold chain where applicable.
3. Provide a summary overview of the organization's value proposition as a collaborator in delivering the SPOKE Project objectives.
4. Indicate current geographic (county) areas of operation and existing community or county-level networks

For further information or clarification related to the EOI, kindly contact Dr. Catherine Kilelu, at ckilelu@acts-net.org.

Please join a webinar **on 10th June 2026** to learn more about the SPOKES. Check this link to register.

<https://cleancooling.org/news-and-events/news/spoke-webinars-announced>

Prof. Tom Ogada
Executive Director