REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Consultancy for CAFE Program – Action Research on Gender and Youth Transformative Approaches

Program name: Coffee Alliance for Excellence and its impact in Gender and Youth Transformative Approaches

Proposals due: September 10, 2020 by 4 pm E.T.

Expected start date: November 20, 2020

Duration: Approximately 24 months

1. Background

1.1 Background on TechnoServe

TechnoServe is an international nonprofit organization that promotes business solutions to poverty in the developing world. It is headquartered in Washington, DC and operates in 29 countries worldwide. TechnoServe's mission is to work with enterprising men and women in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses and industries. It does this by linking people to information, capital and markets. With over 50 years of proven results, TechnoServe believes in the power of private enterprise to transform lives.

1.2 Background on the C.A.F.E Program

In late 2017, TechnoServe, Jacobs Douwe Egberts (JDE), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) began the implementation of a US$12 million program to strengthen the coffee market system in Peru, specifically in San Martin, Huanuco, and Ucayali. The Coffee Alliance for Excellence (CAFE), as the project is called, aims to integrate 10,000 coffee smallholder farmers into a profitable and sustainable coffee market system to ultimately improve their livelihoods in a sustainable way. CAFE will accomplish this goal by working with farmers in four components: 1) supporting them to improve their farm management practices and productivity, 2) strengthening their connections to input and output markets, 3) increase their access to formal financial markets, and 4) supporting their families to diversify their income.

1 This opportunity is pending approval from the donor. The RFP can be cancelled at any time in case TechnoServe does not get shortlisted.
Similarly, CAFE has strong cross cutting issues across all four components such as gender inclusion and environmental sustainability. CAFE works hand in hand with the community to create awareness of women’s participation and value added in the coffee value chain, as well as promoting environmental awareness and climate smart agriculture to reduce the negative impact that coffee production can have in the environment.

Two years into implementation, CAFE has supported 7142 coffee smallholder households, 23% led by women, and increased their yields by an average of 23%. Similarly, CAFE has sold approximately 13,000 MT of dry parchment coffee for US$23.0 million directly to exporters. To date the project has mobilized a total of US$6 million dollars for coffee farmers of which 65% were placed through CAFE loan originators. In addition, the project is working with approximately 585 families to diversify their family income by providing entrepreneurship training (professional efficacy, business concept, marketing principles, financial literacy, among other) as well as analyzing and promoting crop diversification alternatives in the different regions. Finally, the project has planted 3,000 new hectares of coffee and transformed 7,900 hectares of existing coffee areas into bona-fide agroforestry systems.

1.3 Purpose of this RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a Research Partner that can help TechnoServe successfully apply for a research grant funded by the Packard Foundation to gain a deeper understanding of CAFE’s impact on the livelihoods of women and/or young people (age 15-29). The ideal Research Partner will have experience in designing and leading action research to analyze and evaluate, with a robust methodology and data, the impact of CAFE on women and youth.

The Research Partner will work with TechnoServe’s subject matter experts and support the development of the technical strategy/approach for the full proposal. The research grant’s RFP for the full proposal is expected to be released on September 10 and the proposal’s submission date is expected to be on October 8. The selected Research Partner will bear all costs incurred during the preparation of the proposal². Although TechnoServe will lead the preparation of the full proposal, the Research Partner will support the process by:

- Developing proposal content that addresses/comply with the requirements outlined in the solicitation, scores well in terms of the evaluation criteria, and incorporates win themes and other strategies developed by the proposal team.
- Work with the TechnoServe team on developing appropriate graphics for inclusion in the proposal.
- Develop a detailed budget for project activities in a budget template provided by TechnoServe.

CAFE Action Research on its impact in Gender and Youth Transformative Approaches

² The Research Partner will bear all of its own costs that it incurs in connection with preparation and submission of the proposal. There will be no reimbursement, payment, or compensation of any kind prior to any resulting subcontract between the parties for the research project.
TechnoServe is interested in applying for a research grant from the Packard Foundation. The selected Research Partner will first work with the TechnoServe team on the proposal development process between mid September and mid October and if the joint proposal is selected, develop and implement an Action Research approach and present a final report/case study to be published and shared with an external audience.

**Objectives and Scope**

The successful contractor will be tasked with developing CAFE’s Action Research agenda, executing said agenda in close collaboration with the CAFE team, and finally developing a final report/case study with the main findings and lessons learned.

The broad objectives of the consultancy, if TechnoServe is awarded the research grant, include:

- Implement action research to examine or comparative analysis of participatory livelihood planning and value chain creation to achieve a set of clear conservation and livelihood goals. The research and analysis will include an objective assessment of the characteristics of the targeted population (women and youth from smallholder farming households in the area of intervention). It will provide lessons learned to inform the program on what is working and what is not and recommend adjustments to the implementation strategy and process. Research findings should also provide a nuanced understanding of the behaviors and choices of women and/or young people with regard to agriculture and conservation.
- Develop a research product that provides clear and evidence-based findings on the questions outlined in the Packard Foundation’s RFP and as well as additional questions that might come up in the initial assessment.
- Develop a Final report/Case Study that will inform TechnoServe and its partners on CAFE’s results and impact in women and youth. The final report must respond to the questions outlined in the Packard Foundation’s RFP (see below):
  - What role do women and/or young people play in tropical smallholder agriculture and conservation?
  - What impact (positive and negative) do livelihood and conservation initiatives, such as CAFÉ, have on the lives of women and/or young people?
  - What are the barriers to full participation of women and/or young people in these initiatives?
  - What mechanisms/tools/conditions encourage robust participation in these initiatives and improved livelihoods for women and/or young people?
  - What benefits are derived from initiatives that effectively integrate women and/or young people?
  - Are there additional community-level/economic/conservation/environmental benefits that can be attributed to women- and/or youth-led initiatives?
- Organize and present the results of the Action Research and Final Report/Case Study to TechnoServe, CAFE’s stakeholders, and the Packard Foundation.
Final report’s Target Audience

The results of the Final Report/Case Study will be used by various TechnoServe departments (LAC team, Gender Practice, Coffee Practice, Impact Team), the Packard Foundation, and also by CAFE’s key program stakeholders (USAID, JDE, etc.). The primary users will be specific programs within TechnoServe that are implementing various models and wish to validate their own program designs. The program development department at TechnoServe will seek to learn how future program designs can be improved to ensure inclusivity, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Program donors and other stakeholders will want to know whether their support through TechnoServe is impacting the right beneficiaries and whether the models that TechnoServe implements are inclusive, suitable, and sustainable.

Research Approach and Methodology

The contractor is expected to develop an action research project to gather data and information of participatory livelihood planning and value chain development programs that increase coordination between local stakeholders to achieve a set of clear conservation and livelihood goals. This will likely include farm-level analysis and an assessment of systemic change in the value chain.

The research methods to be used during the action research process should be both quantitative and qualitative, and to the extent possible adhere to the principles below:

- **Attribution**: able to attribute the impact of TechnoServe’s intervention to the intervention itself,
- **Intrusion**: should not interfere/ intrude in the project implementation process,
- **Reputational risk**: should not create any reputational risk to TechnoServe and/or to the evaluator,
- **Analytical rigor**: should meet the highest possible level of data integrity and rigor compatible with the intervention
- **Usage of available monitoring data**: should be able to utilize any existing program data/information,
- **Cost effectiveness**: should aim at utilizing the minimum resources to achieve the highest level of methodological acceptance and statistical rigor.

Illustrative Outputs

We expect the consultancy to be very collaborative and for the implementing team to integrate themselves into the CAFE team. Below we list the illustrative outputs expected during three phases of the action research process: Initial Set-Up; Implementation and Monitoring; and Close-out.

1. **Initial Set-up**
   During the set-up of the action research, the contractor will be responsible for developing and submitting outputs as described below and agreed upon during the proposal development process.
The list below is illustrative. These products will be shared with TechnoServe, USAID, and the Packard Foundation and incorporate any adjustments that these parties see fit.

- **Work Plan with time table**: This document must be delivered before beginning implementation of the action research. It consists of a detailed work plan which should include the methodology, data collection and analysis plan, staffing, assessment of respondent risks, budget and time frame (approximately 30 days after contracting for this RFP).

- **Tools for the data collection**: In collaboration with the CAFE and TechnoServe’s technical team, the contractor will define the data sources and methods of collection and preferred measurement methods. All tools and questionnaires should be submitted for TechnoServe’s review and approval. TechnoServe must receive a copy of the complete set of the approved tools and questionnaires.

- **Field work plan**: This document should describe all the activities to be conducted in the field with the corresponding budget. The document should include: a) a summary table with the detail of groups and individual units to be observed, the dates and locations of data collection; b) overview of measures taken for the protection of human subjects; and d) assessment of respondent risks and benefits. This plan must reflect COVID-19 travel restrictions and include a contingency plan for potential changes.

- **Data capture/recording**: In collaboration with TechnoServe, the contractor will identify the most appropriate format for recording and presenting data. Depending on the methods, this may include databases in excel or other statistical software (e.g. Stata, SPSS), charts with their corresponding graphics, pivot tables or other dynamic analysis, written summaries of interviews and reflections.

- **Key Actor Analysis**: Develop an analysis on who are the intermediary individuals, organizations, and institutions that have some influence in the value chain, and which can the program feasibly target to improve gender inclusion and how?

2. **Implementation and Monitoring**

As an iterative process, the implementation of the action research will take the team through multiple cycles of data collection, analysis, and reflection. For each cycle, we expect the contractor to capture the data, analysis, and reflections for each cycle and submit a report summarizing activities and learnings. These reports should be in English and Spanish.

3. **Close Out**

The purpose of the final report/case study will be to describe the implementation process, the lessons identified through the action research, and rigorous evidence of CAFE’s results and impact on women and youth. A key focus of the final report will be to identify lessons learned from the project’s implementation experience and results to advance TechnoServe’s Learning Agenda as it related to including women and youth and significantly, and sustainably, improving their livelihoods and individual agency.

The contractor will produce the following deliverables as part of the final report/case study:
● *Description of the action research process:* The document should provide an overview of the design of the action research and how it was implemented, including the methods for data collection and analysis.

● *A preliminary technical document with preliminary findings (first draft of the final report).* The document should include an annotated table of contents and all the relevant analysis to address the research questions. It should describe the analytical outputs, from quantitative or qualitative analysis. This report should be submitted in English.

● *Summary of Key results:* The contractor should provide Summaries of the key results in a PowerPoint deck.

● *Final report:* The document should include an annotated table of contents and all the relevant analysis to address the research questions. The document should be delivered in English. Once the document is approved by TechnoServe, it must also be submitted in Spanish. The document should include relevant tables and graphs of quantitative and qualitative analysis with recommendations for improvements and lessons learned. The contractor will produce electronic versions, including interpreting and synthesizing analytical results, conducting literature review and synthesis, and incorporating comments from the project technical team and recommendations for TechnoServe, the donor and other key stakeholders. The Executive Summary should include a maximum of 4 pages.

● *A 2-3 page stand-alone brief* describing the design, key findings and other relevant considerations. It will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the research and analysis plan, and should be written in language easy to understand by non-evaluators and with appropriate graphics and tables. This brief should be submitted in English and Spanish.

**Profile of Evaluator/Evaluators**

The lead evaluator candidate and evaluation team must demonstrate:

- At least five years of strong experience in designing and leading participatory research, action research, and multi-faceted program evaluations
- Experience evaluating agricultural livelihood programs and conducting gender analysis
- Proven ability and experience in forming and leading multi-disciplinary teams
- Ability to facilitate and relate to stakeholders at multiple levels
- Proven ability to use quantitative, qualitative and participatory evaluation methods, with examples and references that can speak to this experience
- Strong research, data analysis and presentation skills
- Strong writing ability, particularly in English
- Deep knowledge and experience at the intersection of gender, agriculture, and participatory research methods
- Experience conducting evaluations for international donors
- Given the Covid 19 logistical constraints, the Partner must be based in Peru or have local team members in the country that can mobilize locally. Experience working in Peru is strongly preferred.
- Fluency in both Spanish and English.
Period of Performance

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin on or about Nov 15, 2020, for a duration of approximately 24 months.

Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

1. Questions regarding this RFP may be addressed to rfplac@tns.org, and must be received no later than August 31. Responses to questions will be distributed to all interested parties and posted to the link for this RFP on TechnoServe’s web site no later than September 3.

2. Candidates meeting the aforementioned criteria should address their proposals to the attention of rfplac@tns.org, with the subject line “Proposal for TechnoServe CAFÉ Action Research on Gender and Youth Transformative Approaches”, no later than 4 pm ET on September 10, 2020.

The main body of the proposal should be 3-5 pages and should include the following:

- Background and context of the initiative that demonstrates an understanding of appropriate evaluation methodologies for the CAFE program.
- Experience in evaluating development sector such as agricultural value chains, youth programs, gender focused programs.
- Institutional experience in designing and implementing action research or other participatory evaluations and research and using mixed methods.
- High level proposed approach - for example process and methods - for implementing an action research project for CAFE.
- List of the three most recent relevant assignments that you have undertaken, Include contact information (Day time phone numbers and email contacts).

Appendices (not included in the 3-5 page limit)

- CVs of the evaluator(s), outlining previous evaluation experience and accomplishments as it relates to demonstrating the skills and knowledge needed to fulfill the requirements of the RFP
- Detailed budget in US dollars for conducting the Action Research stipulated in this RFP, including critical assumptions informing the estimate. The total estimated value of all deliverables shall not exceed the contract ceiling. The CAFE Program has estimated that the total contract ceiling will range between US$100,000 and US$150,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on both the “value for money” of the selected applicant’s cost proposal and on the final program budget.³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year 1 (USD)</th>
<th>Year 2 (USD)</th>
<th>Total (USD)</th>
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³ TechnoServe is responding to an RFP and funding is contingent on receiving the award as well as on its final value.
Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate and rank the proposals submitted.

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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience in Technical Approaches</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional capacity</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past Performance (Based on the proposal and also on reference check)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the consultant or firm whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of TNS and the Donor.

The consultant or firm with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Applicants who are not selected will also be notified.

Proposals should remain valid through December 31, 2020.
Appendix 1 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Consultant or Consulting firm, and all parties constituting the Bidder, may have the nationality of any country. All national or international consulting firms or group of individuals acting as a Consulting Group must be legally constituted. In the event that the candidate is a natural person, the following principles apply:
   a. The Consulting firm will act in representation of a group of consultants;
   b. The Consulting firm will receive any remuneration from TechnoServe, to be distributed among the team members as they are defined;
   c. 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 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.

3. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.

4. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFP. All late responses will be rejected.

5. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.

6. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for entire period indicated in the RFP.

7. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.

8. 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.

9. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.

10. 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.

11. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

12. 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.