

Subaward Request for Applications - Independent Evaluation

RFA Release Date:	02 August 2023
Deadline for Questions:	08 August 2023
Closing/Submission Deadline:	18 August 2023, 23:59 GMT
RFA Code:	IB17MEL1
Subject:	Independent evaluation on the impact of CASA TAF's support to a Coffee trader in Tanzania
Eligible Organisations/Criteria:	Organisations with extensive experience in conducting evaluations for programmes supporting smallholder farmers, agricultural development, and food security, and qualitative and quantitative data collection.

Dear Applicant,

This document constitutes a request for applications (RFA) from eligible bidders for an independent evaluation 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.

The project

CASA TAF is working with a global green coffee trader which has been operating in Tanzania for over 20 years. The trader has ambitions to increase the proportion of certified coffee purchased in Tanzania. To hit this target, the trader is working with CASA TAF to establish relationships with coffee co-operatives (Agricultural Marketing Co-Operative Societies – "AMCOS") and maintain these over time through a loyalty programme to support progressive investment in AMCOS in way that minimises risk and maximises impact potential over time.

The loyalty programme comprises four tiers, with increasing risk and benefit for the trader at each stage. A scorecard would be used to assess which tier an AMCOS qualifies for and which areas need improvement to progress to the next tier. Scorecard metrics include measures of financial health as well

as indicators on governance structure, operational efficiency and member composition and loyalty. Specifically, each tier would involve the following:

- For Direct Export (DE), the trader would establish connections with AMCOS to purchase higher quality coffee directly from the AMCOS (vs via auction). This would be the starting point of the relationship which would allow for assessment of the AMCOS and further Cotacof investments via Bronze, Silver or Gold tiers.
- For Bronze tier AMCOS, the trader will certify AMCOS, register their farmers and record their production using a data system. This would unlock access to a certification premium and training, as well as potentially reduced interest rates with banks.
- For Silver tier AMCOS, in addition to Bronze benefits, a revolving fund will be set up to provide financing for pulpers to increase the quality of coffee produced.
- Gold tier AMCOS, already certified and with a high proportion of CPU-processed coffee, will benefit from yield development programmes to increase the volumes of their higher-margin coffee. For Gold AMCOS, the intervention will be tailored depending on specific needs, although it is expected that many AMCOS in the Southern Highlands would benefit from stumping as the primary lever to increase yield.

CASA TAF will provide technical assistance to support the launch and sustainable deployment of the loyalty programme, including overall operational support as well as technical support on specific high impact initiatives (e.g. stumping). The reach of the loyalty programme is estimated to be around 20 AMCOS (8 have been included in the programme to date) and 15,000 smallholder farmers within the life of the CASA TAF.

B. Evaluation

Purpose of Evaluation

CASA TAF is calling for proposals from specialised evaluation firms to conduct an evaluation of the loyalty programme. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the initiative on smallholder farmers' incomes, resilience, and food security, and the operations and governance of the involved AMCOS, as well as the commercial benefit for the company in relation to CASA TAF's support. While findings and insights of this evaluation will be used to assess our impact performance, they will also be used to establish what works and what could be replicated in other contexts.

Scope of evaluation

The scope of the evaluation will include collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the company, AMCOS and a representative sample of benefiting smallholder farmers, as well as a valid control group¹. The following key indicators are to be measured:

Farmer indicators:

1. Probability of Poverty Index (PPI)
2. Mean food insecurity experience & dietary diversity scores of CASA target households.²

¹ We suggest using farmers who are members of direct export AMCOS, which the company sources coffee from but are not part of the loyalty programme.

² Using FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) and Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)

3. Number of smallholder producers and small scale retailers benefiting from CASA TAF. Disaggregated by poorer (those earning less than \$1.90 per day) and gender of benefiting individuals.
4. Additional net annual income per farmer (£) that can be credibly linked to support provided by CASA..
5. A holistic measure of their resilience covering climate, anticipatory and economic resilience (To be discussed and agreed with selected bidder).
6. Difference between men and women's score for **two questions** in the women's empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI) for beneficiaries of CASA interventions (focus on income and production domains)³
7. Adoption agronomic practices of the smallholder coffee farmers, including undertaking activities such as stumping and appropriate input usage, and any observations on impacts on yields.

In addition to these indicators, the company requires a list of questions which take approximately 1.5 hours to complete to be asked of participating smallholder farmers (to be shared with successful bidder). These questions cover a number of agronomic practices in some detail, as well as questions that can be used by the company for carbon footprinting and an assessment of regenerative agriculture - the evaluator is **not** expected to conduct the carbon modelling.

During inception the contractor, along with CASA TAF and the company will discuss methods to ensure smallholder farmers are able to complete the survey. **The control group farmers do not require these same questions to be asked of them.**

The evaluation will aim to answer questions regarding the current conditions and operations of smallholder farmers and AMCOS within the CASA TAF model.

The evaluation will also answer key questions that will unpack how change is realised and enable stakeholders to learn meaningfully, with a view to inform the rest of the programme and other inclusive business models. Ultimately, the findings and lessons learnt will be shared with a wider audience with the goal of enlightening the broader ecosystem of the benefits technical assistance can have in reducing poverty and improving food security, as well as what its limitations are.

Part of the role of the evaluator will be to assist CASA TAF in refining and prioritising the evaluation questions below. The final list of questions should be agreed upon by CASA TAF and the evaluator during the inception phase of the evaluation. These key evaluation questions will guide the evaluation scope, and the evaluator will respond to each of them in the final report.

Evaluation questions

1. Has there been a change in the smallholder farmers' agronomic behaviours, for example, to what extent have farmers adopted appropriate stumping as a practice, or to what extent has there been an increase in the usage of appropriate inputs, equipment, and services? Have the farmers adopted any climate smart practices?
2. To what extent did the supported practices lead to a subsequent improvement in yields for smallholder farmers?
3. What are the benefits of the inclusive business model to the AMCOS, and do these benefits flow to smallholder farmers? How does this differ per tier of the loyalty programme?

³ IFPRI WEAI: <https://weai.ifpri.info/versions/pro-weai/>

4. How has the inclusive sourcing model contributed to changes in smallholder farmers' farm-derived incomes, as well as their wealth? How does this differ per tier of the loyalty programme?
5. How has the inclusive sourcing model contributed to changes in the farming household's resilience? How does this differ per tier of the loyalty programme?
6. How has the inclusive sourcing model contributed to changes in women's empowerment in terms of decision-making over agricultural production and income?

AMCOS-focused questions

1. How has the loyalty programme influenced the operations of the AMCOS involved?
2. What components of the programme have the AMCOS found most valuable to their operations?
3. Have the AMCOs noticed changes in their relationship with the smallholder farmers since the inception of the programme?
4. How has the relationship between AMCOS and Company changed over the programme? Is there greater loyalty?
5. Have the AMCOS been able to offer more or improved services to the smallholder farmers as a result of this programme?
6. How do the AMCOS perceive the sustainability of the benefits they have received from the programme?
7. What recommendations do the AMCOS have for improving the programme in the future, in terms of its benefits to their operations and the smallholder farmers?

Company-focused questions:

1. Has the programme affected the supply consistency and quality of coffee sourced from the AMCOS, specifically in terms of certified traceable volumes.
2. Have the various components of the inclusive sourcing model been able to meet the commercial and impact needs of the coffee trader?

Method

The evaluator will develop and propose a suitable and sound evaluation design. A mixed method, highly participatory and iterative approach is expected for this evaluation. Given the complexities of technical assistance and working with private sector partners, evaluators are encouraged to explore all methods of establishing what changes can be credibly linked to CASA TAF's support. However, we do require a quantitative survey to be conducted on a representative sample of smallholder farmers, as well as a reasonably sized control group of smallholder farmers from non-participating AMCOS (direct export). We expect two primary waves of data collection to take place: one at baseline and one two years afterwards (2025). We would like another follow-up survey conducted at the mid-point in 2024 however, the sample size and number of questions asked during this mid-line can be reduced.

With the technical assistance projects beginning at the start of 2023, we believe that the timing is appropriate for rich baseline data collection from coffee farmers; although, some retrospective questions on income will be required. **The tools for the smallholder survey will be developed in close collaboration with CASA TAF and the company.**

The contracted evaluator will be responsible for the design, implementation, analysis and drafting of reports. Evidence gathered will be from both primary (interviews, surveys, focus groups, beneficiary stories etc.) and secondary (project documents, company and AMCOS records, etc.) data sources. It is also anticipated that the evaluation will include a desk review of project reports and outputs.

Deliverables

- Inception report detailing:
 - Method of the evaluation- to be approved by TAF team before implementation including:
 - Sampling method
 - Data collection plan
 - Analysis framework
 - Detailed work plan for evaluation
 - Survey questionnaire, integrating the company's existing tool and CASA TAF's required indicators.
- A baseline report synthesising findings from the baseline data including a completed table of baseline information on key indicators, emerging findings and recommendations.
- A presentation of the findings of the baseline to CASA TAF and the company
- A shorter mid-line report, which includes a table illustrating changes in key indicators, key qualitative insights, and recommendations for the company and CASA TAF for course correction.
- A final evaluation report after the endline data collection, that includes a completed table illustrating changes in key indicators, key qualitative insights, answers to the evaluation questions, and recommendations for the company and CASA TAF
- A presentation of the findings of the evaluation to CASA TAF and the company
- The raw data collected from all waves of the survey and associated analysis scripts to allow for reproduction of results

Audience

The audience for the evaluation reports and presentations will be CASA TAF, its primary funder, FCDO, the company and its investors, as well as the broader ecosystem of impact investors and practitioners.

Budget

A total of up to £100,000 available for the cost of this evaluation. These funds are provided by CASA TAF.

Location

The evaluation will be based in Tanzania with multiple site and field visits to Songwe, Mbeya, Ruvuma, Kagera, Ruvuma, Kilimanjaro and Dar Es Salaam.

Timing

The project will start in August 2023, with data collection commencing in late October, and end in July 2025 (subject to FCDO contract extension, with provision for a further extension into 2026).

C. The application and award process

Contracting mechanism

Open tender

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.

Required Qualifications

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

- Proven expertise using quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods in projects with the private sector
- Specialised expertise in agricultural development, food security, and gender
- Experience in running large scale surveys in Tanzania
- The ability to run data collection processes in local languages
- Strong skills in statistical analysis
- Strong skills in qualitative analysis
- Ability to write reports and present in English

Knowledge of and experience working with projects in the coffee value chain will be beneficial.

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. Application 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 and timelines
- Milestones and results to be achieved over the life of the project
- 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 evaluation's success, the size/importance of each risk to the evaluation, 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 evaluation.
- 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 7 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 evaluation and past experience with similar evaluations	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 evaluation, 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 £100,000. 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 evaluation 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

Evaluation 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 |