

Subaward Request for Applications - Smallholder farmer data collection

RFA Re-issue Date:	11 October 2022
Closing/Submission Deadline:	17 October 2022, 11:59pm GMT
RFA Code:	IB10MEL1
Subject:	Smallholder farmer survey to establish a baseline for the Phygital extension pilot project
Eligible Organisations/Criteria:	Organisations with extensive experience in collecting, cleaning and managing data from smallholder farmers

Dear Applicant,

This document constitutes a request for applications (RFA) from eligible bidders for a baseline survey funded by the Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders & Agribusinesses (CASA) Technical Assistance Facility. It is accompanied by a template for a letter of intention to submit an application. Interested bidders should sign and return the letter of intention to submit an application to TechnoServe per contact details described in Section E (submission guidelines). Upon receipt of that letter, which also serves as a non-disclosure agreement, TechnoServe may provide additional information to the bidder.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of TechnoServe, nor does it constitute a commitment to pay for costs incurred in the development of an application.

Questions regarding the RFA requirements must be submitted in writing to Noel Verrinder nverrinder@contractor.tns.org by the deadline listed above. Include the RFA Code and Subject in the subject line for your questions.

TechnoServe, CASA TAF & FCDO aim to create an inclusive culture of best practice with the delivery partners with whom it engages, and which receive UK taxpayers' funds. All Supply Partners and Subrecipients should adhere to the overarching principles of the Supply Partner Code of Conduct to:

- Act responsibly and with integrity
- Be transparent and accountable
- Seek to improve value for money
- Demonstrate commitment to poverty reduction and FCDO priorities
- Demonstrate commitment to wider HMG priorities

A. Background

TechnoServe and CASA TAF

Established in 1968, TechnoServe works with enterprising people in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. We have worked in more than 40 countries across Africa, Latin America, and Asia, assisting thousands of businesses and improving the incomes of millions of people. We provide business solutions to poverty by linking people to information, capital and markets. With five decades of proven results, we believe in the power of private enterprise to transform lives. We are business specialists assisting farmers and other entrepreneurs in 29 countries, increasing their access to information, capital, and markets. The increased income our clients derive enhances resilience and prosperity for their families and communities. In 2020, TechnoServe assisted 298,000 farmers and businesses resulting in \$188 million of new revenues and wages for participating farmers, businesses, and employees.

In 2019, TechnoServe was competitively selected by the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to lead part of a five-year programme – Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusinesses (CASA) – focused on driving catalytic change in how investors view and invest in agribusinesses operating in supply chains with significant numbers of smallholder producers. CASA is focused on increasing economic opportunities for smallholder farmers by:

- Enabling more smallholder farmers to engage with and trade into commercial markets;
- Demonstrating the commercial viability of agribusinesses with significant smallholder supply chains and attracting more investment into these businesses;
- Deepening the smallholder impact of investments made by development finance institutions and impact investors.

TechnoServe's role on CASA is to establish and operate a £8 million Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) to support agribusinesses that have received development finance institution (DFI) or impact investor financing to extend and deepen their smallholder impact. The facility will provide grants and technical assistance to agribusinesses that have received financing from a DFI (e.g., CDC, FMO, Norfund) or an impact/patient capital investor (e.g., Dob Equity, Barak Fund) for projects which will increase the volumes of purchases from smallholders and bring new smallholders into business supply chains. CASA TAF's aim is to increase the development impact of individual deals and help build an evidence base of the potential development returns from agribusiness investments that can be used to raise expectations of investors from future deals. CASA TAF has the potential to re-define the role that private investments in agriculture can play towards driving development impact for millions of smallholder producers across the globe. Over 5 years, our objective is to work with 35 agribusinesses to increase sales and productivity of over 100,000 smallholders, and increase jobs and rural income generation opportunities.

Support to Company

To meet our objectives, we are working with at least 35 agribusinesses to design and implement commercially viable, high-impact and sustainable inclusive business plans.

One of the businesses supported, an agri-tech company operating in Eastern India offers farmer services via technology and its network of micro-entrepreneurs. The company has grown rapidly since starting operations in 2016 with a comprehensive service offering including input sales, agronomy advisory and output purchase which distinguishes it from competitors offering a narrower range of products.

The company currently reaches approx. 700,000 farmers and offers advisory via the technology platform, its call-centre, and in-person via its field officers. To deepen smallholder impact and

ultimately grow input and output sales, the company, along with CASA TAF, is in the process of developing and piloting a combination of technology and in-person advisory services with a target of reaching 15 000 smallholder farmers. CASA TAF is specifically supporting the company to define an optimal configuration and a farmer advisory model that is practical, financially feasible and scalable over time.

The outputs of this pilot will be to optimise the operational framework for the extension programme, and to develop a playbook (guide to content customisation, delivery channel mix, and farmer selection) for expanding into new states/geographical areas within the company's network. The key objective of the extension programme is to develop a scalable low-cost training-of-trainers model in which farmer adoption of the practices is maximised and the delivery of the advisory to farmers is done as effectively and cost-efficiently as possible through the optimal, co-ordinated and targeted use of in-person and digital farmer touchpoints.

B. Data collection project

Purpose of work

CASA TAF is calling for proposals from specialised data collection firms to conduct a survey aimed at collecting baseline data from a sample of smallholder farmers benefiting from the extension pilot. The purpose of this survey is to establish a baseline for smallholder farmer incomes, poverty level, yields, sales, input use and costs of production, women's decision making in the household, access to finance, and experience with the company, amongst other things.

Scope of work

The overall purpose of this survey is to provide CASA TAF and its partners with a baseline view of the smallholder farmers targeted by the extension programme. Specifically, the survey will need to collect quantitative data on the key indicators from a sample of approximately 400 to 800 smallholder farmers. These are:

- Probability of Poverty Index: % of farmers living below the USD1.90 a day poverty line
- Mean food insecurity experience.¹
- Average Net annual income per farmer from the supported agricultural activities
 - ◆ Average Annual revenue from supported agricultural activities
 - ◆ Average Annual costs associated with supported agricultural activities
- The number of households in which women are involved in decision making around agricultural production and income, using two questions from the women's empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI)
- % of farmers accessing the extension programme,
 - ◆ The topics they received information on
 - ◆ The channel through which they received the information
- Net Promoter Score™ for the company's extension programme
- % of farmers purchasing appropriate products from the company

¹ Using FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

- % of SHFs practising improved pest management
- % of SHFs practising improved nutrient management
- Average farmer yields for supported crops

The indicators will be discussed in more detail with the contractor.

Based on the outcome of this contract, there is potential for a future contract to conduct an end line survey on the same farmers in approximately 2 years time; *however, this is not part of the scope of this contract.*

Method

The contractor will develop and propose a suitable and sound survey design. A list of smallholder farmers and their phone numbers will be available to the contractor. The bidder must propose in-person data collection.

The contractor will be responsible for the design, implementation, and management of the survey, as well as the cleaning and delivery of the data.

The consulting assignment will include the following tasks:

- **Develop Inception Report and Survey Work Plan:** The contractor will produce a detailed work plan, which should include the proposed method to conduct the survey, sampling approach, agreed upon data collection plan, staffing, budget and period. The survey design will be developed with CASA TAF's staff and the company. The contractor will also identify all requirements for ethical clearance of the survey activities. In addition, the contractor will lead development of the survey protocol, which will include:
 - Overview of methods taken for protection of human subjects, including informed consent and respondent confidentiality
 - Assessment of respondent risks and benefits
- **Develop a sampling plan:** The contractor will define the sample sizes required to be representative, as well as the sampling strategy.
- **Data collection:** The contractor will be responsible for overseeing all activities related to preparation and conducting data collection. CASA TAF and the company will assist the contractor with the logistics involved. The contractor will oversee all activities including:
 - Field data collection
 - Creation of survey training materials
 - Data collectors' recruitment and training
 - Pilot testing with field teams
 - Collection and compilation of any required secondary data
 - Ensuring quality of collected data
- **Data Quality Assurance:** The contractor is responsible to conduct all appropriate data quality assurance procedures, including instrument review, enumerator instruction, coaching and performance monitoring, back-checks, spot-checks and accompaniments and preparation of daily data quality assurance reports

- **Data Uploading:** The contractor is responsible to supervise data uploading to the specified server, verification, and cleaning in accordance with established data quality assurance procedures,
- **Manage, store and deliver data:** The contractor is responsible for ensuring proper and comprehensive documentation of survey activities, as well as making sure all data and corresponding documentation is properly stored. Proper and comprehensive documentation should be provided for the method, sampling procedures, and questionnaires. ***Raw data and cleaning files must be shared with CASA TAF.***

Deliverables

- Inception report detailing:
 - Method- to be approved by TAF team before implementation including:
 - Sampling method
 - Data collection plan
 - Analysis framework
 - Detailed work plan for survey
- A report synthesising findings from the baseline data including a completed table of baseline information on key indicators, and description of any data manipulation.
- The raw cleaned data collected from the survey and associated analysis scripts.

Audience

The audience for the reports will be CASA TAF, its primary funder, FCDO, the company and its investors.

Budget

A total of up to £8 000 available for the cost of this survey. These funds are provided by CASA TAF.

Value for money

Potential service providers will be evaluated in terms of value for money with a benchmarking of bidder costs in relation to outputs before contracts are awarded.

The selected evaluator will be subject to a Risk Assessment Analysis prior to contracting which will ascertain the TAF service provider's value for money capabilities and commitment. Proposed costs will be analysed in relation to market rates. However, payment will be based on performance once the project is contracted.

Duty of care

The contractor owes a duty of care to the contractor personnel and is responsible for the health, safety, security of life and property and general well being of such persons and their property and this includes where the contractor personnel carry out the Services. An assessment of the consultant's duty of care capabilities will be undertaken pre-award.

Location

The survey will be conducted in-person, and will cover 10 districts in Uttar Pradesh, including Agra, Barabanki, Bulandshahr, Ghazipur, Hardoi, Janupur, Kansiram Nagar, Sitapur, and Sonbhadra.

Timing

The project duration is estimated at 3 months starting October 2022 and ending in January 2022.

Required Qualifications

The Survey team, which may include subcontractors, must have:

- Proven expertise using conducting smallholder farmer surveys
- Experience in running large scale surveys in Uttar Pradesh
- The ability to run data collection processes in local languages
- Strong skills in statistical analysis
- Ability to write reports and present in English

Knowledge of and experience working with agricultural extension projects will be beneficial.

C. The application and award process

Application Submission

The application process under this RFA will consist of 1 phase of competition where full applications shall be submitted by interested parties to TechnoServe for evaluation. The application must be a **maximum of 5 pages** and sections must include, but not limited to:

- Organisational experience, including track record of delivery of similar assignments
- Team structure; roles and responsibilities of each team member
 - If the contractor intends to subcontract any aspect of the work, this must be explained in the application, and an overview of how the subcontractors will report to the team leader must be included, as well as an overview of how the team leader will quality control outputs from subcontracted team members. Where subcontractors are firms, the Contractor must provide a description of the firm's relevant expertise and competencies, in addition to information on the subcontractor's staff intended to provide the services.
- Draft proposed method including activities, milestones and timelines
- Budget details (including any value for money arguments) with the level of detail similar to the budget template provided for guidance (you may use your own template), and compliant with FCDO's Cost Eligibility Guidance for Commercial Contracts (found [here](#)).
- Risk Matrix and risk mitigation strategy - A risk matrix should be included that outlines the risks to data collection's success, the size/importance of each risk to the data collection, and the proposed mitigation strategy that the contractor will take to minimise the risk becoming a reality. The table should also include a column indicating how the contractor will track the status of the risk and how this will be reported on during the data collection.

- Three references for work completed on similar projects
- Signed declarations – Attachment 1 to this RFA
- Duty of Care Response – Attachment 2 to this RFA

Application assessment process

Step 1:

Applications will be developed and submitted by the Applicant to TechnoServe using the templates provided (or other referenced material as stated in the RFA) in accordance with all guidelines by the stated submission deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The main body of the technical proposal should be **no longer than 5 pages** (excluding curricula vitae).

Step 2:

Applications will be vetted by TechnoServe staff to ensure each application meets the requirements set forth in this RFA. Any applications failing to meet minimum requirements will be disqualified from competition. The minimum requirements include the eligibility criteria, use of application templates provided, submission by the deadline, etc.

Step 3:

Applications received within the application deadline that meet the minimum requirements set forth in the RFA will be evaluated by a Selection Committee using the following criteria:

Selection Criteria	Scoring
1. Relevance of the proposed method to the RFA; feasibility of planned activities and anticipated deliverables	30
2. Illustrated capacity of the applicant to implement the survey and past experience with similar contracts	30
3. Quality of proposed personnel	20
4. Budget reasonableness and cost effectiveness	20
Maximum Score	100

Step 4:

The Selection Committee will recommend those applications with the highest scores for award. As applicable, the Selection Committee may request applicants to provide additional information and edit their applications. In such cases, the Selection Committee will also establish a deadline for submission of revised applications.

Step 5:

Successful applicants will be notified by TechnoServe and will begin to work with TechnoServe staff to revise their applications to be incorporated into a full subaward. This step will include a pre-award risk assessment.



Step 6:

Following the successful conclusion of the application process and acquisition of any required donor approvals, TechnoServe will issue the successful applicant(s) with a subaward with details on the scale, scope, cost, and terms and conditions. Whenever possible, TechnoServe will meet with the new contractor to provide an orientation outlining the main requirements for performance and reporting.

Step 7:

Throughout the duration of the contract, TechnoServe will monitor the evaluator's performance and compliance with all subaward terms and conditions.

D. Project Budget Submission and Costing guidelines

Individual contracts will vary depending on availability of funding, nature and scope of project activities, the period of implementation, and justification of costs proposed. Although consideration will be given to all applications received by the deadline, it is recommended that the total budget requested from TechnoServe does not exceed £8 000. Contracts will be issued on a competitive basis and only to a selected number of applicants. A budget template is attached for guidance on the level of detail needed in the proposal.

While reviewing application budgets, the Selection Committee will ensure that:

1. The budget application reflects all the resources necessary for data collection implementation (Direct and Indirect Costs, including taxes, as applicable).
2. The budget notes column provides details on all types of costs planned and cost justification.
3. All costs budgeted are eligible. Information on eligible and ineligible costs can be found [here](#). Budgeted costs categories may include but are not limited to:

- a. **Personnel:** Salaries and benefits for full and part-time staff involved in the project. Staff can be paid only for activities performed within the framework of the proposed project. All personnel expenses must be justified with information on the role of the proposed staff in project implementation.
- b. **Consultants and Other Outside Services:** Fees for any external consultants or contracted firms required to support subaward activities.
- c. **Travel:** Flights, per diem, and any other required travel costs for project personnel to conduct implementation activities.
- d. **Office Costs:** Any required cost for the contractor's local office to support project implementation.
- e. **Supplies and small equipment under £500:** Any project-related supplies and small equipment with a unit cost under **£500**.
- f. **Equipment:** Any project-related equipment with a unit cost above **£500**, such as project vehicles or generators.
- g. **Other Direct Costs:** Any other direct costs of the project, such as costs for conducting trainings, developing publications, etc.
- h. **Indirect Costs:** If applicable, organisational overhead costs. This must be an annually audited rate, or negotiated through FCDO's NPAC procedure.
- i. **Taxes:** The applicant agrees to adhere to the appropriate regulatory requirements and ensures that the correct taxes are included in the proposal in relation to the country in which the applicant operates.

Pre-Agreement Costs - TechnoServe will not reimburse costs incurred prior to the effective date of the award. In special cases where pre-agreement costs are necessary to comply with the proposed delivery schedule, TechnoServe may discuss and negotiate with the applicant the approval of certain pre-agreement costs. Such costs are only eligible with the prior written approval of TechnoServe.



E. Submission Guidelines

Applicants must submit their applications, budgetary information as well as any other information responding to the terms, conditions, specifications and requirements of this RFA to:

TechnoServe

To: Noel Verrinder

Email Address: nverrinder@contractor.tns.org

Applications must be received by the submission deadline specified on the first page of this RFA. Late submissions will not be accepted.

F. Reporting Guidance

1. Financial Reporting

This is a Fixed Amount contract. No financial reporting on expenditures is required.

2. Program Reporting

Reporting will be defined during the contract negotiation stage and is expected to be closely linked to the milestones to be defined in the contract.

Attachments to this RFA:

[Please follow this link to download the attachments](#)

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| Attachment 1: | Declarations |
| Attachment 2: | Duty of Care Response |
| Attachment 3: | Budget Template |
| Attachment 4: | Letter of Intention |