



Request for Proposals (RFP) for the mid-term evaluation of The Sustainable Agricultural Improvement Project (MAS+)

TECHNOSERVE HONDURAS

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Table of Contents

1. Project to be reviewed	5
2. TechnoServe Background	5
3. MAS+ Project Background	6
4. MAS+'s Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation	7
5. Midterm Evaluation	7
6. Evaluation Questions and Objectives	8
7. Key Audience for the Mid-term Evaluation	10
8. Mid-term Evaluation Methodology	10
9. Deliverables	13
10. Evaluation Logistics	14
11. Selection Criteria/Profile of the Evaluation Team	15
Profile of the Evaluation Team	15
Deadline for Work Performance	15
Selection Criteria	15
12. Proposal Preparation Instructions	16
Technical Proposal	16
Cost Proposal	17
13. Payment Schedule and Terms	18
14. Schedule of Events	18
15. General Terms and Conditions	19

Appendix Index

Appendix 1. Guide for the preparation of the technical proposal and work plan	21
Appendix 2. Consultant's Experience	22
Appendix 3. Team Composition and Assignment of Responsibilities	23
Appendix 4. Work Plan and Calendar of Activities	24
Appendix 5. Breakdown of the Contract Price	25
Appendix 6. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses	26
Appendix 7. Consulting Team or Company Information Form	27
Appendix 8. Bid Form	28
Appendix 9. Format for sending questions about the consultancy	30
Appendix 10. Content of the Mid-Term Evaluation Report	31
Appendix 11. MAS+ Program Results Matrix	32

Glossary

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Description</i>
BL	Baseline
CBO	Community-based Organizations
COPECO	Permanent Emergency Contingency Committee
CSB	Community Seed Bank
CT	Community trainers
DICTA	Agricultural Science and Technology Research Division
DME	Design Monitoring and Evaluation
FG	Focus groups
FGD	Focus group discussion
FS	Field school
FUNDER	Foundation for Rural Business Development
iDE	International Development Enterprises
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IHCAFE	Honduran Coffee Institute
LoP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
MAS+	Sustainable Agricultural Improvement Program
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
MSU	Michigan State University
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PO	Producer Organization
RCT	Randomized Controlled Cluster Trial
RED PASH	Artisanal Seed Producer Network
RFP	Request for Proposals
SAG	Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock
ToRs	Terms of reference
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
USG	United States government
VC	Value chain

1. Project to be reviewed

Project Name	Sustainable Agricultural Improvement Project, MAS+ (Mejoramiento Agrícola Sostenible, in Spanish)
Project Location	Nine departments in Honduras: El Paraíso, Comayagua, Francisco Morazán, Olancho, Yoro, Intibucá, La Paz, Santa Bárbara and Cortés
Project Budget	USD\$12.9 million
Project Duration	October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2022
Project Funder	The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the J.M. Smucker Company
Project Goal	Improved productivity and strengthened commercial relationships for 32,000 smallholder coffee and bean producers in Honduras
Implementing Agency and Partners	TechnoServe with partners: Fundación para el Desarrollo Rural (FUNDER), Michigan State University (MSU), International Development Enterprise (iDE), and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI),
Evaluation Type	Mid-term, process, mixed-methods
Evaluation timeframe	April to September 2020
First (draft) Report deadline	August 31, 2020
Tender response deadline	April 3, 2020
Estimated value of the consultancy	USD\$90,000 - \$120,000
Type of contract	Fixed-price contract

2. TechnoServe Background

TechnoServe is an international non-governmental organization that promotes business solutions to poverty in the developing world. TechnoServe's mission is to work with enterprising people in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. It does this by linking people to information, capital and markets. Active in Honduras since 2003, TechnoServe is registered in the US as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation and headquartered in Arlington, VA. Its staff of over 1,000 employees operate from 30 country offices in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. For more details on TechnoServe and its work in Honduras see: <http://www.TechnoServe.org/>

3. MAS+ Project Background

With an expected duration of five years, the “MAS+” Sustainable Agricultural Improvement Program is a continuation and expansion of interventions that were originally implemented during the period from September 2012 through June 2017. With the objective of assisting 32,000 smallholder coffee and bean producers in the departments of El Paraíso, Comayagua, Francisco Morazán, Olancho, Yoro, Intibucá, La Paz, Santa Bárbara and Cortés; the MAS+ program leverages an integrated approach based on seven discrete but interrelated activities that aim to increase the income of coffee and bean producers.

MAS+ also provides advisory services to companies that provide improved agricultural inputs and climate-smart agricultural equipment and services in order to increase coffee and bean producers’ access to these important resources. It promotes innovative mechanisms to increase access to financing for farmers and producer organizations (POs), and develops opportunities to sustain these relationships. Finally, it provides training to government institutions to address key issues and policies that inhibit trade and productivity in the agricultural sector. By the program’s fifth and final year, it is expected that the project’s key initiatives will have influenced the coffee and bean markets and that, through training, farmers will have adopted a minimum of three good agricultural practices (GAPs), thereby achieving a 25 percent increase in yields and reducing production costs by 10 percent, on average.

The MAS + project has seven main activities:

- *Training: Facilitate Improved Crop Productivity and Quality.* MAS+ implements a suite of on-farm training activities tailored to the specific needs of targeted farmers in order to facilitate improved productivity of coffee and bean plots.
- *Capacity Building: Producer Groups (POs) and Organizations.* MAS+ builds the capacity of POs to provide effective marketing, financial, and technical assistance to farmers. In addition, the project helps POs to implement value-added services.
- *Inputs: Improve Access to Inputs and Services.* MAS+ helps market-oriented input and equipment suppliers to understand and supply the input and infrastructure needs of farmers and POs. The project provides business advisory services to existing agricultural input, equipment and service providers, with a particular focus on those providing climate-resilient products for water-harvesting, irrigation, and soil analysis. TechnoServe and MSU will continue to scale the community seed bank (CSB) model with additional refinements.
- *Capacity Building: Agricultural Extension Agents/Services.* To ensure the sustainability of project results, MAS+ helps public sector, private sector, and civil society organizations to develop their own agricultural extension services and assume greater responsibility for farmer training.
- *Financial Services: Facilitate Agricultural Lending.* MAS+ strengthens “Cajas Rurales” (rural savings and loans groups) to facilitate access to finance at the PO level. The project also promotes innovative financial agreement mechanisms that can successfully offset risk to exporters, such as factoring, input-supplier loans, and harvest advances.
- *Market Access: Facilitate Buyer-Seller Relationships.* MAS+ promotes marketing contracts among farmers and anchor firms. Program partners also coordinate efforts with the Honduran Coffee Institute (IHCAFE) and the private sector to elevate international recognition of Honduran coffee quality.
- *Capacity Building: Public and Private Institutions.* MAS+ provides technical assistance to the Honduran Ministry of Agriculture (SAG) to validate bean varieties that can help farmers to improve yields. The project collaborates with the Permanent Emergency Contingency Committee (COPECO) and other actors to train key local and national government personnel to strengthen areas that enable smallholder producers to respond more effectively to climatic crises, including drought and excess rain.

4. MAS+'s Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation

MAS + has adopted a two-pronged approach to monitoring and evaluation. First, monitoring activities are planned throughout the project to provide evidence on changes in beneficiaries' agricultural productivity and the expansion of their sales. Monitoring is conducted through the "INFOMAS" system, an integrated online platform that collects, stores, compiles, and analyzes project-derived data, allowing MAS+ managers and key partners to understand the progress made towards targets in real-time, and to make data-driven decisions regarding project implementation. The second component is an independent evaluation approach – designed and partly executed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) – to assess the efficacy and impact of specific activities against a control group, thereby providing rigorous evidence on how these activities lead to better agricultural productivity.

The program's impact evaluation approach draws on experimental and semi-experimental evaluation methods, which involve the collection of information at different times throughout the MAS + program intervention. For the baseline study, which was carried out between June and September 2018, IFPRI designed the information collection instruments and analyzed the collected field information. Similarly, IFPRI will be responsible for implementing the final impact evaluation, which will measure the final results along the hypothetical causal chain in order to understand how the impacts may have occurred. In addition, when measured against a control group, the proposed methodology will help MAS+ to understand what gains in production and/or productivity can be attributed to the project.

For the coffee value chain (VC), the impact assessment methodology consists of a randomized controlled cluster (RCT) trial. A sample of potential participating villages was established, and the treatment group and the control group were randomly selected. In the bean VC, the sample was selected through semi-experimental methods. In total, the baseline survey collected data from 1,932 farmers, including both treatment and control groups in both VCs.

Furthermore, the impact evaluation will analyze only three of the seven project activities. Specifically, the impact evaluation process focuses on these activities: *Training: Facilitate Improved Crop Productivity and Quality*, *Capacity Building: Producer Groups and Organizations*, and *Financial Services: Facilitate Agricultural Lending*. In the case of access to financial services, the final impact evaluation will only assess the coffee VC, as the availability of smallholder access financing is not considered a significantly constraining factor in increasing bean yields.

Clearly the other four activities may also impact smallholder agricultural productivity. Rather than isolating each activity on its own, the project considers the impact estimates generated by the previously described evaluation as inclusive of those four activities (see "Midterm Evaluation" section below for more detail). The project expects that these additional four activities will be assessed through project monitoring and the mid-term process evaluation.

5. Midterm Evaluation

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) is to review and assess the progress of project implementation as well as the effect of MAS+ activities on coffee and bean farmers, POs, commercial partners, and service- and input-providers (such as coffee exporting companies, IHMA, PMA, and Red Pash, among others) in achieving intended outcomes. A process evaluation in nature, the MTE will also assess the relevance and effectiveness of the interventions, document lessons learned, assess sustainability efforts to date, and help project management to determine any course correction required to fully achieve project results in the remaining half of the project.

For smallholder producers, the MTE will specifically seek to understand if the project intervention is helping to improve the management of farms through the adoption of new agricultural practices and technologies, and to assess how these improvements are impacting farm productivity and family income as they pertain to the production of coffee and beans.

While the MTE will review and assess all seven project activities, special emphasis will be placed on the interventions that will not be analyzed through the final impact evaluation, namely: *Inputs: Improve Access to Inputs and Services; Capacity Building: Agricultural Extension Agents/Services; Market Access: Facilitate Buyer-Seller Relationships; and Capacity Building: Public and Private Institutions*. Furthermore, the MTE process will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and prospects for the sustainability of project interventions. It will also address important cross-cutting themes for TechnoServe, donors, and partners, such as *migration mitigation, resilience and adaptation to climate change, and reduction of child-labor in coffee producing areas*.

Finally, it is expected that the MTE will collect and document changes in dynamics around the IFPRI-defined control and treatment groups for coffee that could influence the proposed methodologies for end-line data analysis.

6. Evaluation Questions and Objectives

The mid-term evaluation process is intended to be participatory, and to result in findings and recommendations that are valid, insightful and useful. While relevant program staff and key program stakeholders will be involved cooperatively to the extent possible, the selected evaluator will control the design and implementation of evaluation activities, as this is an independent, third-party evaluation. Overall, this evaluation intends to assess the extent to which the objectives of the project are in the process of being attained, to help capture and articulate lessons learned so far, and to make observations and recommendations on project improvement to TechnoServe, partners, and funders.

The MTE will seek to answer the following evaluation questions identified by the MAS+ project management team and by funders:

Project Design

- Are project activities relevant for farmers?
- How effective are project activities at making farmers more productive?
- How have the project activities affected the income of MAS+ participants for their coffee and bean production?
- Are project activities delivered in the most efficient manner?
- Are project activities leading to sustained outcomes?
- In what ways does the project complement and/or leverage the efforts of both the private and public sectors, and of donor investments in the coffee and bean sectors?
- Is the design of the project practical and suitable for the economic, cultural, and economic context of Honduras?
- Have project resources been used properly?
- Are the targets being achieved to date, and are they on track to reaching life of project (LoP) targets?
- Is the causal model reasonable and valid?
- Are the assumptions still valid?

Technical capacity of producers and producer groups

- Were the recruitment efforts successful in attracting coffee and bean producers to the project?

- In which way(s) did the project demonstrate an interest in including women and other disadvantaged populations?
- How effective have the training modules been for the management and improved production, technologies, and techniques for coffee and bean? Is there a need to further modify the training materials or processes?
- How is the recordkeeping system proposed by MAS+ perceived by producers and POs?
- To what extent are the bean farmers able to understand the importance of using improved seed?
- How effective are Community Seed Banks in disseminating improved seeds of bean varieties?
- Have smallholder participants applied the skills gained from the training?

Access to finance

- Are participants accessing financial products? To what extent have these financial products met their farm and management demands for capital?
- To what extent has the existing loan guarantee fund allowed financial institutions to increase their provision of financial services to smallholder producers? What was the default rate on these loans?
- What real differences can be observed to date in the adoption of best practices among the participants accessing financial products, and among the participants who are not accessing financial products?
- To what extent are the outcomes of increased access to financial products related to changes in productivity and incomes?

Producer Organizations

- To what extent have POs adopted the trainings provided by the project?
- How many additional services are POs providing to smallholders compared to the baseline?
- Do POs have the right staff to manage service provision?
- Has the knowledge imparted via project training activities been used by POs?
- How do coffee and bean producers perceive the quality and utility of services they receive from POs?
- How successful have the efforts to strengthen POs capacity been in terms of POs' ability to commercialize their agricultural products?

Project Management

- Does the monitoring system work properly?
- Does relevant staff understand and comply with their monitoring responsibilities?
- Is the project performing monitoring work on relevant indicators in an efficient and timely manner?
- Is management using monitoring data in their decision-making?
- Are relevant parties well-informed on project progress?
- What roles do project participants and stakeholders play in program monitoring?
- Is there a systematic monitoring of project performance indicators that includes: data flow, data capture and analysis, information sources and means of verification for all indicators?
- Is the project missing key indicators?
- What factors have affected the control and treatment groups that ought to be taken into consideration by IFPRI in order to effectively analyze the impact data of coffee producers at end-line?

- What conditions or issues should IFPRI take into consideration to ensure that the RCT project evaluation methodology does not under- or over-estimate MAS+ impact results?

Climate change

- What initiatives and measures are implemented through MAS+ to increase adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change?
- Have producers received trainings in best or improved techniques and technologies in order to achieve a better adaptation to climate change?
- To what extent has climate change affected the project's ability to reach its performance targets?
- Is the project effectively measuring change (attributable to MAS+ interventions) in producers' resilience to climate change?

Migration

- Has MAS+ sufficiently analyzed and documented the factors affecting migration in the coffee and bean VCs in order to design strategies to prevent migration?
- To what extent have the services and support of the MAS+ project contributed to strengthening participating producers' ties to their communities of origin, and to preventing them from migrating to the United States?

Child labor

- Has MAS+ sufficiently analyzed and documented the factors influencing the employment of children in the project's area of influence?
- Does MAS+ have a child labor prevention plan, particularly in the coffee VC?
- To what extent have the services and support of the MAS+ project contributed to the prevention of child labor, particularly in the coffee VC?

7. Key Audience for the Mid-term Evaluation

The main audiences for this MTE are TechnoServe's Honduras and global leadership teams, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Fundación para el Desarrollo Rural (FUNDER), Michigan State University (MSU), International Development Enterprise (iDE), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola (FHIA).

Furthermore, the findings of the MTE will be used by the MAS+ project team and partners, and by USDA to make informed decisions about the future direction of the project. If changes to project implementation are necessary, TechnoServe will submit a modification to the USDA for approval, and will create a final action plan and implementation schedule.

8. Mid-term Evaluation Methodology

TechnoServe seeks an evaluation approach that is appropriate for the scope of the project, intended audience, and available resources. Evidence should come from both quantitative and qualitative research methods, and should include: primary sources (beneficiary surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups discussions, beneficiary stories, etc.), and secondary sources (InfoMAS reports, planning documents, program documents and reports, monitoring records, and baseline data and reports, etc.).

Upon evaluation start-up, MAS+ and TechnoServe M&E staff will support the selected evaluation team to review program documentation and other relevant information, and to refine the evaluation work

plan presented in response to this Request For Proposals (RFP). Reference materials that will be shared with the evaluator in advance of field work include the following:

- Project documents (award documents, results framework, Evaluation Plan, key partner agreements, etc.);
- Baseline reports;
- Semi-annual M&E report(s);
- InfoMAS Performance Reports.

The MTE's quantitative component will look at each of the seven MAS+ Activities, compare progress against benchmarks set during the baseline study, and document lessons learned. The evaluation will cover all nine target departments and will estimate the project's progress towards achieving impact targets by comparing the results of performance indicators (at the time of the MTE) against baseline figures and the counterfactual. A structured survey questionnaire similar in format to the baseline should be used. In addition, the MTE will examine the quality of project design and the appropriateness of resource allocation.

Result	Activity	Indicator	Final Target
Increased Agricultural Productivity	Training: Facilitate Improved Crop Productivity and Quality	Volume (MT, wet parchment) of commodities sold by project beneficiaries – coffee	224,741
		Volume (MT, field fresh) of commodities sold by project beneficiaries - beans	6,256
	Capacity Building: Producer Groups/ Organizations	Number of jobs attributed to USDA assistance	3,392
Increased Use of Improved Agricultural Techniques and Technologies	Training: Facilitate Improved Crop Productivity and Quality	Number of individuals who have applied new techniques or technologies as a result of USDA assistance	21,490
		Number of hectares of land under improved techniques or technologies as a result of USDA assistance	46,890
Improved Farm Management	Training: Facilitate Improved Crop Productivity and Quality	Number of individuals who have applied improved farm management practices	6,078
Increased Use of Financial Services	Financial Services: Facilitate agricultural lending	Number of individuals receiving financial services as a result of USDA assistance	10,380
		Value of loans provided as a result of USDA assistance	\$24.2M
Improved Capacity of Key		Number of private enterprises, POs and community-based	435

Groups in the Agriculture Production Sector	Capacity Building: Producer Groups/ Organizations	organizations (CBOs) that applied improved techniques and technologies as result of USDA assistance	
Increased Leverage of Private Sector Resources	Inputs: Improve Access to Inputs and Services	Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance	23
Expanded Trade of Agricultural Products	Market Access: Facilitate Buyer-Seller Relationships	Value of sales by project beneficiaries - coffee	\$181,755,192
		Value of sales by project beneficiaries - beans	\$4,306,120
Increased Access to Markets to Sell Agricultural Products		Value of new public and private sector investment leveraged by USDA assistance	\$4,399,559

The quantitative findings will be complemented by the qualitative research component, which will be composed of semi-structured and structured interviews in addition to a set of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Detailed data collection protocols and their accompanying guidelines will be developed by the selected consultants for all interviews and FGDs. The objective will be to understand: how each of the activities may have contributed to intermediate outcomes; what kinds of constraints actors might face in achieving project outputs and outcomes that are not addressed by the activities; and how activities are performing from the perspective of beneficiaries.

The proposed participants in the qualitative component of the MTE are:

- MAS+ community trainers from both VCs in the nine targeted departments;
- Individual producers, PO leaders and members of CSBs;
- Implementation partners (Interviews);
- Commercial partners and service- and input-providers (such as coffee exporting companies, IHMA, PMA, Red Pash, among others);
- Donor representatives (USDA, the J.M. Smucker Company);
- Members of the MAS+ technical and management team.

The MTE will capture lessons learned to create a set of recommended course corrections to ensure that all targeted results are achieved by the end of the project, and in order address any issues that might prevent the sustainability of project activities after the completion of MAS+.

At a minimum, the selected proposal will include the evaluation methods identified above. However, these methods are not considered sufficient to meet all the objectives of the evaluation. Proposals must identify methods to respond to all objectives, integrally incorporating the methods identified in the USDA-approved MAS+ Evaluation Plan.

Further guidance on the scope and methodology of the MTE should be obtained through the approved MAS+ Evaluation Plan and the USDA Monitoring & Evaluation Policy:

(<https://www.fas.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2014-03/evalpol.pdf>)

9. Deliverables

All deliverables shall be submitted electronically, in both PDF files and MS Word or MS Excel files. As appropriate, all photographs or other graphics/figures in the reports will also be submitted as separate editable files. Finally, the evaluator/ evaluation team should also submit the final clean dataset used to inform the analysis.

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin on or about May 8, 2020, for a duration of approximately 6 months, to complete the following deliverables:

1. *Final Mid-Term Evaluation Workplan*¹ (estimated due date: June 12th 2020), including:
 - a. Detailed sampling plan for the quantitative and qualitative component;
 - b. Detailed schedule for data collection, validation, compilation, preliminary reporting, feedback collection, and final reporting;
 - c. Data schema explaining how the evaluation questions will be answered, the data source, and analysis methodology;
 - d. Final versions of all data collection protocols (surveys, interviews, FGDs) with their corresponding guidelines. Present protocols programmed in required software as needed.
2. *Detailed Report on data collected* (upon completion of data collection – estimated due date: July 31st 2020), including:
 - a. Overview of all data collection activities, including number of individuals/entities consulted, locations, and dates;
 - b. Presentation of any salient interim results;
 - c. Challenges encountered in the process;
 - d. Documentation of any deviations to the approved work plan, sampling strategy, or data collection tools;
 - e. Submission of revised schedule, schema, sampling strategy, or data collection tools (if necessary);
 - f. Preliminary datasets:
 - i. Quantitative data in MS Excel- and/or SPSS-friendly formats;
 - ii. FGD and interview transcripts in MS Word and PDF format.
3. *Preliminary MTE Report*, following the recommended format² (estimated due date: September 18th 2020), including:
 - a. Preliminary report with complete analysis of collected qualitative and quantitative data, findings, preliminary conclusions, and preliminary recommendations. The report must be written in concise and clear language, effectively integrating graphs, tables, maps, and/or other relevant visual aids.
 - b. Final (clean) data sets:
 - i. Quantitative data in MS Excel- and/or SPSS-friendly formats;
 - ii. FGD and interview transcripts in MS Word and PDF format;
 - c. Data cleaning log: documenting all steps taken by the consultant to clean and corroborate any data points needed for proper analysis and the rationale;
 - d. Data analysis code used for quantitative analysis.

¹ Refer to Appendix 1 for details on Workplan formats.

² Refer to Appendix 10 for details on reporting formats.

4. *Final Mid-Term Evaluation Report*, following the recommended format³, and Presentation of Findings (estimated due date: October 25th 2020), including:
 - a. Final report integrating all the feedback provided by TechnoServe and the funder. The report must be written in concise and clear language, effectively integrating graphs, tables, maps and/or other relevant visual aids;
 - b. A 2 to 3-page stand-alone briefing document describing the evaluation design, key findings and other relevant considerations. The briefing will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the midterm evaluation, and should be written in language easy to understand by non-evaluators and with appropriate graphics and tables.
 - c. Conduct an in-person presentation of MTE findings for representatives from the MAS+ project, TechnoServe, donors, and key partners in Tegucigalpa;
 - d. Soft copies of support materials used during the presentation of findings: handouts, MS PowerPoint presentations, posters, etc.

10. Evaluation Logistics

The external evaluator/ evaluation team will be responsible for:

1. As needed, refining the evaluation approach proposed in the tender;
2. Managing the evaluation process, including procuring, training, and managing the performance of surveyors;
3. Developing, testing, and applying any data collection instruments/questionnaires, including the development of user manuals⁴;
4. Leading the interview process (TechnoServe Honduras to provide field assistance, facilitating the process rather than assuming direct involvement, i.e. identifying and introducing key individuals);
5. Data analysis;
6. Preparing and presenting all draft and final reports, including ensuring the quality of translations and written products.

TechnoServe Honduras and key regional staff will be responsible for:

1. Supervising the consultancy resulting from this RFP (TechnoServe's M&E Adviser for the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region);
2. Providing the evaluator with copies of and access to all TechnoServe and MAS+ background documents and resources (InfoMAS, proposal, grant agreement, evaluation plans, reports, workplans, training materials, etc.);
3. Introducing the evaluator to key informants as needed and assisting in identifying/engaging suitable individuals for agreed-upon special data collection;
4. Assisting with logistics. Unless otherwise agreed, all travel and logistical arrangements will be made by TechnoServe business advisors and administrative staff;
5. Reviewing and providing feedback to the consultant on each of the deliverables and evaluation products;
6. Facilitating the execution of the final presentation meeting.

³ Ibid

⁴ i) Surveyors' manual. This manual should contain a detailed explanation of the purpose of each question and survey section; ii) A supervisors' manual, where their roles are explained in detail; iii) A Tablet Use Manual. The evaluator/ evaluation team will be responsible for ensuring that the surveyors understand the material specified in these manuals.

IFPRI will be responsible for:

1. Evaluating the proposals submitted for this tender and participating in the selection process of the mid-term evaluation teams.

11. Selection Criteria/Profile of the Evaluation Team

Profile of the Evaluation Team

The desired evaluation team to lead the MTE should be able to demonstrate:

- Deep understanding of the agricultural industry in Honduras and Central America;
- Team leaders with 10+ years of experience working in agriculture, rural development, poverty-reduction, and/or market systems development projects;
- Experience conducting evaluations for development projects, with at least two recent evaluations conducted in projects of similar size and scope;
- Master's degree or higher qualifications in Economics or other social sciences, such as Anthropology, Sociology; or agronomy;
- Ability to relate to stakeholders at multiple levels (e.g., TechnoServe leadership and field staff, private sector business owners and managers, USG representatives at various levels, program participants, community trainers, and farmers);
- Cultural sensitivity and gender balance;
- Strong domain of quantitative, qualitative, and participatory evaluation methods that incorporate gender, intercultural, and social perspectives.
- Advanced knowledge in the use of survey programming software (CommCare, ODK, etc.), as well as other software such as SPSS, MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Excellent data research, analysis, and presentation skills;
- Ability to quickly and creatively problem-solve while maintaining the integrity of the evaluation objectives and process;
- Ability to communicate research findings in a clear, concise, and diplomatic manner;
- Ability to work in a team;
- Excellent English writing skills; ability to conduct interviews and research in both English and Spanish;
- Experience evaluating U.S. government-funded development programs desired.

Deadline for Work Performance

The period of fulfillment of any contract arising from this tender will be effective from approximately April 1st 2020 and end on or around September 30th 2020, following USDA's review and approval of the final MTE report. Proposals must detail the estimated timeframe needed to fulfill all obligations, with detailed estimates of implementation for each particular activity, as indicated in section "9. Deliverables" of this RFP. Proposals that comply with all requirements, are rigorous in the proposed methodology, and propose an efficient yet realistic timeframe are desired.

Selection Criteria

The purpose of this tender is to identify suppliers who have the interest, experience, capacity, and operational and financial strength to provide TechnoServe with the required products and services. The proposals submitted in response to this RFP will be evaluated based on the requirements established in the tender. At TechnoServe's sole discretion, specific proposals may be selected for follow-up questions or a verbal presentation in English or Spanish.

The evaluation and selection of the chosen proposal will be based on the following criteria and weighting:

Criteria	Criterion Weight	Factors
Professional Experience	20%	Experience evaluating Development Programs, especially in rural economic development, using multiple approaches.
		Experience performing evaluations on similar and relevant topics in Honduras and elsewhere.
Profile of the evaluation team	20%	Demonstrated understanding and knowledge of the project's socio-economic context.
		Relevant academic degree(s).
		Knowledge of economic development issues and agricultural value-chain approaches with an emphasis on coffee and bean.
Quality of the technical proposal	35%	Innovative and mixed methodologies.
		Methodology of study proposed from suggested methodology with a realistic and appropriate work plan.
		Recommendations for how to add value to project findings using innovative techniques for transmitting evaluation results.
Quality of the cost proposal	25%	Cost-effectiveness and value of the cost proposal.

The selection criteria are detailed in section “15. General Terms and Conditions” of this RFP. Preference for domestic/national bidders will not be a factor in the evaluation of the offer.

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the organization whose proposal it considers will best respond to the interests of TechnoServe and the donor.

It is estimated that bidding teams will require 2-3 working days to prepare a proposal in response to this tender.

The bidding team with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Bidders whose proposals are not selected will also be notified.

12. Proposal Preparation Instructions

In response to this tender, interested parties must submit their technical and cost proposals considering all the conditions detailed in this RFP.

Technical Proposal

The technical proposal must contain the following:

- Cover Letter, detailing the name of the consultant or consulting company, their contact information, a brief summary of their experience and work developed related to the work required by TechnoServe, during the last 5 years;
- The offer must be submitted in Spanish;

- Framework for the evaluation design, methodology, and general approach to the evaluation;
- Work plan and calendar of activities;
- Describe the qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the consulting team or company to provide the type of service that is being requested in this tender. Include detailed curriculum vitae for all proposed team members, detailing the experience and achievements in previous assessments that demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the requirements of this RFP. See the format required in the Annexes;
- Provide at least three verifiable references of similar services with a description of the product and / or service sold and the dates;
- Organizational chart and individual roles of the proposed team;
- Include a contact name, job title, email address and telephone numbers to facilitate communication between TechnoServe and the consulting team or company. The name of the consulting team or company and its physical address must also be included;
- Prepare the technical proposals according to the formats shown in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2;
- Submit all requested annexes included in this RFP;
- Submit consulting team or company's legal details and documentation;
- National and Foreign Companies:
 - o Photocopy of the Public Deed of Constitution;
 - o RTN of the consulting team or company (as applicable for companies registered in, or with operations in, Honduras);
 - o Letter of representation of the person signing the offer;
 - o Financial statements of the last two years of audited operations;
- Local individual consultants:
 - o Copy of identity document, valid Honduran residence card or work permit;
 - o RTN;
 - o Settlement or proof showing no pending payments with the Government and pending legal matters;
- International individual consultants:
 - o Copy of identity document;
 - o Valid passport;
 - o Settlement or proof showing no pending payments with the Government of your country of residence and pending legal matters.

Cost Proposal

- The cost proposal shall be expressed in US dollars⁵ and should detail the proposed costs for professional fees, surveyors, travel, food, local transportation, materials, communications, taxes, expenses for FGs and other interview instances, and any other expenditure required to deliver all and each output related to this RFP. Eligible and ineligible expenses are listed in Appendix 8. The template in Appendix 5 must be used to prepare the cost proposal.
- Cost proposals must be valid for a period of four months following the tender deadline.

13. Payment Schedule and Terms

The contract awarded for this RFP will be a fixed fee type contract, subject to U.S. Government Standard Provisions.

⁵ The Central Bank of Honduras should be referenced for a foreign exchange rate, for costs incurred in Lempiras.

The form of payment for this consultancy will be carried out in proportion to and upon contractor delivery and TechnoServe approval of each of the following deliverables:

Product/Deliverable	Payment percentage
1. At contract signing.	10% of the total Contract Cost
2. Upon submission and approval of the complete Evaluation Work Plan.	20% of the total Contract Cost
3. Upon submission and approval of the complete Detailed Report on Data Collection.	20% of the total Contract Cost
4. Upon submission and approval of the complete Preliminary MTE Report.	20% of the total Contract Cost
5. Upon submission and approval of the complete Final MTE Report and delivery of presentation of findings in front of MAS+ and TechnoServe Management, donors, and key partners' representatives.	30% of the total Contract Cost

- Income tax withholding will be based on the value for professional fees as established in Art. 50 of the Income Tax Law in force in Honduras, unless the consulting team or company presents proof of income tax payments on an account issued by the DEI. This clause will apply to consulting firms registered in Honduras.
- Deliverables that require extensive editing by TechnoServe – specifically with respect to the clear and comprehensible presentation of data analyses and written reports – may be subject to a quality penalty of up to 5%.

14. Schedule of Events

1. Questions regarding this RFP may be addressed to rfplac@tns.org, and must be received no later than **5pm EST on March 4, 2020**. Responses to all questions will be appended to the link on TechnoServe's web site for this RFP no later than **6pm EST on March 16, 2020**.
2. Interested and qualified parties who intend to submit a proposal for this RFP are asked to confirm their intent by emailing rfplac@tns.org **starting on March 18, 2020**. Applicants who express their intent to submit a proposal in response to this RFP may request access to the program's donor-approved Evaluation Plan, by emailing rfplac@tns.org.
3. Candidates meeting the selection criteria should address their proposals to the attention of rfplac@tns.org, with the subject line "Proposal for MAS+ Mid-Term Evaluation," no later than **11:59 pm EST on April 3, 2020**.

Technical and cost proposals should be submitted in separate files and be clearly labeled. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered, and individual time extensions will not be available for any reason

15. General Terms and Conditions

1. The Consulting team or Consulting firm, and all parties constituting the consulting team or company, may have the nationality of any country. All national or international consulting firms

or teams of individuals acting as a Consulting Company must be legally constituted. In the event that the candidate is a natural person, the following principles apply:

1. The Consulting company will act in representation of a group of consultants;
 2. The Consulting company will receive any remuneration from TechnoServe, to be distributed among the team members as they are defined;
 3. If the Consulting firm finds that any of their staff have committed serious misconduct or low performance, then the consultant shall provide in a timely manner, as a replacement a person with qualifications and experience acceptable to TechnoServe. Penalties will apply if the Consultant does not remedy a failure in the performance of their obligations under the Contract.
2. A bidder must meet all requirements of an independent evaluator indicated in Part 7 CFR 1499.13, articulated in USDA Foreign Service Evaluation Policy. These requirements include but are not limited to:
1. [Independent evaluator] uses acceptable analytical frameworks such as comparison with non-project areas, surveys, involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation, and statistical analyses;
 2. Uses local consultants, as appropriate, to conduct portions of the evaluation; and,
 3. Provides a detailed outline of the evaluation, major tasks, and specific schedules prior to initiating the evaluation.
3. A bidder must not have a conflict of interest. Bidders who are found to have conflict of interest shall be disqualified. Bidders shall be deemed to have a conflict of interest with one or more parties in this bidding process if they are or have been associated, directly or indirectly, with a company or with any of its affiliates which have been hired by TechnoServe to provide consulting services for the preparation of the design, technical specifications and other documents to be used in the tender for the acquisition of goods subject to these bidding Documents.
4. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
5. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFP. All late responses will be rejected.
6. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
7. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for the entire period indicated in the RFP.
8. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
9. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
10. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
11. All information provided by TNS in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
12. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
13. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.

Appendix 1. Guide for the preparation of the technical proposal and work plan

The technical proposal must define the focus of the evaluation, the activities necessary to carry it out, the methodology to be used for the activities of each product/deliverable, and the expected times for the completion of each phase of the consultancy. The proposal must be complemented by a preliminary evaluation work plan – see Appendix 4.

Suggested Table of Contents:

1. Executive Summary
2. Mid-term Evaluation Introduction and Context
3. Objectives of the evaluation
 - 3.1. Overall objective
 - 3.2. Specific objectives
4. Deliverables/products
5. Methodology to be implemented (developed for each product/deliverable as appropriate):
 - Identification of information sources, variables, and instruments (interviews, bibliographic research, etc.);
 - Collection method for primary and secondary information;
 - Interviews with relevant program actors and/or beneficiaries (definition of information gathering instruments, selection criteria, type of information to be obtained, etc.);
 - Survey of field information (scope selection criteria, subjects to be interviewed, instruments for information collection, processing and systematization of the information obtained, etc.). The instruments and analysis/methodology/systematization plans must be included separately for quantitative and qualitative analysis;
 - Quantitative and qualitative data analysis;
 - Description of the focus groups approach (target, participants, etc.)⁶
6. Description of the activities that will be carried out to address the evaluation questions and develop the products
7. Anticipated challenges and potential solutions
8. Schedule of activities/work plan
9. Summarized budget (detailed budget under separate cover)
10. Other issues that the consultant/team of consultants deems relevant

⁶ These instruments and analysis plan / methodology / systematization should be included separately for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Appendix 2. Consultant's Experience

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

Main activities during the last 5 years that best illustrate the bidder's qualifications:

Assignment Name	Assignment Date and Duration	Detailed description of the allocation and services provided	Contracting entity	Name, address, telephone, fax and email of the client

Appendix 3. Team Composition and Assignment of Responsibilities

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

Professional Staff					
Personnel Name	Profession	Area of Expertise	Relevant Work	Assigned Position	Assigned Activities

Appendix 4. Work Plan and Calendar of Activities

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

Activities and Tasks	Responsible	Estimated level of effort (in days)	Week											
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Appendix 5. Breakdown of the Contract Price

(See [*separate MS Excel attachment*](#), to be expressed in U.S. dollars)

Appendix 6. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Liquidation of expenses is understood as the presentation of documents that attest to all those expenses incurred for the development of the function of project consulting team or company.

Eligible expenses are:

- Transportation: Fuel, toll charges, internal transfers (bus, taxi), tire repairs, car wash, vehicle rental, and any other related expenses that may arise to move from the office to the place of destination prior authorization of TechnoServe.
- Food: Food expenses incurred for consulting activities.
- Communication: Sending documents, fax, internet, telephone for local calls.
- Lodging: Accommodation expenses.
- Miscellaneous: Purchases of minor equipment and office supplies, prints, photocopies, among others.

Ineligible expenses are:

- Personal expenses such as personal items, medicines, laundry, medical consultations, etc.
- Entertainment expenses such as cinema, discos, recreation places, etc.
- Alcoholic beverages.

The contractor shall adhere to the U.S. Government cost principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E- Cost Principles 200.400 through 200.475.

Appendix 7. Consulting Team or Company Information Form

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

[The Consulting team or Company must complete this form in accordance with the following instructions. No alteration to this form will be accepted nor will substitutes be accepted.]

Date: [indicate the date (day, month and year) of the submission of the offer]

_____ page of _____ pages

1. Legal name of the Consulting Team or Company [indicate the legal name of the Consulting Team or Company]
2. If it is an Association in Participation or Consortium, legal name of each member: [indicate the legal name of each member of the Association in Participation or Consortium]
3. Country where the Consulting Team or Company is currently registered or Country where the Consulting Team or Company is trying to register [indicate the country of citizenship of the Consulting Team or Company currently, or country where the Consulting Team or Company is trying to register]
4. Year of registration of the Consulting Team or Company: [indicate the year of registration of the Bidder]
5. Legal address of the Consulting Team or Company in the country where he is registered: [indicate the Legal Address of the Bidder in the country where he is registered]
6. Information of the authorized representative of the Consulting Team or Company: Name: [indicate the name of the authorized representative] Address: [indicate the address of the authorized representative] Fixed and mobile and facsimile telephone numbers: [indicate the telephone and facsimile numbers of the authorized representative] Email address: [insert the email address of the authorized representative]
7. A copy of the original documents of: [check the box (s) of the original documents attached] is attached - Bylaws of the Company or Registry of the Consulting Team or Company. - If it is an Association in Participation or Consortium, letter of intent to form the Association in Participation or the Consortium, or the Association Agreement in Participation or the Consortium. - Other (specify):

Appendix 8. Bid Form

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

[The Consulting Team or Company will complete this form in accordance with the instructions indicated. Alterations to this form will not be allowed nor will substitutions be accepted.]

[Indicate the date (day, month and year) of the offer presentation]

Alternative No. [indicate identification number if this is an alternative offer]

To: [Buyer's full name]

We, the undersigned, declare that:

(a) We have examined and find no objection to the tender documents, including its Amendments Nos. _____ [indicate the number and date of issue of each Amendment];

(b) We offer to provide the following Related Goods and Services in accordance with the RFP Documents and in accordance with the Work Plan proposed as part of the technical proposal:
_____ [indicate a brief description of the related goods and services];

(c) Our offer will remain valid for the established period of 4 months, from the date of this RFP's submission deadline. This offer will bind us and may be accepted at any time before the expiration of said period;

(d) We confirm that we have no conflict of interest with TechnoServe Honduras or TechnoServe Inc. (Headquarters), as specified in this RFP's General Terms and Conditions;

(e) Our company, its affiliates or subsidiaries, including all subcontractors or suppliers to execute any part of the Contract, have not been declared ineligible according to the conditions listed in the tender;

(f) We understand that any commissions, bonuses, or fees related to the development of the proposal for this RFP will not be recognized by TechnoServe.

(g) We understand that this offer, together with its due acceptance in writing included in the award notification, will constitute a contractual obligation between us, until the formal Contract has been executed by the parties.

(h) We understand that TechnoServe is not required to accept the lowest evaluated offer or any other offer you receive.

Signature: _____ [indicate the full name of the person and position held]

As _____ [indicate the legal capacity of the person signing the Bid Form]

Name: _____ [indicate the full name of the person who signs the Offer Form]

Duly authorized to sign the offer by and on behalf of: [indicate the full name of the Bidder]

The _____ day of the month _____ of the year _____ [indicate the date of signature]

Appendix 9. Format for sending questions about the consultancy

(Appendix also [available in MS Word.](#))

General information of the Consulting Team or Company:	
Consulting Team or Company's name:	
Name of the Consulting Team or Company' point of contact for purposes of this RFP:	
Email address:	
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:

Topics

1	Project to be reviewed
2	TechnoServe Background
3	MAS+ Project Background
4	MAS+ Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation
5	Midterm Evaluation
6	Evaluation Questions and Objectives
7	Key Audience for Midterm Evaluation
8	Midterm Evaluation Methodology
9	Deliverables
10	Evaluation Logistics
11	Selection Criteria/Profile of the Evaluation Team
12	Proposal Preparation Instructions
13	Payment Schedule and Terms
14	Schedule of Events
15	General Terms and Conditions
16	Appendices
17	Other

Question	Topic # (select from the above menu)
1.	

Appendix 10. Content of the Mid-Term Evaluation Report

The final mid-term evaluation report must be delivered in English and Spanish. The final report must include the following content:

Suggested Table of Contents:

1. Executive summary (summary of the main findings and recommendations).
2. Introduction (purpose of the evaluation, description of the objectives of the program).
3. Evaluation methodology (description of the strategies and methods used).
4. Key findings (detailed and robust analysis of the findings and recommendations, including empirical data and the interpretation of the evaluator).
5. Lessons learned (implications of the implementation of similar interventions in other countries).
6. Final recommendations (for TechnoServe, USDA and / or other relevant actors).
7. Other information that the consultant considers relevant.
8. Appendixes
 - Map of the project's areas of intervention.
 - List of interviews conducted.
 - Evaluation agenda, list of places visited.
 - List of all documents reviewed and cited.
 - Copy of the surveys used.
 - Data analysis, details of the analysis.

Appendix 11. MAS+ Program Results Matrix

Mejoramiento Agrícola Sostenible (MAS) Technoserve-Honduras



