Evaluation of MGD FFE Project
Scope of Work

Consultancy Title	**Evaluation of MGD FFE (NDOKK) Project**
Location	**The Gambia**
Contract Duration and LOE	**April, 2023 to July, 2023**
Contact Person	**Bryan James** **Bryan.james@crs.org**

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit the following with their proposal for this assignment:

1. Cover letter
2. Compensation rate per day
3. Resume/ CV
4. Three professional references, with the following details about the references: (a) name, (b) position, (c) company, (d) phone number, (e) email address, and (f) city, state, country

Applicants must submit their curricula vitae, along with a technical proposal that includes the following specifications:

1. A description of the firm's expertise (maximum 1 page).
2. The different tasks they are planning to undertake in order to fulfill the evaluation's purpose, scope and objectives (2 pages).
3. Detailed explanation of the selected methodology (maximum 5 pages).
4. A detailed budget with explanatory notes (maximum 5 pages).
5. A sample of similar work undertaken as lead consultant(s) (maximum 5 pages).

The proposal should contain no more than a total of 25 pages of which: technical proposal comprises 20 pages and financial proposal comprises 5 pages.

Purpose

The **purpose** of these terms of reference (TOR) is to describe the objectives and minimum methodological requirements for the performance evaluations (baseline, midterm, and final evaluation, and special study) of the USDA funded ***Na Dinding O la 1arang oleh Kumayata (NDOKK) Project.*** Also included is a description of the scope of work (SOW) for an experienced, independent, third-party consultant or firm to conduct the

project's baseline, midterm, and final evaluations. CRS reserves the right to terminate its relationship with the third-party evaluator if the baseline or mid-term performance evaluation, are not completed in a manner that CRS or the donor consider satisfactory. Under such a scenario, CRS will re-engage in a competitive recruitment process.

Project Background

The Gambia is a low-income country—the smallest in continental Africa. With 2.35 million residents living in a country just 450 km long, this tiny nation is densely populated. The national density was estimated at 246 people per square kilometer[1] in 2020; 38% of the population lives in rural areas.[2] The 2019 Human Development Report ranked The Gambia 172 out of 189 countries, with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.496. The Government of The Gambia has a longstanding commitment to education, beginning with the first Education Policy in 1976. The 1997 constitution guarantees nine years of free, compulsory education, a right that was reinforced in the 2004 Education Policy and 2005 Children's Act. The Gambia joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2003 and was one of the first countries supported under the GPE's Fast Track Initiative. In 2020, public spending on education accounted for 18.3% of the total public expenditure.[3] This is below GPE's suggested threshold of 20% but slightly higher than the average for fragile and conflict affected GPE partner countries (17.3%).

Gambia is growing steadily, with an annual population growth of 3% per year and an average fertility rate of 4.4 children per woman (5.9 in rural areas). This has created a very young Gambian population; in 2020, 45% of residents were under 15 years old. This means that the education system must continually expand to accommodate increased enrollment, which requires funding for schools, classrooms, teacher salaries and learning materials. Overcrowded schools and classrooms have forced most Lower Basic Education (LBE) schools to schedule classes in double shifts, with morning and afternoon sessions. The Education Sector Strategic Plan emphasizes formal Early Childhood Development (**ECD)** activities for children aged 3 to 6 years. Nationally, there are more than 1,400 public and private centers, most attached to primary schools. Gross enrollment[4] exceeds 53%, and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) estimates that 70% of first graders entering its schools have some ECD experience. The MoBSE's ECD unit receives technical assistance and other support from the World Bank and UNICEF through the GPE's Education Sector Support project. Other support through GPE includes construction of new ECD centers, community sensitization, development of ECD minimum standards, assessment of ECD centers, a new community-based ECD model, and guidance for peer training and mentorship.

The MoBSE's 2020/2021 statistical yearbook[5] indicates that there are 1,229 LBE schools that are managed or guided by the MOBSE. Of these, 49% are considered public schools, including both government-run schools and grant-aided schools, which are typically missionary schools that follow the national curriculum and receive government support for teacher salaries and other needs. An additional 18% are private schools, and 33% are madrassas, which are officially private schools that are largely funded by the government to foster integration into the national system.

[1] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, custom data acquired via website.
[2] IFAD; World Bank
[3] GPE Results Framework Data for The Gambia, July 2021.
[4] MoBSE defines the gross enrollment rate as the "total number of pupils/students enrolled in a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding school-age population."
[5] Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education; Directorate of Planning, Policy Analysis, Research & Budgeting. Education Statistics, May 2021.

The 2018 UNICEF MICS-EAGLE (Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity) found that Gambian first graders trended young. Only 28% were the officially sanctioned age of 7 years old, 28% were one year younger and 17% were two or more years younger. Of the 27% of first graders who were over age, most were repeating first grade. According to GPE, The Gambia's repetition rate for LBE is highest in the early grades: 7.8% in first grade and 6.6% in second grade, with repetition declining at each successive grade level. This is significant because repetition in the early grades can be an indication of weak numeracy and literacy skills, which are needed for success in higher grades. While urban children have greater access to education, they have higher dropout and repetition rates at all levels, and in LBE, they account for 60% of children who are not learning.[6] There is no significant difference in the LBE repetition rates for boys and girls.

The completion rate for lower basic school is 94.7% and many districts report 100%, which may reflect the government's emphasis on promotion over academic achievement. However, there is a huge disparity between urban and rural communities: In Central River, a very remote region, only 54.4% of students complete LBE, and only 48.8% of girls complete LBE. UNICEF found that, overall, 74% of urban children complete primary school (defined as LBE) versus only 46% of rural children.[7] The gap widens along socioeconomic lines; the primary completion rate for the wealthiest children is almost double that of the poorest (85% versus 46%).

Out-of-school rates have decreased since 2010 but remain high. A 2017 study by UNICEF and the MoBSE[8] found that cost is a major factor in keeping children out of school - school fees were eliminated in 2013, but parents are still responsible for uniforms and other supplies. Other reasons included lack of awareness of the importance of education, poor quality of education, poor school management, distance to school, health, and disabilities. The report recommends several interventions, including teacher training, school feeding, strengthening school health programs and awareness raising campaigns. Under the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) grant, the MoBSE is piloting several solutions to reengage out-of-school children, especially boys.

The Gambia's education system is not equipped to serve **students with disabilities**. Currently, they are served by a single specialized school located in the capital region, with support in the other regions provided by 46 itinerant special education teachers who are trained to work with classroom teachers to support students with special needs in mainstream schools. However, schools and classrooms are generally not adapted for special needs students and as a result, most are simply kept at home. New UNICEF data[9] indicates that 10% of Gambian children aged 5-17 have at last one functional disability, but the MoBSE reports fewer than 6,000 special needs children enrolled in public and private LBE, or roughly 1.4% of total enrollment. Some regions are making progress toward accessibility. CRS' assessment[10] noted that in Central River region, new schools have ramps to assist students with mobility issues and going forward, school toilet facilities will be designed to meet accessibility guidelines.

With World Bank support, the MoBSE has piloted and finalized a screening tool for better identification of children with special needs and in 2021, 950 teachers (including 120 ECD teachers) attended three days of training on inclusive practices, such as how to identify, support and refer students with special needs in

[6] MICS EAGLE
[7] UNICEF. MICS-EAGLE Gambia Education Fact Sheet. 2020.
[8] National Study on Out-Of-School Children In The Gambia, UNICEF-MOBSE, 2017
[9] United Nations Children's Fund. Seen, Counted, Included: Using data to shed light on the well-being of children with disabilities. New York, 2021.
[10] Qualitative Rapid Assessment, CRS Senegambia March 2021.

mainstream settings. MoBSE offers this training annually, depending on the funding.[11] New teachers studying at Gambia College take a module on special needs to provide basic support to students with special needs.

The Gambia's 2020 primary school student-teacher ratio of 36.5[12] is just below that of sub-Saharan Africa (37) and better than the average for low-income countries (40). The MoBSE data indicate that 88% of primary school teachers have appropriate training but 12% do not. Although the number and proportion of **qualified teachers** have shown steady growth, some research, and other reviews[13] have revealed that teachers do not always have the knowledge and skills to perform effectively in the classroom. This indicates that the training programs offered by the MOBSE, as well as the various in-service and professional development programs, may be inadequate to produce effective teachers. This is compounded by management's difficulties in retaining qualified and experienced teachers in primary education due to turnover.

Rural areas have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers. Teachers who are transferred to these areas incur higher costs of living than those in urban areas but receive the same salary. Accommodation is also a problem for teachers who are expected to live in inhospitable and unsafe conditions—a particular concern for female teachers. Despite incentives, such as hardship allowances, free housing and solar power, deployment of teachers to vulnerable and isolated areas has been a consistent challenge that has frustrated expansion of schools and undermined the quality of instruction in those areas. In the Upper River region, for example, only 65%[14] of basic level teachers are qualified compared to other regions where more than 80% of teachers are qualified. REDs told CRS that many qualified teachers do not wish to work in areas such as Upper River, especially female teachers. Despite these challenges, the country does not experience frequent strikes like Senegal and Guinea Bissau. (Although in February 2022, The Gambia Teachers Union encouraged teachers to strike over unpaid COVID-19 allowances.)

Malnutrition rates in The Gambia remain an issue linked to poverty, food insecurity, inadequate consumption and dietary diversity, inadequate sanitation, poor hygiene practices and childhood illnesses (including malaria). The 2019 DHS found that 18% of children under five (CU5) are stunted (low height for age), with the rate peaking at 25% in Kuntuar/Central River North, a CRS target area. In addition, 12% of CU5 are underweight and 5% are wasted (low weight for height). These three indicators have all declined significantly since the 2013 DHS, indicating the improvement of the nutritional status of CU5. However, there is some evidence that the nutritional status of children could be worsening, with a high prevalence in 2021 of global acute **malnutrition** (GAM) in the CRS target regions of Upper River (10.2%) and Central River North (11.7%).[15] Given that poor nutrition negatively impacts cognitive development and learning outcomes, it is highly likely that low levels of nutrition in The Gambia could affect pupils' absenteeism and attention deficits.

The **NDOKK project** will improve literacy of **57,000** students in **186** schools, with **63** Early Childhood Development (ECD) and 123 in Lower Basic Schools (LBS), located in the regions of Upper River (Region 6), Central River North and South (Region 5), North Bank (Region 3), and Kanifing (part of Region 1) and aim to achieve both strategic objectives of improved literacy of school age children and, increased use of health and dietary practices of school aged children. Schools that are already participating in government or WFP school feeding programs will be excluded. Currently, there are **653** schools benefiting from the school feeding

[11] Special education data and information provided by MoBSE via email, April 22, 2022.
[12] UNESCO country dashboard platform, data source is Gambia MOBSE 2020.
[13] Qualifying for quality - Unqualified teachers and qualified teacher shortages Study in the Gambia 2011- funded by the UK's National Union of Teachers (NUT)
[14] Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education, 2019.
[15] WFP Country Brief, November 2021

program in The Gambia and **253** still left uncovered by the national school feeding program. The NDOKK project will therefore focus on the 253 schools as its catchment area. McGovern-Dole activities will directly benefit **114,121** including students, parents, teachers, administrators, officials, cooks, smallholder suppliers and community members participating in health, nutrition, hygiene, education support and savings and lending activities.[16] CRS will work with its partners, Caritas The Gambia and Future In Our Hands The Gambia (FIOHTG) to fully implement the project in five years (from October 2022 to September 2027.)

CRS has been supporting activities continuously in The Gambia since 1964 and has long-standing relationships with partners and communities. CRS' current programming in the Gambia includes work in malaria, agricultural livelihoods, microfinance (SILC), migration and peace building with a particular focus on youth in the Gambia and the effects of climate change. This is the first school feeding program to be implemented by CRS in the country.

Project Theory of Change

The project will align with the USDA McGovern-Dole results framework and multi-level problem analysis to provide a relevant response for improved education and nutrition outcomes in The Gambia. It is founded in two strategic objectives (SO).

The theory of change (TOC) for SO 1, Improved literacy of school age children, postulates that **IF** quality of literacy instruction is improved with increased teacher attendance in school, better access to student school supplies, improved instructional materials aligned to the revised curriculum and sufficient pedagogical materials**,** and increased teacher in-service training and school administrators' knowledge and skills; **IF** student attentiveness is improved by reducing short-term hunger; **IF** community understanding of the benefits of education is increased, **IF** central and local government institutions have increased capacity to regularly monitor the quality of education and policy; **IF** the school feeding monitoring and coordination frameworks improved by building capacity and strengthening the coordination of the school feeding mechanism; and **IF** community engagement is increased, **THEN** literacy of school aged children in The Gambia will be significantly improved.

SO2, Increased use of health and dietary practices: **IF** communities' knowledge of health and hygiene practices improves, **IF** communities' knowledge of nutrition (including Mother's Clubs and most vulnerable women), **IF** students have increased access to inclusive, adequate and clean WASH facilities and trained on WASH (including menstrual hygiene) as part of the curriculum, **IF** schools have improved access to clean water and sanitation facilities, **IF** food preparers have increased the access to requisite food preparation and storage facilities, tools and equipment, **IF** capacities of local, regional and national government institutions and supports are increased , and **IF** the engagement of local organizations and community groups is increased**, THEN** the use of health, nutrition and dietary practices will increase in targeted communities.

Local and Regional Procurement and linked foundational results: IF the utilization of nutritious and culturally acceptable food that meets quality standards is improved by developing partnerships with farmer groups and building capacity in community management, **IF** the framework of school feeding is improved by strengthening the capacity of local, regional and national school feeding management (improving coordination mechanisms and monitoring), and **IF** communities continue to contribute inputs (money/food) to the school meal program, **THEN** targeted schools in The Gambia will have increased access to consistent, safe, and healthy school meals.

For more details on the context and scope refer to Evaluation Plan (section 2) and results framework in Annex

[16] CRS assumes a **3%** annual increase in enrollment due to population growth.

Purpose and Scope Evaluation

CRS Gambia is seeking an individual consultant or a research consulting firm to lead its external performance evaluation process for baseline (2023), midterm (2025), and final (2027) evaluations to measure progress towards meeting its objectives that relate to literacy, health and hygiene behaviors as outlined in the Results Framework (Annex A) and detailed in the Theory of Change (in the above section). As part of the midterm evaluation and endline evaluation special study will be commissioned. The special study will focus on **(1)) *what are the endogenous, socio-cultural, and environmental factors associated with malnutrition in school-aged children in The Gambia?*** The midterm and final evaluation contracts will be dependent on the satisfactory completion of the baseline assessment. The midterm and final evaluations will be re-requisitioned if the baseline is not deemed to have been completed in a manner that CRS or donor consider satisfactory. The methodology and sampling detailed below may require revision by the consulting entity based on the results of the baseline and recommendations from the consultant.

The purpose of each evaluation is detailed below:

(1) Baseline Evaluation: 1) to establish baseline values and measure the status of performance indicators; 2) to identify any underlying factors impacting literacy, nutrition, and health of school-aged children, 3) to establish questions to test the project's theory of change, and also inform its acceptance or modification (USDA/FAS M&E Policy, 2019).

(2) Midterm evaluation: 1) measure project implementation progress regarding the expected results and strategic objectives to provide an early signal of the effectiveness ; 2) assess whether beneficiaries are receiving services as expected, and asses beneficiaries' satisfaction; 3) review the project-level results frameworks and assumptions; 4) document initial lessons learned; and discuss mid-course corrections that may be necessary to meet goals and objectives (USDA/FAS M&E Policy, 2019).

(3) Final evaluation: 1) to measure overall project performance and expected or unexpected results/changes observed in the target communities, 2) assess constraints, lessons learned and good and promising practices, opportunities, and successes in implementation; 3) determine the relevance and effectiveness of the implementation strategies and approach; 4) assess the sustainability of the project benefits regarding the five project sustainability components.

Each evaluation will be completed in line with the academic calendar in the Gambia with data collection taking place between March and April of the evaluation year with final reports due in June of the same year.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

CRS will engage with implementing partners and stakeholders to conduct utilization-focused evaluations that assess relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability in accordance with USDA requirements. The main approach will be a performance evaluation that aims to provide information on progress made toward the objectives set for performance indicators. The evaluation will use mixed method approach using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Data collected on key outcome indicators during the baseline, midterm and final evaluations will track progress towards the established targets based on the unit of measurement and data source established in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP).

The consultant will use Gambia's Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool to assess student reading comprehension. This will ensure comparability of findings because the country used EGRA in 2007,2009 and 2016. The consultant team will work with MoBSE to adapt the EGRA tool for grade 2 students to align with the country measurement context. To assess quality of literacy instruction such as teacher attendance and the utilization of new skills and knowledge, the student attentiveness and attendance, the project team will collect quantitative data (with students, teachers, school administrators) using electronic data collection tools. The consultant will use structured and/or semi-structured key informant interview guides to gather information from implementing partners (Future In Our Hands The Gambia and Caritas The Gambia), USDA, opinion leaders and local authorities as well as focus group discussion guides to obtain qualitative information from community groups (PTAs, School Management Committees [SMC], Mothers' Clubs). In addition, observation tools (e.g., checklists) will be utilized to assess community perceptions of the quality of facilities provided through the project (kitchen, WASH, food preparation and storage) and good health practices will be used to triangulate with surveys and focus group data. This will include an overall assessment of the learning environment in the target schools (by using CRS tools) and how it has changed or improved over time with a significant contribution from USDA. CRS Global Results standards state that the learning environment should pose no threat to the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of the learner. It is a safe space in which children can focus on learning rather than protecting themselves.

To complement the primary data, the consultant will request secondary data on student and teacher attendance from the MoBSE and incorporate findings from consolidated statistical reports available at the national level (e.g., school directory, map of schools). These data will provide a holistic picture of the baseline status of education and allow effective assessment of project performance.

Sampling

Quantitative Sample (Baseline, Midterm, and Final)

The performance evaluations will rely on a two-stage cluster sample to select teachers, students and school administrators. During the first stage, schools will be randomly selected as clusters; students, teachers, administrators, and schools will be selected during the second stage. The size of sampling units will be computed using the indicators noted in Table 1 below. The indicators reflect the size needed for each respondent type. However, it is recommended that the sample be increased by 5% to account for data errors. Minimum sample size for detecting an effect is accomplished by using equations (19) and (22) in McConnell and Vera-Hernandez, and for non-clustered binary and clustered binary indicators, respectively. Where use of conditional intra-cluster correlation (ICC) is necessary, the value is found in the literature review or calculated by the CRS team. To address gender and disability, CRS will work with the consultant to, as much as possible, ensure equal representation of genders as well as that of respondents with disabilities in samples.

Table 1. Optimal quantitative sample sizes

Target Group	Indicators of Interest	Baseline	Target	ICC	No. of Cluster	Individuals	Sample Size
Students	% of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can		21%	0.24 A	80	12	960

Target Group	Indicators of Interest	Baseline	Target	ICC	No. of Cluster	Individuals	Sample Size
	read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	12%.[17]					
	% of students in target schools who are identified as attentive during class/instruction	50% (estimated)	75%	0.74 **B**	66	8	504
Classroom	Average student attendance rate in USDA-supported classrooms/schools	75%.[18]	90%	0.74 **C**	66	3	198
Teachers	# and % of teachers/ educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	0%	75%	0.44 **DD**	12	3	36
	% of teachers in target schools who attend and teach school at least 90% of scheduled school days per year	70% (Estimated)	95%	0.44 **EE**	37	3	111
school administrators	# and % of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	0%	80%	NA	NA	36	36
	% of school administrators by the the end of the project who report that student absences due to health problems have decreased significantly as a result of USDA assistance	0%	80%	NA	NA	36	36

Note: A, A & E. Value comes from the baseline/midterm evaluation for the CRS-implemented McGovern-Dole Beoog Biiga IV project in Burkina Faso 2021.; B & C: Value from baseline study of Sierra Leone's CRS-implemented McGovern-Dole project (Phase 4).

For assessment of mothers, a simple random sample of 195 mothers of children benefiting from the project (at least) will be selected from those who participate in training and awareness sessions on good health and nutrition practices. (Targeting 85% of individuals adopting new child health and nutrition practices, given 5% of margin of error, 95% of confidence interval and 80% of power.)

[17] MICS-EAGLE the Gambia 2018. Among children aged 7 to 14 years old, only 12% demonstrate minimal learning outcomes for reading.

[18] In the absence of recent data, we rate this reference value based on the existing literature while waiting for the baseline.

Data Processing and Analysis Procedures

To ensure that evaluation data is both useful and meets expectations for quality, CRS will engage the recruited evaluation team to determine how to ensure data quality through a quality control system. This should include both interactive data quality control and batch control. Data analysis should be descriptive in that it will provide trends (central and dispersion trends, rate, percentage) in the achievement of results at each measurement period. Because these evaluations will employ representative samples, the significance of the estimators (indicators) will be verified using inferential statistical methods. The mid-term and final evaluations should, at minimum, check for statistical differences between baseline and respective report values.

In addition, the evaluation must consider possible biases related to sampling error and non-response. Sample weights should always be used when providing unconditional descriptive statistics (means or totals) for the underlying population. However, results from regression analyses, would ideally report unweighted and weighted results, and where there are differences, include a discussion of the underlying reasons.

Key audience and stakeholders (baseline, midterm and final evaluations)

To ensure high-quality information that reflects priority perspectives during the baseline, midterm and final evaluations, the evaluations will engage project stakeholders including: implementing partners , local and national government partners (MOBSE, MOH, MOA, NANA), project beneficiaries (students, teachers, school administrators, cooks, farmers, community members etc.), SMCs, PTAs and other development partners in country, and USDA. Regional and global CRS representatives will also be engaged.

Table 1. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	When (how engaged)	Data Obtained
USDA	Baseline (ToR and report review) Midterm and Final (ToR and report reviews; KII)	USDA priorities; project, CRS and MoBSE performance
Implementing partner (Caritas and FIOH)	Baseline (KII) Midterm and Final (KII; dissemination workshop)	Project, CRS, MoBSE and USDA performance
(MoBSE)	Baseline (KII) Midterm and Final (KII; dissemination workshop)	Project, implementing partner, CRS and USDA performance
Teachers	Baseline, (DO) Midterm and Final (DO and KII)	Teaching practices; school administrator, PTA and SMC performance
School administrators	Baseline, (DO) Midterm and Final (DO and KII)	Administrative practices; teacher, PTA and SMC performance
PTA	Midterm and Final (Survey, FGD)	Teacher and school administrator performance
SMC	Midterm and Final (Survey, FGD)	Teacher and school administrator performance
Students	Baseline, Midterm and Final (Literacy assessment, Survey)	Reading ability; teacher performance
Parents	Baseline (Survey) Midterm and Final (Survey, FGD)	Teacher and school administrator performance

Baseline Study

The purpose of the baseline study is to establish a reference point and identify any underlying factors impacting literacy, nutrition, and health of school-aged children, and to establish questions to test the project's theory of change. Baseline values will be collected for all indicators with non-zero baseline values through a randomized sample of schools across all targeted regions. The results obtained from this evaluation will serve as a basis for comparison with the midterm and final evaluations. This baseline data will also be used to adjust the project's intervention logic against the context if necessary.

CRS will establish indicator baseline values and confirm targets for regular performance measurement and reporting within the project's first seven months. (See list of performance indicators in Attachment D.) The data collection techniques and methodologies for establishing baseline information include: 1) survey questionnaires, direct observations and EGRA; 2) school profiles completed as part of an initial assessment of all target schools; 3) direct classroom observation using tool developed by CRS; and 4) qualitative focus group discussions and key informant interviews to triangulate and contextualize quantitative data. The external evaluator will be responsible for the survey questionnaires, direct observations, EGRA, and quantitative data collection at baseline.

Key Evaluation Questions: The key evaluation questions for the baseline study are essentially related to the conditions of performance indicators before implementation start up. The baseline study will also collect information on the relevance of the project design to the context and its potential for sustainability and impact with the following questions:

- To what extent are the project interventions aligned with The Gambia's Education Sector Strategic Plan (2015-2030), National Nutrition Policy and the McGovern-Dole Development Goals?
- What are the potential barriers to achieving sustainability and impact? What are the key factors of sustainability that the project should rely on to achieve sustainability and impact?
- What national and community-level systems of governance and engagement are required for the successful implementation and sustainability of school meal programs?

Relevance

- To what extent are the interventions designed to meet community needs and align with government priorities?
- How does the project complement other intervenors particularly in school feeding programs and in supporting education in Gambia?
- Are the project activities and outputs consistent with the intended impacts and effects?
- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?
- What are the key assumptions related to the project theory of change that need to be monitored and specific questions to test the theory of change?
- To what extent can project interventions go a long way in improving the livelihoods of participating communities?

Effectiveness

To what extent are the project results and the yearly benchmark indicators likely to be achieved?
To what extent can the proposed implementation strategies be relevant and effective enough to improve:

- pupil's literacy level
- enrollment and attendance among pupils, particularly girls
- health and nutrition practices
- Access to nutritious and culturally acceptable food

- community participation and engagement
- Capacity of national school feeding program and other community structures
- Livelihoods of participating communities
- Local ownership of the program

Will the implementation strategies be relevant and effective enough to improve performance of main project results?
What are the major factors that can influence the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives (Including unexpected events such as emergencies)?

Efficiency
Is the project designed to be implemented in the most efficient way?

Impact
What are the necessary steps/actions that need to be taken to improve/increase ownership among stakeholders (monitoring teacher performance, care to prevent fraud, protect infrastructures, supplies, enforce educational bylaws?)

Sustainability
- What activities and/or outcomes (both expected and unexpected) are likely to be sustained?
- What are the major factors (institutional, governance structures, etc.) that can influence the achievement or non-achievement of project sustainability?
- What shall be the role of The Gambian government and other stakeholders in the sustainability of school feeding program?
- What organizational/institutional arrangements that exist at the local level that can support and sustain school feeding programs?
- What key activities should constitute the focus of project sustainability strategy?
- What is community perception on the sustainability of school feeding?

Baseline Study Timeline: The baseline study will take place during the first year of the project. CRS proposes to conduct the baseline during the January to April 2023 period. USDA will receive the final baseline report within **nine months of the start of the project**. The final report will be shared with all relevant stakeholders

Table 2: Baseline Study Timeline

Dates	Baseline Study Activities
October 15, 2022	Identify internal project evaluation team
October 15, 2022	Develop project evaluation ToR
October 30, 2022	Submit ToR to USDA for review and approval
November 18, 2022	Advertise for Baseline Study consultant
January 13, 2023	Recruit independent evaluation consultant
February 20, 2023	Develop data collection tools and Pilot testing
March 10, 2023	Conduct study (training enumerator, data collection)
April 14, 2023	Data analysis and draft evaluation report written
April 21, 2023	Submission of baseline report to CRS for internal review
May 12, 2023	Submit final baseline study report to USDA
May 31, 2023	Discuss actions to address findings and recommendations with USDA
June 16, 2023	submit final report to USDA

Midterm Evaluation

Purpose and Scope: the purpose of this evaluation is to measure project implementation progress against the expected results and strategic objectives to provide an early assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions; assess whether beneficiaries are receiving services as expected and their level of satisfaction; review the project-level results frameworks and assumptions; document initial lessons learned; and discuss mid-course corrections that may be necessary to meet goals and objectives (USDA/FAS M&E Policy, 2019). The midterm evaluation will incorporate mixed methods and will apply the same methodology and tools used in the baseline study. The midterm evaluation will attempt to answer the questions posed in **Table 3**, below, which are based on Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria. CRS will ensure that all key project staff and stakeholders participate in the evaluation process, ensuring a range of viewpoints to inform its design and execution. Ultimately, it will assist staff with decision-making to improve the project's education and nutrition outcomes for children and the sustainability of the school feeding program. Findings from the Midterm Evaluation will be presented in meetings with key stakeholders and government and will be used to adapt programmatic management in upcoming years. The key audience will be Government stakeholders, USDA, implementing Partners, Community groups (SMC, PTAs, Mothers Clubs, etc.).

Table 3. Midterm and final evaluation questions:

Criteria	Evaluation Questions
Relevance	1. To what extent are the project interventions meeting the needs of the beneficiaries (boys, girls, women) and stakeholders in the economic, cultural, and political context?
	2. Are stakeholders satisfied with their participation in the project? Why or why not?
	3. Was community (such as SMCs, Mothers Club, PTA) participation sufficient throughout the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the project? Why or why not? If not, how can participation be increased during the remainder of the project?
Efficiency	4. Have the output and intermediate results (in improving literacy, reducing hunger, increasing health and nutrition knowledge and practices) been achieved on time according to the detailed implementation plan? If not, what were the obstacles?
	5. Has working in partnership with MoSBE, Caritas, and FIOH increased the effectiveness and quality of the project? Why or why not? How can this be improved for the remainder of the project?
Effectiveness	6. To what extent has the project achieved its midterm objectives and results (including improving student literacy; reducing hunger; increasing the use of health, nutrition and dietary knowledge and practices; increased community understanding of benefits of education)?

Criteria	Evaluation Questions
	7. Which intervention packages contributed most significantly to the expected objectives and intermediate results? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
	8. To what extent does the utilization of local foods meet good nutritional and cultural practices and what is the level of acceptance by the communities (students and mothers)?
Impact	9. Using information on objective performance, proactive and reflective monitoring, what are the significant expected and unexpected positive or negative changes strongly associated with the project intervention because of USDA assistance?
	10. Do generated changes vary for different targeted regions? Teachers and students (boys and girls)? Communities (such as women, PTA, SMC)? If so, how and why?
Sustainability	11. Is there evidence of community capacity to take ownership of project activities and maintain results and are they meeting their commitments?
	12. What are the major factors that are likely to influence the achievement or non-achievement of the project sustainability?
	13. What national and community-level systems of governance and engagement are required for the successful implementation and sustainability of school meal programs?

Midterm Evaluation Methodology*:* To ensure comparability of the midterm findings with the baseline, the midterm will use the same methodology outlined in the **Evaluation Approach and Methodology** section. In addition, the midterm evaluation will collect qualitative data through FGDs with school administrators, teachers and cooks, and KIIs with relevant CRS and SC staff.

Table 4: Summary of key informants and proposed qualitative sample (midterm and final)

Key Informant	Estimated number of FGDs and KIIs	Methods
PTAs, SMCs, and Mothers' Clubs	13 FGDs (3 PTAs , 4 SMCs , 3 Mothers' Clubs and SILC group)	Focus groups of SMCs, PTAs, Mothers Clubs and SILC group selected through a purposive sampling approach with various profiles. Groups will maintain area and gender balance.
Regional and Cluster Education Monitor	25 (2 at the central level, 6 regional staffs, 12 for clusters monitors and 5 local community leaders)	At least one individual interview from each Region Education Directorate and two school feeding focal points per cluster by region.
Project Management Team	5 interviews (2 CRS, 3 implementing partners)	At least five semi-structured interviews with project team

Table 5: Timeline for key midterm evaluation activities

Date	Midterm Evaluation Activities
October 2024	Update ToR and Submit to USDA for review and approval
December 2024	Retain external evaluator or recruit new team, if necessary
January 2025	Refine evaluation methodology
March to April 2025	Conduct evaluation (collect, process and analyze data)
June 2025	Submit first draft report to CRS for internal review
July 2025	Submit final midterm evaluation report to USDA
July 2025	Discuss actions to address findings and recommendations with USDA
August 2025	Hold workshop for sharing evaluation results

Final Evaluation

Purpose and Scope: The purpose of the final evaluation is to measure overall project performance as well as expected or unexpected results/changes observed in the target communities. The evaluation team will compare the values of the indicators at the end of the project with the target and baseline values to assess the extent of change and coverage. It will assess constraints, lessons learned and good and promising practices, opportunities, and successes in implementation, and will determine the relevance and effectiveness of the implementation strategies and approach. It will also assess the sustainability of the project benefits with regard to the five project sustainability components: the school feeding program, good health and hygiene practices in schools, improved literacy instruction, community engagement in education, and maternal and child nutrition. Although it is a performance evaluation, the evaluation attempts to assess the premises of long-term changes in the broader community to qualitatively measure the impact on the learning conditions and well-being of learners.

Final Evaluation Methodology: The final evaluation will follow the methodology detailed in the Evaluation Approach and Methodology section. It will attempt to answer the same questions as the midterm evaluation (found in Table 3 above), with slight variations as noted in the table. The baseline study and midterm and final evaluations will also include reflection events with key stakeholders listed in Table 1 to review and analyze preliminary evaluation findings. Evaluation findings may be used by MOES to inform future school feeding programs.

CRS will present key findings and lessons learned from the five years of intervention in The Gambia. This learning and adaptation approach is a key element in ensuring the effective use of resources for future programming. Sharing successes and areas for improvement will be important for the stakeholders involved in the McGovern-Dole project as well as other actors involved in school feeding and education in The Gambia. Information will take on various formats, such as success stories, thematic results presentation workshops, exchange visits to project sites, webinars, training, and international conferences related to literacy education and nutrition, children, school feeding, etc. CRS will liaise with all partners for the sharing of data and documentation.

Table 4: Summary of key informants and proposed qualitative sample (midterm and final)

Key Informant	Estimated number of FGDs and KIIs	Methods
PTAs, SMCs, and Mothers' Clubs	13 FGDs (3 PTAs , 4 SMCs , 3 Mothers' Clubs and SILC group)	Focus groups of SMCs, PTAs, Mothers Clubs and SILC group selected through a purposive sampling approach with various profiles. Groups will maintain area and gender balance.
Regional and Cluster Education Monitor	25 (2 at the central level, 6 regional staffs, 12 for clusters monitors and 5 local community leaders)	At least one individual interview from each Region Education Directorate and two school feeding focal points per cluster by region.

Project Management Team	5 interviews (2 CRS, 3 implementing partners)	At least five semi-structured interviews with project team

Table 6: Timeline for key final evaluation activities

Date	Final Evaluation Activities
December 2026	Update ToR and submit to USDA for review and approval
January 2027	Retain external evaluator or recruit new team, if necessary
February 2027	Refine evaluation methodology
March- April 2027	Conduct evaluation (collect, process and analyze data)
1st June 2027	Submit first draft report to CRS for internal review
1st July 2027	Submit first draft of final evaluation report to USDA
1st August 2027	Discuss actions to address findings and recommendations with USDA
10th August 2027	Submit a final report to USDA
August 2027	Hold workshop for sharing evaluation results

Special Study

Study: *What are the endogenous socio-cultural and environmental factors associated with malnutrition of school-aged children in The Gambia?*

Purpose and Scope: the purpose of this study is to measure the nutritional status of school-aged children (6-14), understand the socio-cultural, endogenous, and environmental exposure factors significantly associated with their nutritional status, to understand the perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of communities on their nutritional practices of target children. Malnutrition remains a public health problem in The Gambia and affects young children. It has adverse effects on their physical growth and cognitive development, requiring significant energy, protein and micronutrients. However, most of the current interventions and implementation research focuses on improving nutrition among children under five and pregnant and lactating mothers. CRS believes that for the first round of the McGovern-Dole program, it would be relevant and useful to learn about the contributing, limiting, or determining factors of malnutrition in the first few years regarding The Gambia context.

Methodology: The study population will consist of all students in the basic 6-14 age level in the project's target schools located in Regions 6 (Upper River) and 5 (Central River). These regions have been frequently affected by the food and nutrition insecurity crisis over the past 10 years, as well as in 2022 (24% of the population of Upper River and 23% for Central River North). The study will be conducted in the first year of the project across the three spheres of development of the school-age child: the household, the school, and the community. The study will be cross-sectional in that a random and representative sample of students in Lower Basic School will be selected. The Brachial Perimeter Measurement Bracelet, also known as the MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference) tape, will be used to measure the nutrition status of children.

- **Sampling**:

A two-stage cluster random survey will be conducted among the **27** schools (at least), representing the first stage of selection. In the second stage, nutritional status will be measured for 21 students at each school for a total sample of **567** students. In 2020[19], 18% of children under age five were stunted, 5% were wasted, and 12% were underweight. Another study[20] in 2018 showed that stunting was common among adolescent boys (25%) and among early-adolescent girls (14%). Therefore, we estimate that at least 20% of school-age children in the targeted zone suffer from global malnutrition. The binary variable of interest (% of students with global acute

[19] Demographic and Health Survey 2019/2020

[20] Schoenbuchner, Simon M. et al. "In rural Gambia, do adolescents have increased nutritional vulnerability compared with adults?" *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* vol. 1416,1 (2018): 77–85. doi:10.1111/nyas.13587.

malnutrition) will be used to calculate the sample size, based on McConnell and Vera-Hernández (2015) and CRS samples (2020).

To understand the correlation between nutritional status and independent household variables such as socioeconomic characteristics, geography, and dietary practices (frequency of consumption and diversity of diet), the study will also target the students' households. A household questionnaire will be administered to mothers, women or respondents who can provide information about the household. CRS recognizes that tracking the households of the sampled students could lengthen the data collection time but intends to engage the communities (PTAs, SMCs, community health providers) to support the process for more effectiveness. CRS will work with the consultant to determine optimal households sample size to be enrolled given the operational constraints of the methodology and the required representativeness.

To understand the socio-cultural and environmental factors of malnutrition, a qualitative focus group approach will target mothers to triangulate data by identifying the perceptions, attitudes, behavior, and food practices that explain and correlate with the current situation of schoolchildren. At least six focus groups will be conducted in the communities during the first baseline survey, as well as five semi-structured interviews with other key stakeholders, such as local or community health providers or other key actors delivering nutrition interventions in the targeted zones.

- **Data analysis:**

A descriptive analysis will be performed to describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the study population. In addition, the inferential analysis will use an econometric model using binary logistic regression (Logit model) to assess the explanatory factors of malnutrition as well as their weight and their interactions including gender dimension and vulnerable factors. Content analysis will also be employed to complement data collection and ensure triangulation of the findings.

Table 7: Timeline for key study activities

Dates	Special Study Activities
December 2022	Develop ToR and submit to USDA for review and approval
January 2023	Recruit International or local consultant
February 2023	Submit research protocol to MoE Ethics committee and approval
February 2023	Refine study methodology,
March- April 2023	Conduct data collection
May-June 2023	Process and analyze data
June 2023	Submit first draft report to CRS for internal review
July 2023	Submit draft report to USDA
August 2023	Reflect on findings with stakeholders to generate recommendations and inform Project learning
September 2023	Submit a final report to USDA

COVID-19 Adaptation Plan

CRS recognizes that the occurrence of Covid 19 pandemic during the school year could be a major challenge to implement fieldwork evaluations and study. As a reminder, during school year 2020, most of schools across the country were temporarily closed based on government directives. Between 2020 and 2021, restrictive government measures were taken regarding travel requirements for foreigners into The Gambia. These include a requirement for a negative PCR COVID-19 test, 14-day quarantine on arrival, a ban on mass gatherings in public and private spaces, etc. Thus, school closures and travel restrictions represent a significant barrier to in-person data collection and may require the third-party evaluator and data enumerators to adjust accordingly. In 2022, the pandemic is under control in The Gambia with very low positive cases. The average of the last seven

days is zero positive cases[21] as of August 30 and 14% fully vaccinated as of August 7, 2022. Currently there is a normal situation of movement of people and socio-economic activities throughout the country. To mitigate the risk, CRS will work closely with the evaluators to develop an evaluation approach that is both robust and capable of achieving the objectives defined in these TOR and the evaluation plan, while considering government mandates, public perception, and the need to protect project participants, community members, and evaluators from COVID-19.

At this stage, CRS envisions three possible modes of data collection depending on the COVID-19 situation in The Gambia at the time of each planned data collection. These options will be considered by CRS and the evaluation team in consultation with USDA in the period prior to any project evaluation event:

1. **Fully In-Person Data Collection.**

This option assumes that all schools are open and government guidance allows travel to, and in-person data collection at, schools in the project areas. All evaluation activities will be carried out as described in this TOR and the project Evaluation Plan. Quantitative and qualitative data collection will be conducted in-person as planned but will be guided by a COVID-19 Prevention Protocol developed jointly by CRS and the evaluation team. For all face-to-face activities, data enumerators will be fully vaccinated and follow the most recent guidelines provided by the Government of The Gambia. Preventative measures may include, but are not limited to, wearing face masks, and providing masks and sanitizing gel to evaluation participants; maintaining physical distance of at least two meters; washing hands before and after meeting participants; and distributing questionnaires, holding focus group discussions, and conducting interviews in outside spaces when possible, or ventilating rooms (for example, opening windows and doors) if data collection must be conducted indoors.

2. **Hybrid In-Person/Remote Data Collection**

This option assumes localized outbreaks, with schools in villages experiencing outbreaks closed, and schools in villages without outbreaks open. Some evaluation activities will be carried out as described in this TOR and the project Evaluation Plan, and others will be carried out remotely. In villages with open schools, Scenario 1 will apply. In villages with closed schools, data collection logistics will depend on local restrictions and the extent of the localized outbreak. If deemed safe, allowable, and appropriate (in collaboration with local authorities and based on up-to-date transmission rates), one-on-one home visits will be considered to administer surveys and reading tests. All respondents will be asked to give consent to the in-person data collection activity and will be given the option to respond via phone if more comfortable. With consent, in-person data collection will be conducted outdoors or in a covered outdoor area, ensuring compliance with all COVID protocols mentioned above. If rapid COVID testing is available in The Gambia prior to and during data collection, enumerators (along with CRS staff) will be required to undergo rapid testing at regular intervals over the data collection period. Qualitative data collection (interviews and FGDs) will be conducted in-person only if allowable in the area, only in outdoor spaces, and only with consent from all participants. If small group gatherings are allowed but group size is restricted, FGDs will be either reduced to the allowable number of attendees or converted to a one-on-one key informant interview structure. In areas with localized outbreaks, caution will be at the forefront in deciding whether to conduct in-person data collection that is allowable but is not entirely necessary (for example, FGDs with adults can be conducted remotely more easily than a survey or reading test with a child.) When planning for data collection in which face-to-face communication is not essential, Scenario 3 will apply.

[21] Our World in Data et JHU CSSE COVID-19 Data ·August 2022.

3. **Fully Remote Data Collection**

All evaluation activities will be carried out without face-to-face interaction. Any tools developed for in-person data collection will be reviewed and adapted as needed for a virtual environment. The evaluation team will train data enumerators remotely and data enumerators will collect data using phones and video-conferencing applications. Key informant interviews with project partners and other key stakeholders can be conducted over the phone or through video-calls without significant impact on data quality. The same is likely true for quantitative surveys with adults. However, focus group discussions with young adults and community members may need to be replaced with additional KIIs. Participant selection for these interviews can be guided by school staff in target communities to ensure broad representation of voices and perspectives. Because virtual data collection with minors has proved difficult in previous evaluations, student surveys and literacy assessments will require significant adaptation to generate meaningful data. If fully remote data collection is necessary, CRS and the evaluation team will identify alternate data collection strategies and will select the most appropriate option in consultation with USDA.

Ethical Standards

The evaluation team, including any enumerators or contractors that the evaluation team may hire, must ensure that the evaluation study adheres to ethical guidelines as outlined in the American Evaluation Association's (AEA) Guiding Principles for Evaluators. A summary of these guidelines is provided below:

1. Informed Consent: All participants are expected to provide informed consent following standard and pre-agreed consent protocols. As in the baseline and midterm performance evaluations, and as per the approved IRB protocols for the LBRA, teachers should provide written consent for the children to be surveyed and students must provide verbal assent. For qualitative surveys, participants are required to give verbal consent.
2. Systematic Inquiry: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries.
3. Competence: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.
4. Integrity/Honesty: Evaluators display honesty and integrity in their own behavior and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.
5. Respect for People: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders. It is expected that the evaluator will obtain the informed consent of participants to ensure that they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate.
6. Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of general and public interests and values that may be related to the evaluation.
7. Evaluators shall provide copies of the evaluation reports that are free of personally identifiable information (PII) and proprietary information.

A link to a more detailed description of AEA's Guiding Principles for Evaluators can be found at: http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51.

The evaluation team is responsible for ensuring all local (The Gambia) and international ethical review and approval processes are followed for the studies outlined in this ToR. In addition, CRS requires to consultant to collect, manage, utilize, archive, and responsibly destroy data in a way that protects constituent privacy and rights, and is in accordance with CRS Responsible Data Values and Principles and international and local regulations.

Deliverables

All reports and deliverables should be completed in English, be free of typographical or grammatical errors, and be a polished document ready for publication. This means the document contains no factual errors or inaccuracies and citations are properly used.

1. Inception report from the identified consultant.
2. CRS-approved study plans (including consultant responsibilities for identifying, interviewing, contracting, training, and overseeing enumerators) for all evaluations and studies;
3. Local (The Gambia) and/or international IRB or other ethical approval documentation, as required.
4. Meeting with CRS & MoBSE for review of Literacy Assessment tools and methodology in February 2022;
5. Sampling plan including the file with actual sample size calculations for all quantitative surveys and assessments associated with evaluations and study.
6. Soft copies of all quantitative and qualitative data collection tools for all evaluations and study.
7. Training of enumerators and supervisors;
8. Data collection guides for enumerators & supervisors;
9. Completed copies of survey questionnaires, consent forms, and qualitative notes;
10. Soft copies of both raw and final, clean quantitative datasets, in a readable format, with accompanying codebook/data dictionary;
11. Soft copies of qualitative matrices;
12. Survey implementation reports: summary of issues encountered and solutions during the fielding of questionnaire, data entry and data analysis. The purpose is to: 1) document the issues that might affect the analysis (i.e. if one of the modules has failed then the analysis will show this; and 2) highlight lessons learned to improve the implementation of mid- or end-line survey;
13. Final reports must not contain any proprietary or PII. PII is any information that directly or indirectly identifies an individual. This information can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact or locate a single person, or to identify an individual in a specific situation. This may include, for example, a name, national ID number, address, birthplace, etc. PII includes both direct and indirect identifiers that, when taken together, could allow for the identification of an individual (such as village name, gender, age, name, and/or facial image).
14. Final reports must contain the project's indicator table as an annex with updated values for each evaluation.
15. Final reports should not allow for the identification of individual schools or communities. Any list of schools or communities provided should be included in the report as an annex, so that it can be easily removed for external sharing. CRS-approved final reports for the final performance evaluation must follow the outline and pages limits discussed;
16. Final reports must be compliant with Section 508 of the United States Access Board which requires that information and services are accessible to persons with disability (See https//section 508.gov/create);
17. The full report should be accompanied by a 2-3-page stand-alone brief describing the evaluation design, key findings, and other relevant considerations. It will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the evaluations and be written in language easy to understand by non-evaluators along with appropriate graphics and tables;
18. Delivery of a short webinar, with time for Q&A to the global CRS FFE and MEAL audience and USDA audience after the completion of the final performance evaluation in 2027;

19. Participation in dissemination events and provision of soft copies of presentations developed and delivered during dissemination events; and
20. Written responses to any questions raised by the donor on any of the final reports that require feedback from the Evaluation Team.[22]

Table 8: Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities
Catholic Relief Services: *Project MEAL Manager & Sub-Office MEAL TA:* Oversee day-to-day and in country logistical support for third-party consultant; Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluation methodology and tools; Review draft midterm and final evaluation reports; Provide support to project-level MEAL team during enumerator training and data collection; Supervise Special Study. Provide schools sample frame to consultant for random select. Reflect on evaluation findings with partners and other stakeholders to generate appropriate recommendations and inform project learning
Country Program MEAL Technical Advisor: Develop ToRs for baseline, midterm and final evaluations and special Study. Review draft baseline midterm and final evaluation reports; Coordinate Special Study with MEAL manager and Sub Office MEAL TA and consultant. Provide technical assistance as needed in adapting methodologies and tools to the changing country context. Ensure alignment with CRS MPP and evaluation quality assurance.
Project Chief of Party & CRS Head of Programs: Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluation SOW; Recruit and contract external evaluation consultant/firm for baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluations; Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluation methodology and tools; Review draft midterm & final evaluation reports. Reflect on evaluation findings with partners and other stakeholders to generate appropriate recommendations and inform project learning
Regional Technical Advisor for MEAL: Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluation SOW; support selection of third-party evaluation consultant; Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study 1, and final evaluation methodology and tools; Review draft baseline, midterm, Special Study , and final evaluation reports *Headquarters Senior Technical Advisor for MEAL:* Advise on methodologies, sampling, and special studies. Conduct final review of evaluation and special study reports.
Caritas and FIOH Subrecipient *:* Identify current information need to be provided by evaluations. Support external consultant to train enumerators; Support external consultant to conduct assessment and data collection in the field if need; Review draft baseline, midterm, and final evaluation reports . Reflect with stakeholders on evaluation and special finding to generate appropriate recommendations and lessons learned.
External Evaluator: *Independent third party:* Draft, refine and finalize tools and methodology; Train enumerators and field test tools; Manage data collection and ensure data quality,; Process and analyze data; Facilitate reflection event for participatory analysis of preliminary results; Co-facilitate evaluation dissemination events; Prepare draft and final reports
Government Partner: *MOBSE, NANA, MoH:* Contribute to design of ToR and interpretation of baseline, midterm, and final evaluation findings; support to adapt literacy assessment tool regarding country measurement frame; Accompany enumerators in the field; Participate in dissemination workshops.
Donor: USDA will be kept informed as the baseline, midline, final evaluation, and special study preliminary results are collated, and CRS will request that USDA provide input on decisions stemming from early and mid-project findings, particularly in relation to adaptive learning. USDA will be engaged fully in decisions to adapt activities or project strategies or to revise the RF or any critical assumptions.

Evaluation Management and Coordination

CRS will support the contracted evaluator in a review of the final performance evaluation plans, survey and

[22] Timing of donor feedback on evaluation reports cannot be estimated. The evaluation team is suggested to plan the equivalent of 0.5 day of the Team Leader's time within the 6 months following the submission of each of the 3 required evaluation reports (1.5 days total) to allow for time required to respond to donor queries on final evaluation reports.

data collection instruments, sampling methods, and the development of a data analysis plan based on the project indicators.

In-country coordination of the baseline study and evaluations will be ensured by the Project Chief of Party, and MEAL Manager. They will be assisted by country Program MEAL Technical Advisor and The Gambia Sub-Office MEAL TA.

Evaluation Resources

The evaluation team will have access to the following key documents:

- Donor-approved proposal;
- Donor-approved evaluation plan;
- Donor-approved performance monitoring plan (PMP);
- Updated indicator performance tracking table (IPTT);
- Baseline and midterm data collection tools;
- Financial documents;
- Semi-annual project status reports;
- Relevant population data for calculation of survey sample sizes;
- Definition files used for digital data collecting tools used by the Project team;
- Donor-approved evaluation TORs;
- Market Studies conducted by a local consulting firm examining the availability and impact of commodities.

CRS will facilitate introductions to government stakeholders, but the evaluation team is responsible for engaging the government to allow for their input and feedback throughout the study processes.

Ownership of the Evaluation Data, Results, and Report

All data collected for the evaluations outlined in this TOR shall remain the property of CRS. Any work product resulting from the baseline, midterm, or final evaluations, or Special Study , must cite CRS and USDA.

Selection of an Evaluation Team

All evaluations will be conducted by an external independent consulting firm or individual evaluator in coordination with CRS's regional and Country Program MEAL technical advisors and the CRS Program Department. CRS will advertise the ToR for the baseline, midterm and final evaluations together and recruit one consultant or firm to conduct all three studies. The firm will be selected following a competitive, transparent, and independent procurement process conducted by CRS procurement team. The proposal will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Soundness of the technical approach;
- Practicality of the methodologies proposed;
- Timeframe;
- Cost efficiency; and
- Evaluation consultant qualifications (see below).

Evaluator's Qualifications

The evaluation team will comprise one international program evaluator (Team Leader), and three or more local or international consultants or members of a consulting firm selected for their technical expertise. The evaluation team should include an expert(s) in survey design, management and multivariate analyses of quantitative social science data. In addition, a team member(s) is needed with experience implementing an EGRA tool, as well as analysis of EGRA data.

The aggregate technical expertise of the evaluation team members should encompass the sectors: childhood literacy, primary education, and WASH and nutrition in the context of school feeding programs. The team should have The Gambia language ability and fluent English speakers. Data collectors should include individuals who can speak the local dialects that are prevalent in the project areas. Inclusion of team members with previous experience working in The Gambia context or in West Africa is preferred.

All evaluation team members should meet the following qualifications and experience:

- No previous involvement in the The Gambia MGD FFE program design or implementation;
- Proficient in spoken and written English;
- Master's or PhD degree in a relevant field;
- 10+ years of experience in applying his/her field of expertise to program design and oversight or 8+ years' experience with program baselines and/or evaluation in his/her field in developing countries (Gambia or West Africa context preferred);
- Demonstrated ability to achieve results and meet deadlines in a demanding environment;
- Preferred skills: Knowledge of IRB requirements and ethical considerations when working in schools.

All evaluation team members and all baseline and evaluation data collectors are responsible for adhering to all terms and conditions stipulated in the contract with CRS, including but not limited to CRS' Code of Conduct and Policy on Protection from Abuse and Exploitation. All enumerators and evaluation team members working in schools must also complete SCI's child protection training.

The Team Leader and any other international consultants on the evaluation team are responsible for and must provide proof of emergency evacuation insurance.

Evaluation Team Leader Responsibilities and Qualifications

The evaluation team leader will lead the team to accomplish the studies and deliverables outlined in this TOR and SOW, ensuring that all team members fulfill assigned tasks.

The Team Leader will:

- Serve as the primary point of contact with the NDOKK management to assure adequate logistics and good adherence to local protocols;
- Lead the timely development of appropriate study plans for the baseline performance evaluation, mid-term performance evaluation, final performance evaluation, and Special Study.
- Assure rational sampling of targeted schools, communities, and other key informants;
- Ensure adequate triangulation and validation of findings;
- Oversee data collection training for enumerators, including time for field testing quantitative and qualitative tools;
- Monitor and assure the quality of data collection and analyses;
- Oversee the data analyses and integration of qualitative and quantitative findings;

- Lead a presentation of preliminary findings to CRS, USDA, SCI, and other key stakeholders to be confirmed by the NDOKK team;
- Assure timely submission of draft and final reports that flow logically and clearly separate findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and in which all conclusions and recommendations are based on evidence presented in the report;
- Assure timely submission of the deliverables to the appropriate recipients or entities; and
- Be available to respond to USDA questions on baseline and evaluation reports.

The Team Leader should have the following **qualifications and experience**:

- Master's degree required, PhD in a relevant field preferred;
- Minimum of fifteen years of experience in international development evaluation, preferably of education programs;
- Experience leading similar evaluations;
- Familiarity working with USDA and/or USAID and their project and performance management frameworks;
- Strong management, communication and administrative skills;
- Demonstrated exceptional report writing skills that emphasize logical flow and objective analyses;
- Demonstrated ability to achieve results and meet deadlines in a demanding environment;
- Previous work experience in The Gambia and/or proficiency in major Gambian languages.

Proposal Deadline

All proposals must be received by bryan.james@crs.org no later than March 31, 2022 [11:59 PM EST for electronic submission]. The solicitation name "RFGS 245992: Evaluation of MGD FFE Project" must be included in the subject line.

Q&A Opportunity

Prospective bidders may submit any clarification questions to bryan.james@crs.org by March 22, 2022. Responses will be provided to any known prospective bidders on March 27, 2022.