

Request for Expressions of Interest and Quotes (REIQ)

Title:	Study on Labor and Skills Demand in Countries of Destination for Sri Lanka Migrant Workers
Issue Date:	20 October 2022
Closing Date:	16 November 2022
Closing Time:	17:30hrs (India Standard Time)
Project Title:	Skilled and Resilient Migrant Workers (SRMW) project
Offer Reference Number:	SRMW-REI-001-2022

IESC is a leading U.S. nonprofit organization that fosters private sector development in the economically developing world. Since 1964, we have delivered lasting solutions that have resulted in more than 1.5 million jobs in 137 countries. We partner with businesses, cooperatives, entrepreneurs, jobseekers, and governments to sustainably build capacity, create jobs, and grow enterprises, sharing proven skills and experience that improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities around the world. Our major funders today are the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), among others.

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Skilled and Resilient Migrant Workers (SRMW) project is a three-year project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by IESC in Sri Lanka. The project runs from December 1, 2020 – November 30, 2023, as an integral part of the YouLead program, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). SRMW aims to ensure migrant workers access gender-responsive skills qualifications and have increased employability in local and global economies. The Project is implemented in five priority districts in Sri Lanka, including Anuradhapura, Kandy, Kurunegala, Puttalam, and Vavuniya. SRMW is part of the SDC's Safe Labour Migration Programme Phase IV (SLMP-IV).

2. ASSIGNMENT

IESC is looking for Expressions of Interest and Quotes from offerors to undertake country-specific research to understand the changing labor demand dynamics for Sri Lankan migrant workers in identified Countries of Destination (CoD) post COVID-19. The study will research the factors impacting labor demand including but not limited to sectors and employment categories that continue to expand employment opportunities and the specific skills required in these sectors; sectors and employment categories that are likely to contract or see reduced employment demand due to automation or high-tech substitution or other factors; new legislations introduced in by a CoD

affecting labor recruitment, supply or demand; and any other factors relevant to the demand for Sri Lankan labor in the destination country. Through a comprehensive series of country-specific reviews, the research will identify the demand for Sri Lankan migrant workers and the skills and qualifications required for those jobs. In addition, the study will identify any new CoD that GoSL could explore, for enhanced benefits and protection for the migrant workers, while enabling GoSL to consider necessary policy and skills development measures required to access these new markets.

Since the beginning of labor migration from Sri Lanka in late 1970's, Middle Eastern countries, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) have been employing the majority of Sri Lankan migrant workers. For example, the top five GCC destinations alone (Kuwait, Qatar, KSA, UAE, Oman) employed 79.39% of the total Sri Lankan migrant workers in 2019.¹ SLBFE statistics for 2019 further reveals that the GCC countries remain within the top 10 destinations for both professional and skilled workers, as well as low-skilled workers and female domestic workers. Additionally, through government to government (G2G) arrangements, a considerable number of low-skilled workers have been recruited in Israel, Japan, and the Republic of Korea on a quota allocated to Sri Lanka. The Maldives, Malaysia, Cyprus and Singapore also have attracted notable numbers of low and semi-skilled workers in the past years. However, the developed countries in Europe, Americas, and in the Pacific have not been fully explored by Sri Lankan migrant workers, apart from highly skilled workers who continue to choose these destinations through their own sources, often with a view to permanently migrate to these countries.

With the onset of COVID-19 in late 2019, many contractual labor migrants were compelled to return to their home countries because of the contraction in employment, health reasons, travel restrictions, and other socioeconomic reasons. About 60,000 migrant workers returned to Sri Lanka due to the impact of COVID-19.² As countries are gradually easing travel restrictions, and opening up for foreign labor recruitments, an understanding of post COVID-19 labor demand will help Sri Lanka, which is largely a labor-originating country, to assess its supply side capacity. A qualitative and quantitative mapping of the labor market demands in destination countries, and the relative capacity of the GoSL to match these demands to required skill sets is an area that has not been adequately researched.³ The proposed research therefore envisions filling part of this gap and benchmarking the labor and skills demand in selected destination markets, particularly the changes in recruitment demand in different economic sectors and job categories in the post COVID-19 environment.

3. TASKS UNDER THIS ASSIGNMENT

The research partner will undertake a study to identify the skills and labor demand in selected countries of destination for Sri Lankan migrant workers. The research partner

¹ slbfe.lk/file.php?FID=587

² <https://www.un.int/srilanka/sites/www.un.int/files/Sri%20Lanka/2020/July/01/speech- sfr.pdf>

³ Lansakara, (2022). Desk Review of Existing Research on Labour Migration –Prioritization of Research Topics

will coordinate and work closely with SRMW's consultant who is overseeing the Study on Labor and Skills Demand in Countries of Destination for Sri Lankan Migrant Workers. Specific tasks under this assignment are as follows:

- Conduct a deep-dive desk review into selected Countries of Destination about the current and potential labor and skills demand landscape (considering post COVID-19 developments in destination countries) for Sri Lankan migrant workers.
- Develop a research design and methodological approach for primary research to map the labor and skills demand in the selected destination countries.
- Submit the revised research design and methodological approach, as needed.
- Conduct consultations, interviews, meetings, and surveys with key informants and relevant stakeholders in Sri Lanka and destination countries to gather primary data.
- Provide project progress summaries every other week, discuss issues if any with the consultant and SRMW team, and incorporate feedback.
- Submit the draft study covering the targeted destination countries that includes the labor and skills demand and supply mapping to SRMW for review and make necessary amendments as directed.
- Develop the research report presentation to share findings with the stakeholders (format of the event to be decided), for feedback and validation of the report.
- Make the final submission of the research report following the validation event, after incorporating feedback.
- Participate in the formal launch/handover of the research report and be available for responding to queries and assisting with information requests/clarifications if any.

4. DELIVERABLES

The contractor will be responsible for the following deliverables:

Table 1: Deliverables and Timeline

DELIVERABLE	TIMING
1. Workplan: Participate in the initial meeting and submit the workplan	5 days
2. Deep-dive Desk Review: Submission of the deep-dive desk review and suggesting the preliminary research design.	6 weeks
3. Final Research Design: Submit the final research design and methodological approach based on the three destination countries provided by the SRMW team.	2 weeks
4. Presentation on the primary research: Conduct primary research in the selected destination countries and in Sri Lanka. The research partner is expected to use own networks in destination countries in conducting the primary research.	6 weeks

<p>5. Draft research report: The draft report of the study should contain changes in selected destination labor markets post COVID-19, the occupations and sectors in demand, forecast trends (related to age, qualifications, and experience levels, etc.), skills in demand, and required recognition/certification levels.</p> <p>Following any feedback received from SRMW team, submit the revised report.</p>	<p>3 weeks</p> <p>1 week</p>
<p>6. Draft labor and skills supply map: Submit a labor and skills supply map for Sri Lanka for the sectors and skill levels in demand.</p>	<p>2 weeks</p>
<p>7. Final study report and labor and skills supply map: Comments received from stakeholders to be incorporated and submit the finalized version of the research report, and the supply map.</p>	<p>3 days</p>

The delivery times of each deliverable of this contract must be established by the offeror, but the time must not exceed 6 months in total.

5. QUALIFICATIONS

The offeror must have the following expertise:

- Should possess working experience in conducting research and analytical work in labor migration, particularly deep knowledge on labor markets of origin countries in South Asia including Sri Lanka.
- Having established networks in destination countries to conduct primary research will be an advantage.
- Able to involve a team leader and at least two other qualified members with strong educational background in social science, labor studies, law, or relevant field with a strong link to administrative and policy issues related to labor migration, research, and skills development.
- The team should have professional experience in labor migration (policy formulation, administration, skills development, and international labor market analysis). Familiarization of the destination labor markets of Sri Lankan migrant workers will be a strong asset.

6. EXECUTION PERIOD

The anticipated period of performance will be 6 months from the signing of the contract. Expected term: **29 November 2022 to 14 May 2023.**

7. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The research partner/organization should be an officially registered entity with a valid registration (international or Sri Lankan). Additionally, SRMW reserves the right to

conduct an interview with the selected offeror after the technical and cost evaluations and before the award of the contract. The technical experience and background of work performed as a set of the main contractor and potential subcontractors will be considered.

8. APPLICATION PROCESS

In order to be considered, interested firms should submit their Expression of Interest and Quote including technical concept and quote, and any relevant information relative to the tasks outlined above.

Please note that responses received without the information below will not be considered. Responses must be organized in the following format:

1. Contact information (full name and address of the firm, name of the authorized representative, contact person if different from the authorized representative, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and website, if any)
2. Legal Status (firm, sole proprietor, etc.)
3. Brief presentation of the firm, no more than 5 pages in length, that includes:
 - An account of the Offeror's past work record demonstrating the qualification requirements (section 5 above) of this EOIQ, including reference list of three previous clients for which the team members have done similar work.
 - Biographical sketch of the key team leads who would directly work on the deliverables should the contract be awarded.
4. Technical concept overview, no more than 10 pages in length, which includes the idea and a demonstration of its ability to achieve the objectives outlined. Concept should include data collection methodology, sampling techniques, tools to be used, and analysis methods, among other details necessary to achieve the noted objectives.
5. A quote that corresponds with the technical concept, using the attached Excel Budget Template (refer Annex 1). Costs should be broken down by individual cost element, include supporting information for the proposed costs. The Offeror must include the unit costs in its detailed description for each proposed cost.

In the event that the proposed rates are combined rates (which include tax payments, percentage of profits, indirect expenses, etc.), the offeror must break down said rates in such a way that it is clear for the evaluation committee to determine what the direct costs are. IESC will use the required detailed descriptive budget justifications to determine the reasonableness of costs and prices as required by US federal regulation.

In the event that an offeror proposes subcontractors to perform any part of the work, such subcontracting costs must be proposed separately, demonstrating a clear delineation between primary costs and subcontractors. Offerors must include a detailed fixed price budget and corresponding budget descriptions (including breakdown of combined rates if any) as described above for any proposed

subcontract. The indirect cost instructions above also apply to any proposed subcontractor.

6. Offerors to send their Expression of Interest and Quote on or before **16 November 2022 at 17:30 (India Standard Time)**, to the following email: ssubasinghe@youlead.lk, Samudra Subasinghe, Procurement Manager

9. BASIS FOR THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

IESC anticipates that the contract will be based on best value principles. Accordingly, the contract will be awarded to the technically acceptable offeror whose Expression of Interest and Quote provides the best overall value for IESC and for the SRMW program, price and other factors will be considered.

10. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Offer Verification

- a. IESC may contact the offeror to confirm contact person, address information and to confirm that the offer was submitted in response to this request for expressions of interest and quotes.

2. Evaluation

- a. Submission materials will be reviewed and evaluated by a review committee. IESC reserves the right to change or cancel the requirement at any time during this REI and/or future solicitation process, if any.

3. Accuracy of Information

- a. Offerors must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this request for expression of interest and quote. If at any time IESC determines that an offeror has provided false statements in the response, IESC may reject the response without further consideration.

11. TYPE OF CONTRACT

Any contract resulting from this REI will be a firm fixed price contract.

12. DISCLAIMER AND PROTECTION CLAUSES

- IESC may cancel this request for expression of interest and quote
- IESC may reject any or all responses
- IESC reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on the offerors failure to follow REI instructions
- IESC will not compensate offerors for response to this REI
- IESC may choose to award only part of the activities in the REI, or issue multiple awards based on this REI activities
- IESC may request from short-listed offerors a second or third round of either oral presentation or written response to a more specific and detailed statement of work