1. Could you please provide an indication of the volume of work anticipated, i.e. number of (i) documents to review, (ii) interviews and focus group discussions to hold, (iii) stakeholder groups to include in the mentioned possible survey?

With regard to the number of documents to review, GOAL will try to keep this at a manageable number in discussion with the winning consultant(s). Similarly for the number of interviews, focus groups and stakeholder groups which will have to be proposed by the consultant(s)

1. With regards to the 2 country visits (physical or virtual) mentioned, is there an idea on which countries this might entail?

The selection of the countries to be visited (physically or virtually) has not taken place. This will be decided in consultation with the GOAL teams in the countries proposed by the winning consultant(s) based on – as per the ToR s- geographical region, programme scope and size.

1. Would it be possible to provide some further information on the level of effort in terms of working days envisioned for completion of the scope of work?

This is for the consultant(s) to propose.

1. Would it be possible to receive an indication of the budget or a budget range anticipated for completion of the evaluation? This would be highly appreciated as it would provide further insight on the expected scale of the work to be completed.

We are not sharing this information. GOAL expects proposals to put together a realistic budget that reflects the cost of the evaluation process proposed.

1. Could you kindly share the ‘GOAL standard’ document for evaluations as mentioned on page 14 of the ToR?

Please see attached.

1. From the ToR we understand that GOAL is looking to engage either individuals or a firm for the evaluation. Is there a preference for either of these and, considering these two options provide different solutions in terms of available competencies and resources, could you kindly clarify if and how this is considered in evaluating the received proposals?

GOAL has no particular preference and this will have no bearing in the selection of the winning proposal. The selection criteria will be based on what has been published in the ToRs:

1.    Quality of the technical proposal;

2.    Profile and competency of the evaluator(s);

3.    Suitability and relevance of the financial proposal;

4.    Up to three relevant examples of past evaluations completed;

1. The method for this consultancy is expected to combine quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The ToRs state clearly that mixed methods and use of surveys are a preference, not an expectation by GOAL. It is up to the consultant(s) to propose the methodology. GOAL will assess all proposals submitted and methodology is one of the awarding criteria, but not the only one.

1. It includes 10 countries, does this mean that evaluation data gathering will be needed in all 10 countries?

This will also depend on what the consultant(s) proposes, but it is not an expectation from GOAL.  Where and how data will be collected should be stated in the methodology which as per above will be assesses along with the other awarding criteria.

1. The consultant/consulting company is expected to visit only 2 countries.

The ToRs say visit to ‘at least two countries virtual or physical’. It is up to the consultant(s) to propose either or both, outlining the cost each option will require.

1. Does this mean that local consultants should be contracted in these countries? This is the way that I have done surveys in the past, especially quantitative ones.

Hiring local consultants or travelling themselves, is also left to the consultant(s) to propose. GOAL does not have any particular preference.

1. This would involve very large expenses and coordination efforts, and contracting local consultants could take many weeks.

GOAL has the budget to provide for either option proposed. The proposal should outline the timeframe, cost and responsibilities the consultant(s) take (e.g. if hiring local consultant, or travelling themselves) and what expectations they have of GOAL. As per above the content of the proposal (including, timeframe and cost) will be one of the award criteria but not the only one.

1. If there is not a plan or provision to work with local consultants, what sort of quantitative and qualitative survey is anticipated?

At this stage, this is for the consultant(s) to provide the solution, not GOAL.

1. I also was somewhat surprised to see that the final report must have 30 pages maximum. This seems incompatible with the idea of large data-gathering exercises in 10 different countries.

The number of pages in a report, are not linked to the dataset but rather to the evaluation questions that GOAL is seeking answers to. If upon receiving the Inception Report from the consultant(s), a case is made for extending the number of pages of the report, GOAL is opened to this.

1. Or is it anticipated that there would be extensive annexes with data presentations?

This is up to the consultant(s), but it is not an expectation from GOAL.

1. Is there one overall logic model or logframe, and is there an overall theory of change? Is there a common set of indicators, and is it possible to find those indicators somewhere?

Yes the programme has an overall theory of change, and each country programme has a Results Framework with a common set of indicators. These will be made available to the winning consultant(s)

1. Is there a baseline survey for the overall program, and for individual country projects?

Yes

1. What would the evaluation be comparing against?  Or is it expected to be retrospective?

Please refer to ToRs for this.

19. Are the individual country projects of the same type or are there different types, eg. in the same country we might find one disaster response project, a separate nutrition education project, and a separate agriculture value chain intervention?

In each country, the programme works under 4 Goals, with common set of objectives and indicators. However the interventions are country specific.

1. It would also be really helpful to have a ball park idea of the potential budget. My colleagues and I have done evaluations that cost less than EUR 100,000, and some that are worth more than a million. From our experience with programs as large as yours, the evaluations definitely run to the high side of that range. To do good quality quantitative and qualitative surveys in ten countries would require local teams and a significant budget.

We are not sharing this information. GOAL expects proposals to put together a realistic budget that reflects the cost of the evaluation process proposed.

1. Another question is about the timeframe. Is the end of November a non-negotiable deadline?

The preference is as stated in the ToRs. The consultant(s) can propose different deadlines and these will be considered along with the selection criteria published in the ToRs. As stated in the ToRs, upon receipts of proposals, there will be a period of two weeks to review all the submissions with the possibility of requests for clarifications from GOAL where the deadlines can be discussed.

1. Can GOAL provide more information regarding the quantitative surveys mentioned in the RFQ?  What type of surveys are expected, and should they be done in all of the programme countries or just those where primary data collection takes place in-person?

The type of survey, where and how the data is collected will depend on what the consultant(s) propposes. It is not an expectation of GOAL that all programme countries be included in primary data collection and/or that this be in-person.

1. Should the financial proposal only include professional fees/costs for experts or should bidders also include expenses for any anticipated travel?

As per ToRs these are some of the cost GOAL would like to see in the financial proposal:

-             the payment schedule;

-             travel and accommodation cost (if required);

-             number of working days/hours, holidays and other special requirements e.g. working weekends, if travel days or public holidays are counted as working days etc;

-             cost of services such as translators, enumerators, office space, phone/internet access, printing, photocopying, transport, meals, etc (if required);

-             cost of communication with stakeholders.

1. Can GOAL provide the estimated Level of Effort (in days) for this evaluation or alternatively the budget that is available?

This is up to the consultant to propose.

1. Is the closing workshop to present findings and recommendations to GOAL expected to be in-person?

No

1. Can GOAL clarify what is meant to be included in the Logistics Plan section of the technical proposal? Is this different from the Costed Logistics Plan listed on page 13 of the RFP?

No, it is the same. What would be important is to note, what responsibilities the consultant(s) take in terms of Logistics and what expectations (if any) the consultant(s) have of GOAL.

1. Given the uncertainty around travel in light of COVID-19, is it acceptable that bidders propose different methodological options that reflect different travel scenarios and mix of approaches and resources?

Yes, please.

1. Will GOAL answer questions on a rolling basis as they are received from bidders?

Is this questions for clarifications, or response to the bid proposals? If the former the answer is yes, if the latter please refer to ToRs. All bidders will be contacted with an answer.

1. Will all questions and answers be circulated to all bidders?

For fairness to other bidders we will publish in our website all questions and answers that we have received for clarifications without names of bidders.

1. Part 9 of the RFQ requires all sections to be completed. One of them is the Registration Number. Are un-registered individual consultants still eligible to apply, providing they will sign/confirm all the statements at the bottom of Section 9, please?

Yes, you can apply.

1. Any conflicts of interest involving a bidder must be fully disclosed to GOAL particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the bidder. **Please provide an example of a recommendation that would constitute a conflict of interest.**

If you know of any reason why performing mentioned work for GOAL may lead to conflict of interest on your part currently or throughout the course of or aftermath of this work

1. The RFQ mentions that unsuccessful bidders will be notified. **We request being informed about the main reason for a bidder being unsuccessful**.

We cannot guarantee that such a reason can be provided, as we expect a large volume of applications and do not have the resources to do this for all the applicants. And for fairness we would have to do it for all, rather just one applicant.

1. **Is it okay for CVs to be attached as an annex in the technical proposal or they should be submitted as separate file**?

**Yes**

1. **Do** **you want written reference letters about previous evaluations or would GOAL request the written references from the referees?**

We are not requiring written refence letters at this stage, but as per RFQ, they may be contacted on a confidential basis to verify satisfactory execution of contracts.

1. It will include visits (physical or virtual) to at least two country programmes preferably in different geographical region, programme scope and size. **Please clarify if scoring of the technical proposal would be on the same standard for the option of physical visits and another option of virtual visits (remote interviews) via online platforms (e.g. Zoom or Skype) in the 2 countries.**

We cannot answer this at this time as our choice (physical or remote visits) will depend on the feasibility of each option at the time the evaluation will take. We suggest you submit both options costed accordingly and they will be given due consideration.

1. The evaluation will target a range of stakeholders including but not limited to, the beneficiary populations, non-beneficiaries, partner organisations, Government representatives of the countries of implementation, GOAL country teams, GOAL Ireland staff and Board and IA. **Please provide the number of partner organisations per country, number of GOAL Ireland staff and the size of the Board so that the bidder can determine the potential number of key informant interviews and the level of effort?**

Some of the information requested is available in our website and we do not believe providing the rest of the information is necessary at this stage. We suggest instead in your proposal you include the number of key informants you are capable of completing within the timeframe proposed, with the resources you have at your disposal with the budget you are proposing.

1. GOAL is responsible for providing transport among other things. **Does the transport include air-travel for the evaluators to the 2 countries for physical field visits or is it only in-country transport?**

Transport here is referring to in-country support.

1. Up to three relevant examples of past evaluations completed are required; **is it okay if the annexes of the evaluation reports are excluded (given the many pages involved)?**

Yes

1. When specifically requested by GOAL, a bank guarantee from a well reputed bank acceptable to GOAL in the currency in which the Contract is payable and for an amount to be prescribed by GOAL shall be obtained by the Service provider/contractor at his expense and deposited with GOAL before start of the Contract. **Can GOAL let us know before submission deadline of 15th June 2021 whether or not a bank guarantee will be needed for this assignment?**

No bank guarantee will be required

1. Could you confirm whether the ‘Resilience Hub’ identifies an approach or a distinct programme component?

Resilience is an approach we apply in GOAL, but in this programme it is also a stand alone hub or centre that is funded through Irish Aid with its objectives, activities and targets and which will therefore be part of the evaluation.

1. Section 7 Submission checklist (p. 3 of RFQ) mentions “this document filled in and signed”. Could you confirm whether we should fill in the Request for Quotation and submit it as such to you (without any changes) or whether we are allowed to integrate it into our own proposal template (with our own cover page etc.)?

Best to keep the two separate- fill in the Request for Quotation form as requested and submit the five-page proposal also as requested.

1. Section 7 Submission checklist (p. 3 of RFQ) mentions that the technical proposal (item 3) should also include “budget (including information on fees)”. However, appendix 1 : Technical Offer (p. 8 of RFQ) doesn’t mention that a budget should be included in the technical offer. Could you confirm whether we should include a budget with information on fees in our technical offer (appendix 1) or whether this should only be included in Appendix 2: Financial offer?

Please include the budget with information on fees on the five page proposal.

1. Could you confirm whether GOAL has a VAT number?

No GOAL is VAT exempt

1. Given the extensive travel restrictions that have been placed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; we would like to clarify whether our proposal should be a) conducted remotely OR b) include travel to two country programmes?

Please refer to answer of Q9 on the Clarification List published on our website along with this RFQ.

1. What is the number/profile of projects within each country programme, including locations and the number of beneficiaries?

Each of the 10 countries has a different size of programme, the number of locations range from one to about 3 and the beneficiary reach varies depending on country and programme.

1. Are these programmes seeking to achieve change at the local or national level?

Mostly at a local level but some may feed into national level change depending on the programme.