

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

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**General Information:** TechnoServe is a nonprofit organization that works with enterprising people in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses and industries. We develop business solutions to poverty by linking people to information, capital and markets. Our work is rooted in the idea that hardworking people can generate income, jobs and wealth for their families and communities. With more than four decades of proven results, we believe in the power of private enterprise to transform lives. For more work on Technoserve, please visit: <http://www.technoserve.org/>

We originally anticipated having responses to questions back by May 18 2018. However, it took longer than expected to compile answers. In light of this, we have decided to extend the deadline for proposals to **June 04 2018**. We have carefully looked at all the questions asked by the various consultants interested in responding to the EoI and put together responses. Please find responses below:

**Question 1:** We'd be interested in your perspective on partnering for this. What role do you envisage each party to play? Are you proposing to be the lead on this bid?

**Answer 1:** We are not proposing to be the lead on this bid. We are expecting interested bidders to take full responsibility for this evaluation. The suggested break down of responsibilities for this evaluation is available in section IX of the ToR. Though TechnoServe is not in the position to provide the facilitation necessary to support consortium building, we would welcome a consortium-based proposal if the bidder puts together a consortium to submit a proposal.

**Question 2:** What is the division of labor between TechnoServe and CRS in the project?

**Answer 2:** TechnoServe is the lead implementer of the project, setting the strategy, performing overall project coordination, monitoring performance, and is implementing activity three (support to cashew processors), activity four (access to finance), and activity five (institutional support). CRS is a sub awardee and implements the majority of direct farmer training activities (activities one and two) in partnership with three local organizations. Details on all five activities are included in section I of the ToR.

**Question 3:** Can TechnoServe provide more details on the limitations of the baseline survey that require correction at midterm?

**Answer 3:** Limitations of the baseline survey included: 1) use of village chiefs to build local lists of cashew farmers; 2) collection of some data on processors (factories and their employees) that were not directly related to the indicators of this component of the project; 3) methodology for measuring yields did not take into account seasonal effects; 4) and lack of collection of baseline data for select indicators.

**Question 4:** Are the data obtained by the annual yield surveys disaggregated by sex?

**Answer 4:** Yes.

**Question 5:** The baseline survey investigated three different sample populations: 1) cashew producing households, 2) members of producer groups, and 3) cashew processors. Does TechnoServe expect the midline evaluation to survey all three sample populations, or population 1 only?

**Answer 5:** TechnoServe expects the midline evaluation to survey all three sample populations.

**Question 6:** Can TechnoServe provide information on the targets at outcome level to be achieved by the end of the project?

**Answer 6:** Under key objective one (increased agricultural productivity), targets at outcome level include:

- Number of hectares under improved techniques or technologies as a result of USDA assistance: 64313
- Number of jobs attributed to USDA assistance: 3686
- Total number of individuals benefiting directly as a result of USDA assistance: 53365
- Total number of individuals benefiting indirectly as a result of USDA assistance: 172116

Under key objective two (expanded trade), targets at outcome level include:

- Value of sales by project beneficiaries: \$124,741,187
- Total number of individuals benefiting directly as a result of USDA assistance: 53365 –
- Total number of individuals benefiting indirectly as a result of USDA assistance: 172116
- Number of jobs attributed to USDA assistance: 3686

**Question 7:** What is the budget ceiling for the midterm evaluation

**Answer 7:** \$150,000

**Question 8:** We would like to request the methodology used for the baseline of BeninCaju as well as the sampling done. We would also appreciate if we can know the budget allocated for the mid-term evaluation as well as the organization that collected the baseline data of the project.

**Answer 8:** Baseline methodology and sampling are detailed in Annex II and III of the TOR. The budget ceiling for the midterm evaluation is \$150,000. The organization responsible for collecting baseline data was Programme Analyse de Politique Agricole (PAPA). They used enumerators from the Beninese cashew producers association (Federation Nationale des Producteurs d'Anacarde du Benin (FENAPAB)) and some additional enumerators familiar to PAPA.

**Question 9:** To this effect, it would be really helpful if we could access the baseline survey report – to gain a better understanding of the methods/tools used in conducting the baseline.

**Answer 9:** A summary of key findings from the baseline evaluation are included in section II of the TOR. Baseline methodology and sampling are detailed in Annex II of the TOR. The full baseline report will be included in a package of key project documents that will be provided to the selected firm after contract award.

**Question 10:** The TOR states that “403 members of producer groups were also interviewed during the baseline study”. Can TechnoServe clarify what is meant by the word “interview” - was it a quantitative survey or qualitative interviews?

**Answer 10:** A total of 205 producer group members from BeninCaju villages and 198 producer group members from Control villages were interviewed as part of this survey. A quantitative survey was conducted with this group.

**Question 11:** Does TechnoServe want the baseline study replicated? If so, can TechnoServe share the baseline report with interested bidders?

**Answer 11:** TechnoServe would like interested bidders to utilize a mixed methods, difference-in-difference approach that follows the baseline study sampling and methodology as closely as possible - while taking into account limitations encountered during the baseline study. Additional information on the baseline study can be found in section II and annex II of the TOR. The full baseline report will be included in a package of key project documents that will be provided to the selected firm after contract award.

**Question 12:** Can TechnoServe clarify what is meant by “150 employees from the six BeninCaju partner cashew processors were also interviewed as part of the study”? Was quantitative data collected using a survey tool or was it qualitative data through key informant interviews?

**Answer 12:** Employees of all six of the BeninCaju-related cashew processors were surveyed. As it was not possible to get advance lists of employees and managers in each section of the processor factory, for each processor, in each section the first employee encountered was interviewed. A form of “nearest neighbor selection” with suitable skips was then used to randomize the selection of the next employee to interview throughout that processor section. A total of ten (10) workers in each section (that had at least 10 employees) was selected to be interviewed including the manager of that section. The manager of each work section in each processor was thus purposefully included in the sample. Quantitative data was collected using a survey tool. Employees were read a number of statements that reflect their level of satisfaction with different aspects of their current job and current employer. The surveyed employees were asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement or were satisfied with their employer regarding the issue being queried.

**Question 13:** The TOR states that the midterm evaluation presents an opportunity to resolve any inaccurate or incomplete measurements produced by the baseline study, in order to provide a more complete and relevant baseline that will allow management to more accurately measure the program’s impact. Can TechnoServe provide more information as to what inaccurate or incomplete measurements is referred to in this statement?

**Answer 13:** Inaccurate or incomplete measurements are as follows: 1) collection of some data on processors (factories and their employees) that were not directly related to the indicators of this component of the project; 2) methodology for measuring yields did not take into account seasonal effects; 3) and lack of collection of baseline data for select indicators. In addition, the contextual factors of the project were not sufficiently documented to explain and qualify the measurement of the indicators.

**Question 14:** What type of regular monitoring data is collected on the program?

**Answer 14:** Both TechnoServe and CRS collect quantitative data on all five project activities. Qualitative data is collected in the form of event and training reports. Both quantitative and qualitative data is used to support semiannual reports to USDA. Information collected includes: 1) output counts (training sessions, training participants, trade missions, capacity building actions, loans disbursed, seedlings produced, decrees and regulations facilitated, etc.) and outcome

measurements (adoption of new practices and technologies, farm yield, sales data, etc.) Results presented in section I of the TOR are also representative of the type of regular monitoring data collected.

**Question 15:** With regard regards to the quantitative survey the TOR says that the “the sample size will be representative of each value chain at the 95% confidence level”. Can TechnoServe clarify how many value chains there are?

**Answer 15:** We are working in three value chains, namely: raw cashew nut for export, processed cashew kernel and cashew apple products.

**Question 16:** Does TechnoServe have a preferred local firm that can be engaged for assistance with data collection and fielding enumerators? If so, is TechnoServe interested in having the same firm complete the survey to improve the replicability of the survey instruments used at baseline?

**Answer 16:** TechnoServe does not have a preferred local firm.

**Question 17:** Does the Scope of Work for hiring a local firm need to be developed at this stage if bidders do not have a local partner to include in their proposal?

**Answer 17:** If bidders do not have a local partner to include in their proposal, it is preferred that they include a draft Scope of Work for hiring a local firm.

**Question 18:** While data collection in-country is expected to be from July 16 - August 10, can bidders adjust that timeframe as needed (in terms of length)?

**Answer 18:** Bidders can adjust the timeframe as needed (in terms of length) as long as it still meets the September 21 milestone of submission of final draft to TechnoServe and USDA.

**Question 19:** When (in terms of month) was the baseline data collected?

**Answer 19:** June to August 2016. Information on the baseline evaluation can be found in section II and Annex II of the TOR.

**Question 20:** Should bidders budget for travel costs to have in-person meetings with USDA?

**Answer 20:** Bidders are not required to have in-person meetings with USDA. Meetings can be conducted remotely through video and tele conferences.

**Question 21:** What international/national per diem rates (that include accommodation and meals/incidentals) should bidders use when budgeting for data collection (in Cotonou and in the field)?

**Answer 21:** TechnoServe uses the per diem rates, which include lodging, meals and incidental expenses, established by the US State Department for international travel. TechnoServe follows the Federal Code for determining meal per diem rates. TechnoServe's policy is to set daily per diem rates at 50% of the current US State Department per diem rate for each country/city. Lodging costs cannot exceed 100% of the listed US State Department rate for that country/city. When breakfast, lunch or dinner is provided during local or international travel, the following percentages should be used to prorate the total daily per diem rate for those meals not provided: Breakfast: 15% Lunch: 25% Dinner: 40% Incidentals: 20%

**Question 22:** Will TechnoServe provide local transportation during the field visit or should bidders include that cost in the financial proposal?

**Answer 22:** TechnoServe will not provide local transportation. Bidders are requested to include this cost in their proposal. Additional information on logistics is provided in section IX of the TOR.

**Question 23:** How long were the baseline surveys? Specifically, how long did each survey take to be administered?

**Answer 23:** The longest survey administered included more than one hundred questions. The surveys administered took between an hour and two per survey.

**Question 24:** Are the survey digitalized? How were they administered?

**Answer 24:** The surveys were not digitalized. They are paper based. They were administered on paper and then transcribed into Excel. TechnoServe prefers that all surveys conducted for the midterm evaluation are digitalized.

**Question 25:** Are team members expected to be engaged full time (20 days a month) during the evaluation or can TechnoServe provide us with the expected Level of Effort for the assignment (in days)? Alternatively, can TechnoServe provide bidders the with budget that has been allocated for this evaluation?

**Answer 25:** Team members are not expected to be engaged full time (20 days a month). The anticipated level of effort is 45 days. This is outlined in section VII of the TOR. The budget ceiling for the midterm evaluation is \$150,000.