

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consultancy for Prosper Cashew Project Evaluations

Project name: Promoting Opportunities for Cashew Processing in West Africa (Prosper Cashew)

Expected start date: January 2021

Subject: Request for Proposal to conduct evaluations (baseline, midterm, and final evaluation) of the West Africa regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria) Prosper Cashew project

1 Background

1.1 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 nearly 50 years of proven results, TechnoServe believes in the power of private enterprise to transform lives.

TechnoServe Inc. (TNS) invites your firm to participate in this competitive solicitation for pricing, delivery and terms as an evaluation contractor for West Africa Regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) Prosper Cashew project with the project's head office based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

1.2 Project

Prosper Cashew is a five-year, \$25 million project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Food for Progress Program (FFPr) that aims to catalyze investment for the West African cashew processing sector by strengthening cashew processing facilities across Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. West Africa is responsible for 45% of the global cashew production, yet the majority of those yields are exported for processing. The project will complement other USDA investments and programs in this sector to address market barriers through technical assistance and financing solutions along the West Africa cashew value chain to improve sector productivity, increase incomes, and create jobs.

The overall goal of the project is that 50% of cashew production is processed to kernels in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. Increased investment in local cashew processing and increased processing capacity and capacity utilization are the key results to achieve this goal.

The project's Theory of Change is that if cashew-processing and other agri-enterprises in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria have better access to appropriate capital and technical expertise, and stakeholders have incentives to establish and maintain local supply chains, then local processing capacity will increase and the competitiveness of the West African cashew processing industry will improve. Achieving this vision requires significant increases in overall capacity utilization as well as in the number of processing enterprises across the three countries. While improvements to existing facilities can move the sector towards the stated goal of 50% domestic processing, the industry will need to crowd in a large number of new processing plants to meet the overall target, requiring significant levels of investment. Prosper Cashew will act as a catalyst for the sector, strengthening and reviving existing cashew processing facilities, facilitating access

to critically needed working capital, demonstrating the business case for additional investment flows into the sector, and bringing together investors and high-quality investees.

The Prosper Cashew project identified four key Activities that together address the needs, challenges, and constraints in the cashew processing sector. These activities are summarized as follows:

- **Activity 1: Financial Services – Establish \$60 million Cashew Catalyst Fund for the commercial cashew sector:** The project will assess feasibility and design a Cashew Catalyst Fund. A comprehensive analysis will inform the design and ultimate structure of the fund, including its organizational and governance structure. The analysis will also confirm the investment thesis and inform the development of the investment memorandum which will support outreach to partners and funders to secure initial commitments for the fund's first close. The project will competitively select a third-party fund manager based on criteria developed and validated during fund design. Once launched, the fund will provide capital to cashew processors and other businesses supported through the project.
- **Activity 2: Financial Services – Cashew impact investment:** The project will identify investable companies and connect them to existing capital providers via a matchmaking facility. Through this activity, the project will engage national/sub-national chambers of commerce, export promotion agencies, and industry associations to link promising businesses to providers of long-term financing in the region. The project will coordinate with the African Cashew Alliance and its investment promotion services to stimulate the creation of new cashew processing facilities, strengthen and modernize existing facilities, and support the expansion and professionalization of the broader cashew sector.
- **Activity 3: Strengthen and increase commercially viable cashew enterprises through Technical Support:** The project will build processor capacity in business management, financial management, investment facilitation, HR and workforce management, marketing, and supply chain development. It will also identify and address specific constraints related to particular sections of cashew processing (raw cashew nut drying, warehousing, calibration, steam cooking, shelling, oven drying, peeling, grading, fumigation, packing, and storage) and provide support to processors to install food safety management systems, support the introduction of traceability, and support the introduction of environmental practices and effective waste management. In addition to its support to processing firms, the project will aim to build the capacity of selected training centers to deliver curriculum for cashew processing operations and management.
- **Activity 4: Buyer-Seller Relationships – Enhance the international marketing of African cashew:** The project will identify areas for collaboration with cashew farmer cooperatives/producer groups receiving support from other initiatives to strengthen local supply chains. In particular, the project will aim to link farmers, farmer groups, and farmer associations capacitated by the USDA-funded PRO-Cashew project directly to processors funded by Prosper Cashew via Activity 1. It will also support cashew producers to attend international conferences.

We expect that the overall Prosper Cashew project objective of expanding trade of agricultural products will result in the project goal of increasing the production of processed kernels by 50% in each of the three focus countries. Two key project outcomes will achieve the objective and goal: (1) increasing investment in local cashew processing, and (2) increasing processing capacity and capacity utilization. The planned interventions in Activities 1-4 will support each of these outcomes and produce the foundational and intermediate results necessary to realize the project outcomes, objectives, and goal. These results include increased leverage of private sector resources, reduced investment risk, improved organization of producer groups, incentives, and

relationships between value chain actors, strengthened skills and management capacity of cashew enterprises, and enhanced use and availability of financial services.

The Prosper project is currently in its start-up phase and expects to begin implementation in the first months of 2021.

Prosper Cashew Evaluation Plan

TechnoServe elaborated a first draft of the evaluation plan for the life of the project, which provides the guidance for the execution of these Terms of Reference. The evaluation plan establishes the proposed methodologies to measure progress towards the stated goal of 50% domestic processing, increased investment in local cashew processing and increased processing capacity and capacity utilization. Prosper's evaluation approach is informed by the scope and complexity of its activities, specifically the fact that Prosper will be implemented across three countries. The project requires a strategic approach to evaluation that will be rigorous without exhausting project resources. Prosper will target the evaluation at two major levels. At impact level using a mixed-methods evaluation that leads with qualitative methods. We will target project outcomes level using primarily quantitative methods.

2 General Requirements & Scope of Work

2.1 Role of the contractor

The selected contractor will provide input on the evaluation plan before it is submitted to USDA for final approval. Once approved by the donor, the contractor will be tasked with executing the evaluation plan, starting with the baseline study and eventually to include the mid-term and final evaluations. The broad objectives of the project evaluation will be to:

- Provide an objective assessment of the characteristics of the targeted population (cashew processors, processing equipment manufacturers, and other cashew supply chain actors) at project outset (baseline) and provide data to be used as a benchmark for performance indicators to support the ongoing monitoring activities as well as subsequent project evaluations. Provide data to validate and or review indicator targets for the life of the project.
- Undertake an end-of-project evaluation that will inform TechnoServe and its partners on the project's results and impact. In addition, to identify lessons learned from the project's implementation experience for future programming either at TechnoServe or within the donor/partner organizations.
- Provide insight into what is working and what is not working and recommend adjustments to the implementation strategy and process during the life of the project.
- Suggest topics for special studies to be carried out throughout the course of the project that will contribute vital learning to the project and the broader industry. Studies may contribute to a better understanding of the operating environment, challenges and motivations of beneficiaries and stakeholders, and how the project might adapt its strategies to maximize results.

2.2 Evaluation Target Audience

The key audience and intended users of the evaluation include the following groups: 1) USDA, 2) Prosper Cashew project staff, 3) other USDA and donor-funded cashew projects, 4) relevant TechnoServe regional and headquarters staff involved with the management of the Prosper Cashew project, 5) relevant host country government stakeholders from the three focus countries, 6) Fund investees (select findings), and 7) the African Cashew Alliance.

Evaluation reports will be shared with project partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders through stakeholder validation workshops, where they will discuss the findings and recommendations. All personally identifiable information will be removed as per USDA's M&E policy.

2.3 Evaluation Approach:

The detailed methodology for the Prosper Cashew project evaluations is defined in a first draft of the Evaluation Plan, developed by TechnoServe. The selected contractor will be expected to work alongside TechnoServe in the review of the draft Evaluation Plan and, if necessary, to propose adjustments and/or approaches that will enable the completion of all project's evaluations. The draft Prosper Cashew project evaluation plan serves as the initial guiding document outlining our approach and plan to carry out a robust evaluation and learning agenda. We designed the evaluation plan in consideration of our technical and management approach, the Prosper Cashew project theory of change, USDA FFP learning Agenda, and FFP results framework.

Our methodology for evaluation aims for an "optimal" evaluation of Prosper Cashew's outcomes and results among cashew processor design with propensity score matching to counter the potential bias and threat to internal validity that exist in quasi-experimental designs due to participant self-selection. This will be largely applicable to midline evaluation. A pre-post analysis

evaluation design will be used during midterm evaluation to establish the project's performance with respect to higher-level results and against baseline data. Therefore, the team will target the same sample of key stakeholders (beneficiaries and partners) interviewed during the baseline survey that are involved or benefited from the Prosper Cashew project. For example, out of the total respondents interviewed during the baseline survey, the team should interview those who were involved or benefited from project interventions, to capture changes that occurred since project implementation began. Further, sectoral and macroeconomic data will also be used to substantiate and provide context for the data analysis.

We expect the evaluation team to determine the best approach/methods to be used for the midterm evaluation exercise to effectively address all evaluation objectives. The team should make use of a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques for data triangulation purposes, including but not limited to;

- Document review: review project work plans, progress reports, success stories, and lessons learned documented by the project, indicator targets and data, and other relevant background documents.
- Key informant interviews: conduct interviews with a diverse set of value chain actors and fund investors, including project-assisted processors from all three countries.
- Focus group discussions: conduct FGDs with intermediaries and other value chain actors as appropriate.
- Cashew program specific stakeholders Beneficiary Survey: conduct a beneficiary survey with a representative sample of project-assisted cashew farmers in all three countries.
- Cost benefit analysis, impact tracing, surveys (interviews), case studies, benchmarking, participant observations, context and situation analysis, livelihoods framework and most significant change are some of the tools that the team can adopt in the evaluation processes.

TechnoServe is eager to contribute to USDA's FFPr Learning Agenda, which strongly aligns with our own learning priorities and orientation toward using research to improve project design. We selected FFPr Learning Agenda themes based on our assessment of the project's ability to contribute meaningful insight to the topic and the usefulness of the research to project decision-making. The baseline will also collect information regarding questions to be assessed in the final evaluation, all of which relate to the USDA's Learning Agenda. The Learning Agenda questions to which we anticipate contributing knowledge as a result of our evaluation activities include:

- Market Linkages (#12): What value do intermediaries bring in expanding markets? What methods of engaging intermediaries to expand markets through the services and trade they provide are effective?
- Market Linkages (#11): To what extent does increasing horizontal and vertical market linkages among agricultural actors at various levels, such as companies, SMEs, smallholders, and intermediaries, promote economic benefits for actors and market expansion overall?
- Market Linkages (#14): What are the best linkage models to help small- and medium-sized producers, traders, and postharvest market actors, who frequently lack collateral, registration and credit history to access loans or other financial instruments to effectively expand their businesses?
- Quality and Standards (#21): In what context is it profitable for agricultural actors, particularly producers and processors, to adopt higher product quality standards for sales in higher-value markets, including international markets?

- Risk and Uncertainty (#34): What types of incentives are effective in encouraging the adoption of risk reduction and mitigation products and practices (i.e., insurance, loans, crop diversification, new technology) among agricultural actors?

In addition, the general approach should address or achieve the following:

- *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 or the donor,
- *Statistical rigor*: should meet the highest possible level of data integrity and statistical rigor compatible with the intervention
- *Usage of available monitoring data*: should be able to utilize any existing project data/information,
- *Cost effectiveness*: should aim at utilizing the minimum resources to achieve the highest level of methodological acceptance and statistical rigor.

2.4 Evaluation Approach:

The evaluation plan consists of three specific studies: Baseline, Mid-term Review and the Final Evaluation. First, the contractor will be responsible for conducting the Baseline. Based on performance, TechnoServe will seek approval to sole-source the midterm and endline evaluations. In general, the contractor will have to understand the project, develop a questionnaire, test it, build a sample frame, and test the tool all take significant input from the team.

The key activities and their corresponding deliverables are defined as follows:

2.4.1. Evaluation Plan

The contractor will assist TechnoServe in the adjustment of the Evaluation Plan that will be submitted to USDA.

2.4.1.1. Deliverables

- A final Evaluation Plan to be submitted to USDA (approximately 30 days after contracting for this RFP).

2.4.2. Baseline Study

The baseline study will collect data that will be used as a benchline for performance indicators to support both ongoing monitoring activities as well as project evaluations and to provide empirical data to reevaluate the indicator targets.

2.4.2.1. Deliverables

The key deliverables expected in the baseline study will include but are not limited to:

- **Baseline work plan with time table:** This document must be delivered before implementing the baseline. It consists of a detailed work plan which should include the methodology, data collection and analysis plan, data quality strategies, staffing, assessment of respondent risks, budget, and time frame.

- **Sample design:** In collaboration with the Prosper technical team, the contractor will define the sample design. Separate samples should be constructed for each country based on the specific numbers and characteristics of targeted cashew value chain actors. The sample should be stratified to reflect the overall sector's business size, gender, and geographic distributions to the extent possible. Data will be disaggregated by sex, age, and business size. Based on the available estimated numbers of cashew processors, baseline survey samples of approximately 15 processors. The process will also involve selecting representative samples of equipment manufacturers, vocational training centers, and other types of value chain businesses/actors that the program will be interfacing with during implementation.
- **Tools for the data collection:** In collaboration with the Prosper technical team, the contractor will define the data sources and methods of collection and preferred measurement methods. This will involve designing the questionnaire, interview and protocol templates and adapting them to the project's specific context. It will also include development of other relevant instruments and templates. 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 c) assessment of respondent risks and benefits.
- **Baseline databases:** Databases should be designed in excel or other statistical software (e.g. Stata, SPSS). Charts should be generated with their corresponding graphics, providing relevant pivot tables or other dynamic analysis and including an explanation of the analysis. The qualitative analysis should analyze and provide summaries of focus groups and in-depth interview discussions.
- **Summary of Key results:** Once data collection, aggregation and analysis is complete, the evaluation firm/consultant will provide summaries on the key results as a preliminary draft baseline report.
- **Final baseline report:** The document should include an annotated table of contents and all the relevant analysis to address the research questions. It should have a list of all project indicators, their baseline values and life of project targets. This report should be submitted in English.
- **A 2-3 page stand-alone brief.** This document should describe the baseline design, key findings and other relevant considerations. It will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the evaluation 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 French.

2.4.3. Mid-term Evaluation

The purpose of the Prosper Cashew midterm evaluation is to critically and objectively review and take stock of the project's implementation experience and the implementing environment. The evaluation will assess the investees' use of the Cashew Catalyst funds, and the pre- and post-investment performance of those firms. It will also assess whether the targeted beneficiaries are receiving services as expected; if the project is on track to meeting its stated goals and objectives; review the results frameworks; and document initial lessons learned. Finally, the evaluation will identify and discuss modifications or mid-course corrections that may be necessary to effectively and efficiently meet the project goals and objectives.

2.4.3.1. Deliverables:

The key deliverables expected in the mid-term evaluation will include but are not limited to:

- **Work plan with time table:** This document must be delivered before implementing the mid-term evaluation. 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.
- **Sample design:** In collaboration with the Prosper technical team, the contractor will define the sample design. Separate samples should be constructed for each country based on the specific numbers and characteristics of targeted cashew value chain actors. The sample should be stratified to reflect the overall sector's business size, gender, and geographic distributions to the extent possible.
- **Revised/updated tools for data collection:** processors and other project participants at midterm will replicate the methods and instruments used in the baseline study, incorporating revisions and updates based on the baseline results and relevant developments in the implementation context.
- **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.
- **Mid-term databases.** Databases should be designed in excel or other statistical software (e.g. Stata, SPSS). Charts should be generated with their corresponding graphics, providing relevant pivot tables or other dynamic analysis and including an explanation of the analysis. The qualitative analysis should analyze and provide summaries of focus groups and in-depth interview discussions.
- **Summary of Key results:** Once data collection, aggregation and analysis is complete, the contractor should provide summaries on the key results in a PowerPoint deck.
- **Draft evaluation report:** A draft evaluation report will be submitted to TechnoServe at least one month before the due date for the final report. It should contain a summary table of all indicators with the baseline, midline and target values (TechnoServe will provide a format and guidelines for the evaluation report.)
- **Evaluation report:** The final report will be submitted according to an agreed upon timeline and should fit the format and guidelines provided by TechnoServe.

2.4.4. Final Evaluation

The purpose of the final evaluation will be to document the outcomes and impact achieved by the Prosper Cashew project, identify lessons learned to advance USDA's FFPr Learning Agenda, and describe ongoing challenges. The evaluation will also provide insights and recommendations for future programming based on the successes and trials encountered during project implementation. The Evaluation Plan provides more detail on the proposed data collection techniques and methodologies, which will be based on the baseline study.

2.4.4.1. Deliverables:

The contractor will produce the following deliverables as part of the final evaluation:

- **Final evaluation work plan with time table:** This document must be delivered before implementing the evaluation. The document should include the methodology, data

collection and analysis plan, staffing, assessment of respondent risks, budget and time frame.

- **Revised/updated tools for data collection:** processors and other project participants will replicate the methods and instruments used in the baseline study, incorporating revisions and updates based on the baseline results and relevant developments in the implementation context.
- **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.
- **Final databases.** Databases should be designed in excel and/or or other statistical software (e.g. Stata, SPSS). Charts should be generated with their corresponding graphics, providing relevant pivot tables or other dynamic analysis and including an explanation of the analysis.
- **Summary of qualitative analysis:** Qualitative analysis should analyze and provide summaries of focus groups and in-depth interview discussions.
- **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. This report should be submitted in English.
- **Summary of Key results:** Once data collection, aggregation and analysis is complete, the contractor should provide Summaries of the key results in a PowerPoint deck. The deck should be provided in both English and French.
- **Final evaluation 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. 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 statistical 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 5 pages.

2.5 Profile of Evaluator/Evaluators

A competitive bid for the contractor role will demonstrate:

- At least five years of experience in designing and leading multi-faceted evaluations of agricultural programs, or access to finance programs, preferably in West Africa
- Proven gender qualifications
- Proven ability to use quantitative, qualitative and participatory evaluation methods, with examples and references that can speak to this experience
- Ability to facilitate and relate to stakeholders at multiple levels
- Data analysis and presentation skills
- Strong writing ability, particularly in English
- Sensitivity to cultural/historical context in the data collection process
- Experience conducting evaluations for international donors (e.g. USDA, USAID, and European Union, etc.)
- Experience working in the targeted countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria) would be preferred
- Ability to present written documents and PowerPoint decks in French

2.6 Period of Performance

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin on or about January 1, 2021, for a duration of approximately 18 months for the baseline assessment. If the contractor is also selected to conduct the mid-term and end-of-project evaluations, the duration of the contract will be approximately five years, or until the Prosper project ends in September 2025.

3 Submission Process and Evaluation of Proposals

The procurement will take place according to the following timeline:

1. Interested parties who intend to submit a proposal for this RFP should notify TechnoServe of their intent to bid by emailing rfpprosper@tns.org with the subject line “**USDA Prosper Cashew evaluation procurement**” by October 26, 2020.
2. All questions must be submitted by October 29, 2020. TechnoServe will provide a transparent response to interested parties by November 4, 2020. All questions should be addressed to rfpprosper@tns.org.
3. Submission is due at 5:30 PM Eastern Time on November 26, 2020. The submission must be emailed to rfpprosper@tns.org with the subject line “**USDA Prosper Cashew evaluation procurement**” and must include:

The main body of the proposal should be 8 -10 pages and should include the following:

- A cover letter summarizing the applicant’s interest and capacity to implement the evaluation plan for this project (including baseline, mid-term and final evaluations).
- A description of the recommended evaluation methodologies that demonstrates an understanding of Prosper’s expected impact and implementation approach, and the context of cashew processing in West Africa.
- A summary of the contractor’s experience in evaluating the development sector, including areas such as agriculture product transformation, enterprise development, investment fund management.
- A summary of the contractor’s experience in applying different quantitative *and* qualitative methodologies (provide some details of specific assignments, challenges encountered and how the challenges were mitigated)
- List of three references who can attest to your experience and expertise in evaluation. Include contact information (daytime phone numbers and email contacts)
- List of the three most recent relevant assignments that you have undertaken, including a description of why these are relevant to this RFP and what learnings were drawn from that assignment

Appendices (not included in the 8-10 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 for finalizing the evaluation plan and implementing the baseline, and a high-level estimate for implementing the mid-line and end of project evaluations, including critical assumptions informing the estimate. The total estimated value of all deliverables shall not exceed the contract ceiling. The Prosper Cashew Project has estimated that the total contract ceiling will range between US\$275,000 and US\$375,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on both the “value for money” of the selected applicant’s cost proposal and on the final project budget.
- Demonstrated financial and administrative capacity to manage a contract of this size
- Optional: one example of an evaluation report recently completed or any other document that demonstrates strong writing ability. (These documents will be handled with the utmost confidentiality).

See Appendix 2 of this RFP for additional details on proposal submission requirements.

4 Criteria for Selection

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

| Section | Points |
|---|---------------|
| Past Performance (as demonstrated in the applicant's proposal and based on the reference check) | 40 |
| Proposed Evaluation approach (tailored to Prosper's unique design and context) | 30 |
| Staffing | 20 |
| Cost | 10 |
| Total | 100 |

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the consultant or firm whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of TechnoServe 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 for a period of 90 days from submission.

5 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 groups 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 meet all requirements of an independent evaluator indicated in Part 7 CFR 1499.13, articulated in USDA Foreign Service Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. These requirements include but are not limited to:
 - a. [Independent evaluator] uses acceptable analytical frameworks such as comparison with non-project areas, surveys, involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation, and statistical analyses;
 - b. Uses local consultants, as appropriate, to conduct portions of the evaluation; and,
 - c. 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. A bidder must not be debarred or suspended according to the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 7 CFR Part 3017.510, Participants' responsibilities.
5. A bidder must be in compliance with 2 CFR 175.15(b), Trafficking in Persons.
A bidder must be in compliance with E.O. 13224, Executive Order on Terrorist Financing.
6. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
7. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFP. All late responses will be rejected.
8. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
9. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for the entire period indicated in the RFP.
10. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
11. 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.
12. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
13. 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.

14. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
15. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by the 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.

6 Appendix 2 – Form/Content of Response

All proposals shall:

1. Be in the English language.
2. Contain detailed cost in US Dollar, with applicable Tax/Charges clearly identified.
3. Provide requested payment terms and conditions.
4. Describe the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the firm in providing the type of services being requested by this RFP. Resumes or CVs of “key personnel” shall be submitted as an attachment.
5. Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate
6. communication between TNS and the submitting organization.
7. A brief outline of the organization and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company
 - Full legal name and country of citizenry of company’s President and / or Chief Executive Officer, and all other officers and senior managers of the company
 - Year business was established