

# Request for Proposal No. SRI241-RFP-001-2025 - MOD&CO Baseline Evaluation Services Questions and Answers

1) **Does IESC have details on the specific areas in the 9 regions where the project will be implemented?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

The program anticipates the following primary subregional focus areas by target value chain to be as follows; however, additional districts in all 9 provinces may be identified for implementation by project partners through the life of the program:

Dairy value chain:

- North Western Province – Kurunegala and Putlam
- Central Province – Matale and Nuwara Eliya
- North Central Province – Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa
- Uva Province – Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya

Coconut value chain:

- Approximately 60% of activities are anticipated in the main coconut triangle in Kurunegala, Putlam, and Gampaha districts.
- Approximately 20% of activities are anticipated in the new coconut triangle in Jaffna, Mullaitivu, and Mannar districts.
- Approximately 20% of activities are anticipated in Matale, Kegalle, Ratnapura, and Hambantota districts and other districts or provinces TBD.

2) The RFP mentions the 2 context indicators. **Can IESC provide details about what those indicators are and if they need some disaggregation?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

The two context indicators are as follows:

- New macroeconomic reforms affecting the dairy and coconut sectors.
- Disaster weather and/or climate risk forecasts in project-supported areas

For the two context indicators, baseline data will be sourced from publicly available data.

Disaggregation by sector and/or by region may be appropriate based on available data.

3) Page 10 of the RFP states that “[...] surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions of a sample of pre-identified individual producers/farmers, processors, input suppliers, financial institutions, trade associations, collectors, coconut exporters”. **Can IESC provide details about who is responsible for pre-identifying these stakeholders and when will this identification process happen?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

Pre-identification of individuals will be the responsibility of the contractor. Pre-identification takes place when the contractor selects the sample of respondents from the list of proposed stakeholders provided by the program. Note that the contractor may want to include individuals not on the stakeholder list provided by IESC as necessary at the baseline. We anticipate that this process will take place following award.

4) **Can IESC provide details of the level of engagement that the evaluation team will have with the programs monitoring and evaluation?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

The program's Monitoring and Evaluation Manager is anticipated to be onboarded prior to the commencement of the baseline evaluation, and the evaluation team is welcome to engage closely with the Monitoring & Evaluation Manager and other staff members engaged in Monitoring and Evaluation system/processes as needed.

5) Budget question: The RFP states that the budget narrative is maximum 3 pages and that subcontractors also need to provide a narrative in the same format. **Can each budget narrative be 3 pages long or must they be combined for 3 pages?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

Subcontractor budget narratives are separate and in addition to a prime offeror's budget narratives; subcontractor budget narratives must also not exceed 3 pages.

6) The RFP mentions that the project aims to reach 50,000 direct beneficiaries across nine provinces. **Could you please provide a breakdown of the intended reach by commodity (Dairy and Coconut) and by province?**

a) **IESC's Answer:**

15,000 beneficiaries will be reached directly by project staff and partner extension service providers through training and mentoring and they are broken down by commodity as follows:

- Dairy: 10,000
- Coconut: 5,000

The remaining 35,000 beneficiaries will be targeted through ICT extension systems developed and promoted by the project, and we anticipate the same commodity breakdown ratio (2:1 Dairy: Coconut).

The intended reach by province has not yet been established; however, the project anticipates a particular geographic focus in the Central Highlands for dairy production, and in the Northwestern and Northern Coconut Triangles for coconut production.

**See Also Questions and Answers No. 7 through 15 in the table below.**

	Section Number	Page Number	Solicitation Requirement	Question/Comment
7)	2	2	With an estimated value of \$16.6 million in technical and management funds, the project will run for five years from September 2024 through September 2029.	<p>Could IESC provide a description of the activities that the project has carried out to date?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> To date, no technical activities have been carried out. The focus has been on administrative set up for the project and establishing relationships and connections with key stakeholders. Technical activities will commence following the baseline survey's completion.</li> </ul>
8)	4	5-6	<p>The baseline study should be designed to accomplish the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ... Establish baseline data (and trendline, as applicable) for five standard performance indicators prior to the start of project activities</li> <li>• Provide baseline data for two context indicators prior to the start of activities</li> <li>• ... Verify realism of proposed targets and provide revised targets across all indicators as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>So that offerors can select appropriate methodologies and budget appropriately, could IESC please provide a complete list of indicators for the project that the offeror will be responsible for:</p> <p>(1) collecting baseline data for and (2) verifying the realism of proposal targets for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b></li> <li>• <b>Collect baseline data and verify the realism of proposed targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FFPr #1: Yield of targeted agricultural commodities among program participants with USDA assistance.</li> <li>○ FFPr #18: Value of annual sales of farms and firms receiving USDA assistance.</li> <li>○ FFPr #19: Volume of commodities sold by farms and firms receiving USDA assistance.</li> <li>○ FFPr #3: Number of hectares under improved management practices or technologies with USDA assistance.</li> <li>○ FFPr #4: Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USDA assistance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collect baseline data only:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New macroeconomic reforms affecting the dairy and coconut sectors.</li> <li>○ Disaster weather and/or climate risk forecasts in project-supported areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9)	6.4	7	<p>The evaluations will employ a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods (surveys, focus group discussions with direct observation of target beneficiaries, and key informant interviews <b>with government officials and relevant public/private stakeholders</b>, as well as project staff and USDA representatives).</p>	<p>So that offerors can select appropriate methodologies and budget appropriately, could IESC please:</p> <p>a. Clarify the types of respondents that the offeror should plan to collect data from directly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> For the indicators listed above (FFPr #1, FFPr #18, FFPr #19, FFPr#3, FFPr#4), IESC anticipates that the offerors should plan to collect data from, at minimum, farmers, input suppliers (silage producers, fodder cultivators, other agro-input suppliers), processors, exporters and other firms in the target value chains.</li> </ul> <p>b. We note that the limited timeframe for this study (two months) is likely to constrain any offeror's ability to achieve a statistically significant sample of the estimated beneficiary population of 50,000. Given that, could IESC please:</p> <p>i. Provide parameters for the sample size anticipated for the survey, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> The offeror is expected to propose a suitable methodology, including the proposed sample size,</li> </ul>
	6.7 Task One	9	<p><b>Public sector beneficiaries, input suppliers, and downstream buyers will not be directly included in data collection for this study...</b> The proposed data collection and sampling methodology should account for the need to reach all areas of the country and to draw proportionate samples based on region/agroclimatic zone to most efficiently utilize resources.</p>	
		9-10	<p>The methodology will be a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions of a sample of pre-identified individual producers/farmers, processors, <b>input suppliers</b>, financial institutions, trade associations, collectors, <b>coconut exporters</b>.</p>	

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				<p>within the timeframe and budget parameters provided.</p> <p>ii. Clarify if the offeror is required to travel to all nine regions for data collection?</p> <p>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> The offeror is expected to propose a suitable methodology, including the travel logistics, within the timeframe and budget parameters provided, to estimate baseline values and verify realism of proposal targets. We anticipate that the offeror will be required to collect data in all 9 provinces.</p>
10)	6.5	7-8	The project staff will assist the evaluator by providing logistical support during the baseline study... Logistical support to the evaluation team. Identification of the required stakeholders. Setting up required stakeholder meetings and site visits.	<p>So that offerors can budget accurately, could IESC please specify what logistical support the project staff will provide? Specifically,</p> <p>a. Will the project staff provide a list of potential respondents?</p> <p>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Yes, the project staff will provide a list of potential respondents from which the evaluation team may select target respondents. Note that the evaluation team may choose to include individuals not on the list of potential stakeholders provided by IESC as necessary.</p> <p>b. Will the project staff provide venues for FGDs and KIIs?</p> <p>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Project staff can identify/propose locations and help facilitate the respondents' arrival at the venues. Typically, these venues will be outdoor locations or</p>

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				<p>respondent office/firm locations. The project does not anticipate providing rented space for FGDs and KIIs. The contractor should budget for any anticipated venue hire required for data collection. The cost of venue hire typically will not exceed USD 25 per day for any locations proposed/identified by project staff.</p> <p>c. Will the project provide incentives for FGD participants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> The project will not provide incentives for FGD participation; however, the project will provide basic refreshments at FGD and interview locations as necessary (tea and snacks).</li> </ul> <p>d. Will the project staff provide transportation for enumerators?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> The evaluation team is expected to provide transportation as required for enumerators, and respondents within the proposal budget.</li> </ul>
11)	8.1	13	3) Technical and cost proposals must be submitted as two separate documents.	<p>Could IESC please let offers know if:</p> <p>a. Separate tech and cost documents may be submitted in the same email?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Yes. please submit separate technical and cost proposals in the same email to <a href="mailto:globalawards@iesc.org">globalawards@iesc.org</a>.</li> </ul> <p>b. There is a MB limit is on each individual email? Note</p>

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				<p>that samples of previous work are often very large files.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Offerors may submit samples of previous work in multiple clearly labeled emails if the submission files are too large.</li> </ul> <p>c. The submission files are too large, may offerors submit the proposal in multiple, clearly labeled emails?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Yes, offerors may submit the proposal in multiple clearly labeled emails if the submission files are too large.</li> </ul>
12)	8.3	13	In addition to the required proposal documents listed in sections 11 and 12 below, please include a <b>cover page</b> with your submission for the technical and cost proposals (separate cover pages).	a. May offerors provide an acronym list and table of contents not counted against the page limits?
	8.4	14	The technical proposal must be within the 16-page limit (see section page limits in section 11) and must include the following: A <b>cover letter</b> summarizing the applicant's interest and capacity	b. Could IESC confirm that the cover page does not count against the 16-page limit for the technical proposal?
	11	17	Only include the requested information and avoid submitting extra content. Any pages exceeding the page limitation may not be evaluated.	c. Could IESC clarify if the cover letter counts against the 10-page limit for the technical approach? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC's Answer:</b> Acronym list, table of contents, and cover letter will not count against the page limit for the technical proposal.</li> </ul>

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13)	8.3	14	9) Payment terms	<p>Could IESC confirm that it is requesting information such as “Payment by wire transfer within 30 days” here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC’s Answer:</b> Yes, Offerors are requested to provide their preferred payment terms, e.g., “payment by wire transfer within 30 days” (this is an example only). Note that advance payments are not authorized under the resulting contract to the successful offeror.</li> </ul>
14)	8.4	14	List of three references for offeror’s firm ... Include contact information (daytime phone numbers and email contacts).	<p>For offerors with relevant USAID projects, would IESC accept copies of official CPARs in lieu of contact information for a COR or CO, given that many USAID staff are no longer available?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC’s Answer:</b> Please provide reference information only in accordance with the RFP guidelines. In the event we cannot reach any USAID references provided, due to their separation from the Agency, IESC may request additional reference documents from an offeror and such references may include official Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) assessments.</li> </ul>
15)	11.2	17	<p>11.2 Offeror’s past performance and references: 3-page limit.</p> <p>Does not include samples of previous work and references, which are submitted as attachments.</p>	<p>Could IESC please confirm that the references do not count against the three-page limit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IESC’s Answer:</b> Yes, references are not counted as part of the three-page limit.</li> </ul>