



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

USAID Reforestation Project Mid-Term Evaluation Qualitative Data Collection Haiti Evaluation and Survey Services (ESS)

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Project	USAID Reforestation Project
Project Implementer	Chemonics International
Evaluation Implementer	Haiti Evaluation Survey Services (Haiti ESS)
RFP number	SOL_HESS_2020_005
USAID Office	USAID/Haiti Economic Growth and Agriculture Development
Development Objective(s) (DOs)	DO2: Increased food and economic security
Active Geographic Regions	North and North East departments of Haiti
RFP Release Date:	Friday, August 14, 2020
Deadline for Questions:	Monday, August 24, 2020, 8:00 AM EST
Answers to Questions:	To be released by Wednesday August 26, 2020
Deadline for Proposals:	Monday, August 31, 5:00 PM EST
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Annexes	Annex A: Summary of Relevant Capability, Experience, and Past Performance Annex B: Proposed Data Collection Team and Resumes Annex C: Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Form Annex D: Budget Template



I. BACKGROUND

In May 2017, USAID awarded Social Impact (SI) the Haiti Evaluation and Survey Services (ESS) contract to conduct baseline surveys and, mid-term and final evaluations for a wide range of United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Haiti projects currently being implemented throughout the country.

Under this contract, USAID is now commissioning the Mid-Term Evaluation of the USAID Reforestation Project. The USAID Reforestation Project has been implemented for over 2.5 years, trying to restore environmental services, improve livelihoods and build the resilience capacity of beneficiary communities through integrated reforestation interventions. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the extent to which the project is strategically, operationally and sustainably progressing towards its objectives, including youth and gender inclusion in reforestation programming and governance.

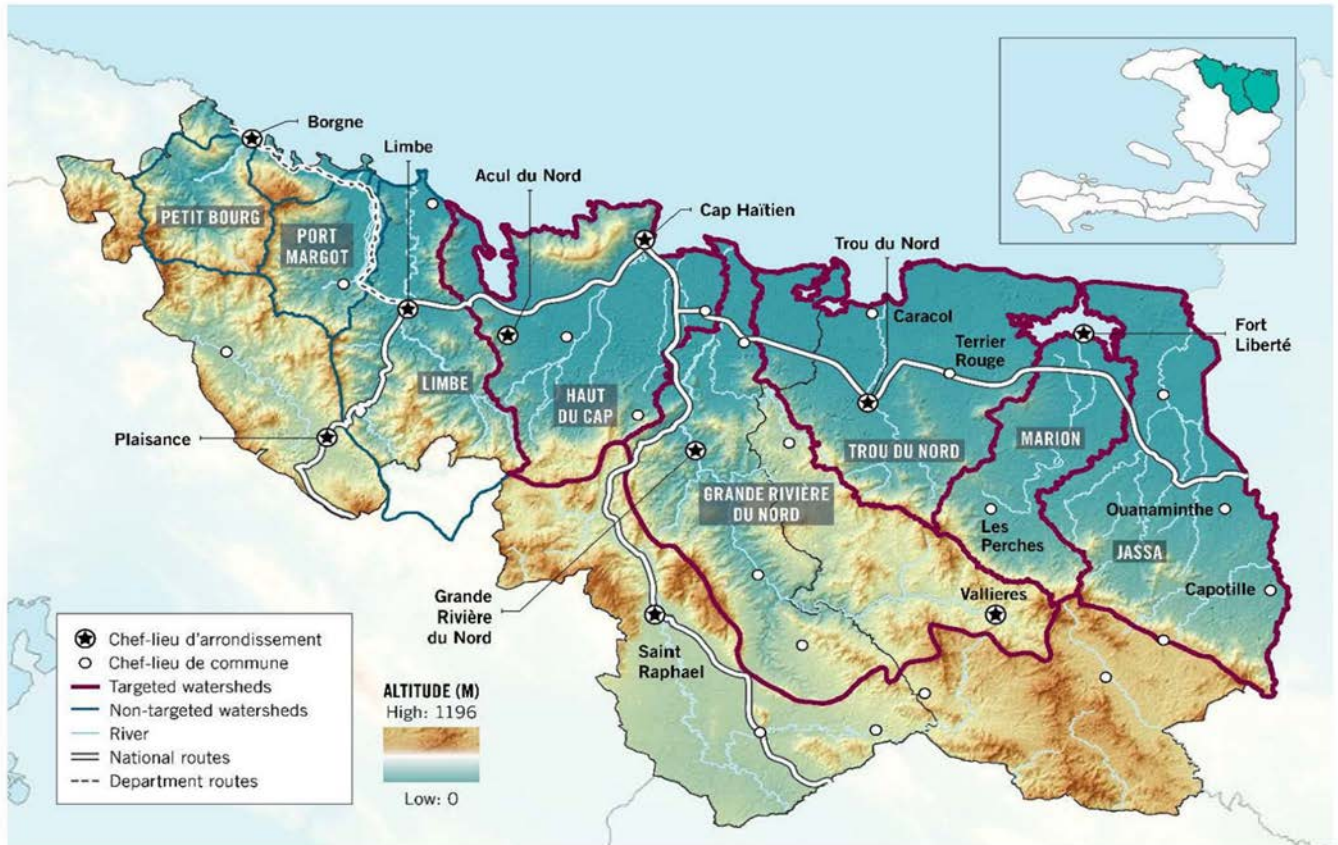
The evaluation questions are:

1. **Effectiveness:** What are the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation mechanisms (Direct Investment vs. Grants) as utilized separately and together to promote improved natural resource management?
2. **Resilience:** To what extent and in what ways is the project improving beneficiaries' resilience in the face of natural and economic shocks?
3. **Youth and Gender:** To what extent and in what ways is the project integrating youth and gender?
4. **Sustainability:** After two and half years of implementation, to what extent and in what ways has the project laid the foundation for sustainability in terms of beneficiaries' improved approaches towards natural resources management through the adoption of principles and practices promoted by the project?

II. SCOPE OF WORK

ESS is seeking to engage a Haitian research firm as a Sub-contractor who is well versed in collecting qualitative data, particularly pertaining to agriculture, environment, and natural resource management. The sub-contract will be Firm Fixed Price with the anticipated period of performance starting October 2020 and the data collection taking place in the North and North East departments of Haiti. Precise dates will be communicated upon award.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) describes the specifications for the field data collection services required to complete the final program evaluation. Offerors will prepare a technical proposal that addresses all aspects of the data collection as detailed in each section below.



Data Collection Activities

Overview of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The Sub-contractor will conduct FGDs with beneficiary farmers and local organizations (*producer groups, agribusinesses*), and KIIs with local government representatives. Specific groups and locations will be indicated after award.

These data collection events will take place in the USAID Northern corridor, particularly the North and Northeast departments, including the country's watersheds of Haut du Cap, Grande Rivière du Nord, Trou du Nord, Marion and Jassa (see above map). The specific sampling plan will be determined based on additional detailed information to be provided about the specific interventions carried out within each locality, and the specific Reforestation interventions in the targeted area. The evaluation team (ET) will lead the sampling frame and plan development, with input from the Sub-contractor. The Sub-contractor will be required to coordinate with ESS, SI home office staff, and the ET on the design, planning, and implementation of the data collection. The Sub-contractor will be responsible for the planning, facilitator/note-taker training, piloting, data collection implementation and logistics, data security, recordings, mobilizing people, providing technologies for remote data collection in the face of COVID-19 as appropriate. The Sub-contractor will provide detailed summary notes in French for each data collection event. The notes must be anonymized to protect participants' identities, with a separate spreadsheet that lists who participated in each FGD with basic demographic data like age, gender, etc. A unique identifying code should be attached to each entry to link the participants to the relevant notes.

The exact number of data collection sites and FGDs will not be determined until after the Sub-contract is awarded. As such, Bidders should prepare preliminary budgets that include two FGDs and four KIIs per watershed, using the table format below:

Table 1

Watershed	# FGDs	# KIIs
Haut du cap	2	4
Grande Riviere du Nord	2	4
Trou du nord	2	4
Marion	2	4
Jassa	2	4
Total	10	20

Data Collection Tasks

Preparation

Clearances – The Sub-contractor will be responsible for identifying and liaising with the necessary authorities to gain permission/clearances to legally perform all tasks specified in this RFP. The Sub-contractor will be required to keep documentation of all requests, approvals, and correspondence between relevant parties and provide copies to SI upon request. The Sub-contractor will be expected to maintain positive, professional relationships with all local stakeholders and report any challenges therein immediately to ESS.

Planning - The Sub-contractor is responsible for planning all FGDs and KIIs in the field and identifying and organizing the FGD participants, based on lists provided and sampling plan developed by the ET with input from the Sub-contractor. Note that data collection activities must be compliant with policies regarding restrictions due to COVID-19. All FGDs and KII should be conducted virtually.

Instrument Development – The ET will assume primary responsibility for developing the data collection instruments. However, the Sub-contractor will be required to review and provide input on the instruments.

Translation – The Sub-contractor will arrange for instruments translation into Creole. The Sub-contractor is responsible for ensuring translation quality, by verifying that translators possess adequate credentials. The Sub-contractor will be responsible for reviewing the final wording of all data collection instrument translations to ensure that they are appropriate for the relevant respondent groups.

Develop Manuals for Field Staff – With input from ESS, SI home office staff, and the ET, the Sub-contractor will be responsible for developing comprehensive manuals for field staff. These will include manuals for facilitators and notetakers. ESS, SI home office staff, and the ET must have a chance to review and approve the final manuals at least five business days prior to the start of training.

Staff Training – All facilitators and notetakers are required to receive training prior to data collection. The training shall be comprised of classroom as well as practice sessions administering FGDs and KIIs, while respecting restrictions due to COVID-19. Offerors are

required to specify the recommended duration and content of field staff training as part of the technical approach. Offerors shall describe in their technical proposal their approach to assessing facilitators, and notetakers' readiness to conduct data collection during and after the training. It is recommended that more facilitators and notetakers be trained than will be required for any data collection activity, so top-performers can be selected, and a pool of back-up facilitators and notetakers be ready in case of need. ESS and ET representatives will assist with the training, may test facilitators and notetakers as needed and may require, at their discretion, replacement of facilitators and notetakers deemed to be performing inadequately in training or in the field.

Piloting – Piloting will be done as part of staff training and will focus on the entire data collection process. This is meant to be a “real-life” practice of the data collection. The Sub-contractor should plan to conduct pilots. Following piloting, major changes to the tool are not expected. The final version of the instruments will be produced, eventually integrating minor changes suggested during the pilot, and shared with ESS and the ET. Any major issue should be communicated to ESS on the spot to be properly addressed.

Quality Assurance

Data Quality Assurance processes are required in real-time during all phases of this engagement: translation, facilitator and notetaker training, pilot testing, data collection, and all deliverable development. Most critically, the Sub-contractor is required to provide significant oversight of facilitators and note-takers during data collection. It is the Sub-contractor's responsibility to identify and communicate problems in all phases of the engagement with ESS. Minor issues should be corrected on the spot, to the extent that they do not change the scope of services or cause an increase in costs. Larger problems should be raised with ESS and collaboratively discussed before taking any remediation measures, which may require a subcontract modification.

- **The Sub-contractor** will be required to conduct quality control, at minimum, following the requirements listed below.
 - **Daily Team Debriefs:** Check-ins with the facilitators, notetakers and field staff to review any challenges faced, allow for questions and clarifications, and provide feedback to the wider group. These are especially important early in the data collection activity to ensure that proper interviewing habits are formed.
 - **Facilitator checks:** Facilitators will check their teams' notes daily before they are submitted to the server to ensure completeness and spot-check for errors.
- **ESS and SI home office staff** will be performing independent Quality Assurance, including, at a minimum, the following:
 - **Collaboration with Haiti ESS staff:** ESS will delegate a TL and Deputy Team Leader (DTL) to oversee data collection, provide guidance and support in the data collection process, conduct in-depth interview with primary project stakeholders, and conduct additional quality assurance. The Sub-contractor should work closely with the ESS team, providing updated information about logistics, plans, and insights during their supervision visits.

- ESS and SI home office staff will conduct independent quality checks of the data downloaded directly from the server at least three times a week, summarizing any questions or feedback for the Sub-contractor from each check. The Sub-contractor will be required to respond to these questions within one business day.

Respondent Protection & Data Security

The Sub-contractor is required to abide by SI's respondent protection and data security protocols (to be provided upon award). The Sub-contractor will be given an opportunity to comment on the protocol and provide feedback that allows ESS to better contextualize the protocol (without modifying SI's "required minimums").

All field staff will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement (to be provided upon award) signifying their understanding of ethical behavior in the field and proper handling of respondents' confidential and private information, including personally identifiable information (PII). The Sub-contractor will ensure proper measures are taken in the field to monitor facilitators' and note-takers' behavior with respect to respondent protection and data security (including interviewing, handling of recording devices, etc.). The Sub-contractor will also be responsible for ensuring that detailed summary notes and other documentation do not include PII.

Reporting

The Sub-contractor will be required to submit six main deliverables, namely a (1) Work Plan (2) Instrument Translations, (3) Field Manuals, (4) Training, and Pilot Report, (5) Weekly Status Reports, (6) detailed summary notes of each FGD and KIIs, (7) audio recordings of FGDs and KIIs, and (8) a Final Report.

General guidance is provided below. Social Impact will provide report templates as guidance to the Sub-contractor following award.

- **Work Plan:** The Sub-contractor is responsible for developing a detailed work plan and schedule within one week of contract award. The document will detail the following: expected duration and sequencing of tasks, staffing/team composition, team roles/responsibilities, pilot approach, facilitator and note-taker training approach and data quality assurance protocols. The Work Plan should outline any areas for which the Sub-contractor requires support from ESS.
- **Instrument Translations:** The Sub-contractor will submit translated versions of the instruments.
- **Field Manuals:** The manuals will cover roles, responsibilities, and protocols for facilitators and notetakers.
- **Training & Pilot Report:** This report will describe the activities undertaken during the training and piloting, and identify problems, solutions, and the way forward.
- **Weekly Status Reports:** This report will cover activities undertaken during the period, challenges faced, strategies adopted to overcome such challenges, programming of upcoming activities for the next reporting period, and any identified risks related to upcoming activities.

- **Detailed Summary Notes of each FGD and KII:** After each FGD and KII, the team needs to meet to write detailed summary notes, which consist of a faithful detailed report of what was said during the interview, enriched with details from audio recording such as examples, illustrations, explanations, and direct quotes. The summary notes will remain the raw qualitative data to inform ESS about findings from the field. They must be in French, stay as close as possible to the recordings, and contain as many quotes as possible. The notes must be anonymized to protect participants’ identities, and the Sub-contractor must provide a separate spreadsheet that lists who participated in each FGD with basic demographic data like age, gender, etc. Summary notes must be uploaded **daily** to the server.
- **Audio-recording:** The audio recording of each FGD must be submitted to ESS as a backup file that supports the summary notes. Audio recordings must be uploaded **daily** to the server.
- **Final Report:** This report will describe the overall activities, limitations, challenges, any modifications to the data collection protocols, data quality process, identification of any data quality issues, results and lessons learned. The Sub-contractor is required to submit to Social Impact the data in electronic format together with the final report.

III. PERSONNEL

Bidders must provide CVs for required team members (key personnel) positions as listed below, which meet the minimum qualifications specified. In this section, Bidders should also describe their recruitment strategy for other field staff and should specify the total number of facilitators and notetakers that will conduct the activity.

Table 2

Key Personnel	Qualifications
Coordinator (1)	Required 5-10 years of relevant experience managing qualitative data collection in Haiti
Facilitators	Required 5 years of relevant experience conducting FGDs and/or in-depth interviews in Haiti
Notetakers	Required 3 years of relevant experience in qualitative data collection exercises in Haiti

The field coordinator will oversee the interface with ESS, plan all the activities and author the reports.

IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORMAT

Bidders must submit the following information and documents:

- Valid business license
- Contact person, telephone, office address, and email
- **Technical proposal**
 - Proposals must be in English and not exceeding 8 pages.
 - The bidder should demonstrate understanding of the SOW and provide technical specificity regarding the expected tasks.
 - Proposal should provide specific approaches and strategies for fieldwork, including sound staffing plan and staffing approaches.

- In addition, the technical proposal shall include the following appendices (which do not count towards the page limit):
 - Past performance showing similar data collection services provided in the country (Appendix A in Technical Proposal). Offerors should submit a summary of three past performance reports including relevant past performance in agricultural sector (no more than 3). It should include contact information for references. ESS reserves the right to contact references provided in these past performance reports. Experience working with US Government preferred, but not required.
 - Data Collectors Qualifications: Please provide the qualifications of personnel that would be involved in providing the above services. (Appendix B of the Technical Proposal)
 - Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for both the firm and key personnel (Appendix C in Technical Proposal)
- **Price proposal**, which shall be submitted as a separate file from the technical proposal. The Bidder shall submit its best price as per the following requirements:
 - Offeror shall submit quotes in US Dollars (USD)
 - The Bidder shall propose costs for events in Table 1.
 - The rates quoted shall be for complete services inclusive of all taxes and charges for service contingent to the work
 - ESS will establish the scope of the services mentioned in this RFP at the design phase and will request a full budget based on the original budget. However, ESS anticipates needing 30 events total with 2 FGDs and 4 KIIs per watershed (see Table 1)
 - Payment term: Net 30 days
 - Proposals validity: Net 30 days from date of submission

Evaluation Criteria

All quotations received in response to this solicitation will be evaluated by the Haiti ESS bid review committee. The contract shall be awarded based on the criteria listed in this RFQ. Haiti ESS will conduct a source selection based on the evaluation factors listed below. These factors will serve as the standard against which all information will be evaluated and identify the factors that the bidder should address. The quotations will be evaluated according to best value with the following criteria:

- i. Technical (50%) – Haiti ESS will consider the technical specifications of the vendor's ability to provide the services listed in the "Description of Services Requested" section of the RFP;
- ii. Past Performance (20%) – Haiti ESS will consider Appendix A detailing past performance information (to be included in the technical proposal).
- iii. Personnel Qualifications (30%) – Haiti ESS will consider Appendix B detailing the qualifications of each bidder's data collection team.

This solicitation does not commit SI to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in preparing the quotation. SI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations received or to cancel in part or in its entirety the solicitation when it is in SI's best interest.

ANNEX A

Summary of Relevant Capability, Experience, and Past Performance

Include **three** projects that best illustrate your experience relevant to this RFP or similar activities, sorted by decreasing order of completion date. The projects should have been undertaken in the past three years (i.e. 2017, 2018, and 2019). Projects undertaken in the past five years may be taken into consideration at the discretion of the evaluation panel.

Item #	Project Title and Description of Activities	Location	Client Name and Contact Information	Cost in USD	Completed on Schedule (Yes or No); if no, then explain
1.					
2.					
3.					

ANNEX B

Proposed data collection team and resumes

1.

2.

3.

4.

ANNEX C

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for Reforestation Mid-Term Evaluation

Please fill one form for each for the firm and each team member.

Organization Name	
Evaluation Position	Service Provider /__/ Team Leader /__/ Team member /__/
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	SOL_HESS_2020_005
USAID Project(s) Evaluated <i>(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	Reforestation Project implemented by Chemonics International, award number CA AID-521-A-17-0001
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	Yes /__/, No /__/
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</i> <i>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</i> <i>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</i> 	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their



information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	



ANNEX D

Budget Template

Please see separate Excel attachment.