Request for Proposal

Consultancy Title: Food Security Desk Review and Evidence Gap Mapping
RFP number: US8488.06.2024
Location: Remote
Anticipated Contract Duration: July 17, 2024 – September 17, 2024 (2 Months)
Anticipated Level of Effort: 20 Billable Days; 46% of full-time
Procurement Contact Person: Andrea Wilson-Taylor (andrea.wilson-taylor@crs.org)
Due date for Clarifying Questions: June 26, 2024 [11:59 PM EST]
Due date for Full Proposal: July 3, 2024 [11:59 PM EST]

I. Background

Millions of people around the world are experiencing life-threatening levels of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition in a global crisis that has reached unprecedented levels. At the root of this crisis are converging factors that have exacerbated the fragilities of global and local food systems. The factors include increased effects of climate change, heightened conflicts, and the persistent economic ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine conflict. Food price inflation has put people under tremendous strain, and supply chain interruptions and high costs continue to slow humanitarian operations and disrupt local and regional markets.

This crisis has elevated the need for greater coherence across humanitarian-development-peace programming, and thus, where feasible, CRS’ Global Food Crisis (GFC) response strategy focuses on meeting immediate humanitarian needs while actively addressing the underlying drivers of acute and chronic food insecurity through systems-level change. The goal of CRS’ GFC response is that all people are food secure and resilient to recurrent, increasingly complex local and global shocks. To contribute to this goal, CRS aims to meet immediate needs and mitigate acute food insecurity and malnutrition. At the same time, CRS aims to begin the longer-term support to local systems that promote food security and nutrition in crisis-affected countries, to address the root causes of acute food insecurity, for greater resilience, and for sustainability over time. is that all people are food secure and resilient to recurrent, increasingly complex local and global shocks. To contribute to this goal, CRS aims to meet immediate needs and mitigate acute food insecurity and malnutrition. At the same time, CRS aims to begin the longer-term support to local systems that promote food security and nutrition in crisis-affected countries, to address the root causes of acute food insecurity, for greater resilience, and for sustainability over time.

CRS has identified four leverage points as part of our work to meet immediate needs and strengthen food systems to be more resilient. The four leverage points are:

1. Market systems for immediate food and nutrition provision and resilient, affordable last-mile food and nutrition;
2. Social protection, advocacy, and governance systems that support access to food and nutrition;
3. Climate change adaptation and landscape restoration to mitigate food security shocks; and
4. Data systems for anticipatory action and better decision-making include food security, resilience, and market monitoring.
Within the GFC strategy, investing in knowledge management, learning, and evidence across the nexus has been identified as a priority. Learning outcomes feed into strengthening programming and testing the logic models that underpin the GFC programming priorities.

II. Purpose and Objectives
The purpose of this consultancy is to review, assess, and synthesize the evidence available, with a primary focus on CRS programming related to the GFC framework. The below learning questions will frame the inquiry:

1. To what extent is working through prioritized systems (market systems, social protection systems, climate and landscape systems, and/or data systems) an effective way to ensure vulnerable people meet their immediate food and nutrition needs and recover from shocks?
2. To what extent are food security interventions targeting prioritized leverage points resulting in systems-level changes?

The specific objectives include the following:

1. Conduct a comprehensive desk review of internal literature, project evaluations, reports, and some seminal external pieces exploring the linkages between key approaches within the prioritized leverage points and food security outcomes (To what extent is working through prioritized systems (market systems, social protection systems, climate and landscape systems and/or data systems) an effective way to ensure vulnerable people meet their immediate food and nutrition needs and recover from shocks?) as well as documenting instances of food security programming catalyzing systems-level change (To what extent are food security interventions targeting prioritized leverage points resulting in systems-level changes?);
2. Identify where linkages between prioritized approaches and outcomes are well-established and where limited evidence is available in order to identify focus areas for future inquiries.

III. Responsibilities of the Consultant

1. Review CRS project reports, evaluations, learning briefs, technical notes, etc., including those published on https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications.
2. Include a review of select reports and other literature sources from academic journals and relevant existing Evidence Gap Maps related to key approaches and food security outcomes, as necessary.
3. Identify key themes, trends, and gaps in the existing literature;
4. Synthesize findings into a structured report that outlines the current state of knowledge linking key approaches to food security outcomes and documenting instances of systems-level change;
5. Finalize an Excel based framework outlining key approaches and food security outcomes in order to facilitate evidence mapping;
6. Provide recommendations for future learning based on the findings of the desk review and evidence mapping.

IV. Specific Activities and Level of Effort
Below is a list of specific activities required to produce the deliverables, along with the anticipated number of billable days it will take to complete each activity.
### Activity Number | Activity | Date(s) of Performance | Anticipated Number of Billable Days | Bidder Anticipated Number of Billable Days
---|---|---|---|---
1 | Finalize methodology |  | 3 |  
2 | Conduct desk review and inventory evidence |  | 12 |  
3 | Final Report |  | 5 |  
Total |  |  | 20 |  

V. **Deliverables**

The table below highlights the deliverables for this consultancy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable Number</th>
<th>Deliverables/Outcomes</th>
<th>Estimated Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a. Excel-based framework (including key approaches by leverage point, prioritized food security, cross-cutting outcomes, key takeaways contributing answers to learning questions)</td>
<td>July 31, 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Selection criteria for reviewed evidence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Preliminary list of resources to review</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>a. Finalized criteria for inclusion in the review.</td>
<td>August 20, 2024</td>
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<td>b. Table/inventory of reviewed literature/evidence with notes and relevant tags.</td>
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VI. Location of Assignment
This consultancy will be performed entirely remotely. No costs related to travel will be included.

VII. Contract Duration
The anticipated duration of the contract is July 17, 2024, to September 17, 2024 (anticipated 20 billable days).

VIII. Qualifications
1. Master’s degree with at least 5 years of experience in food security or a related field is required;
2. Experience in conducting studies, assessments, evaluations, or literature reviews in food security, resilience, or other related areas is required;
3. Previous experience in completing a thesis or publication manuscripts in relevant fields is required;
4. Previous experience conducting evidence gap mapping is preferred;
5. Familiarity with systematic review methodologies, evidence mapping techniques, and quality assessment tools to ensure rigor and reliability in the review process is required;
6. Strong understanding of food security concepts, frameworks, and key issues, with expertise in relevant thematic areas such as food access, production, nutrition, etc. is required;
7. Demonstrated ability to work independently with minimal guidance and support is required and
8. Excellent written and verbal communication skills to articulate complex concepts, findings, and recommendations clearly and effectively in reports and presentations is required.

IX. Required Application Components
1. Cover letter, which describes a brief summary of the approach demonstrating qualifications in undertaking the Scope of Work. This summary should highlight how the applicant will complete the deliverables. (Document cannot exceed 3 pages single-spaced.)
2. Completion of separate attachment, Annex I, which is also the table found under Section IV Specific Tasks and Level of Effort.
3. (a) Compensation rate per day; (b) Total cost for completing the assignment; (c) Confirmation of the level of effort (i.e., number of billable days).
4. Resume/ CV.
5. Contact information for 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.
6. One sample work from a previous similar assignment.
X. **Clarifying Questions and CRS Response**
Prospective bidders may submit any clarifying questions by singular request to andrea.wilson-taylor@crs.org by June 26, 2024 [11:59 PM EST]. The solicitation name “US8488.06.2024: Food Security Desk Review and Evidence Gap Mapping” must be included in the Email Subject Line. Questions submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Responses will be provided to any known prospective bidders on June 28, 2024.

XI. **Proposal Submission**
All proposals must be sent to andrea.wilson-taylor@crs.org no later than July 3, 2024 [11:59 PM EST for electronic submission]. The solicitation name “US8488.06.2024: Food Security Desk Review and Evidence Gap Mapping” must be included in the Email Subject Line.

Please note that all prospective bidders will receive a notification regarding the outcome of the Request for Proposal (RFP) promptly following the decision-making process.