

AGRIFOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT(ASTYE) PROGRAM

Terms of Reference for:

ASTYE Program Baseline Assessment

Location of Activity: ASTYE 17 districts (Tooro and Bunyoro Sub Regions)- *Tooro (Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Kitagwenda, Bunyangabo, Kasese, Ntoroko, Bundibugyo) and Bunyoro (Hoima, Masindi, Kagadi, Kakumiro, Bulisa, Kibaale, Kikuube, Kiryandongo)*

Targeted Participants: Youth & Actors in ASTYE districts

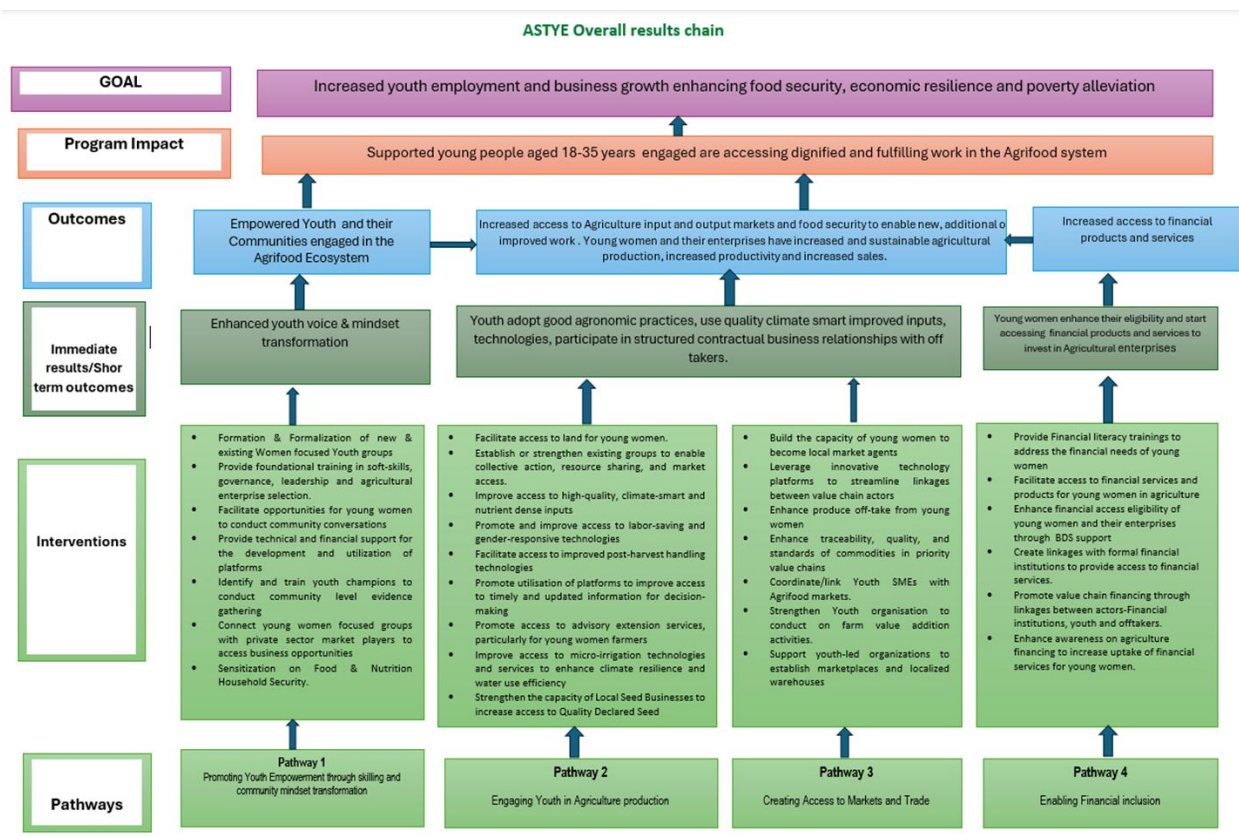
1.0: Brief Introduction about the GOAL ASTYE Program

The Agrifood System Transformation for Youth Employment (ASTYE) Uganda Program is a 5-year transformative initiative designed to create dignified and fulfilling work opportunities for financially disadvantaged young women, refugees, and vulnerable groups by addressing structural barriers in Uganda's agrifood ecosystem. The Program also complements the Mastercard Foundation's Young Africa Works Strategy and Roadmap Briefing Note for Uganda, which aims to empower young Africans, particularly young women, by addressing structural barriers to employment and providing them with the skills and resources to succeed.

Implemented in partnership with Mastercard Foundation and in collaboration with Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and Development Sovereign Group (DSG), the GOAL ASTYE program aims to reach 500,000 financially disadvantaged young people, with 456,000 engaged in work and 336,000 securing dignified and fulfilling work. As a young women-centric program, 80% of the total outreach target will be young women within Uganda's agrifood ecosystem. Additionally, out of the 500,000 total outreach, 25,000 will be refugees, and another 25,000 will be people with disabilities. The program focuses on four key intervention areas: youth empowerment, engaging youth in agricultural production, creating access to markets and trade and enabling financial inclusion.

GOAL's ASTYE Program Theory of Change sets out the key poverty alleviation goals, program outcomes, and systems change we envisage as a result of systemic interventions that address specific identified

constraints experienced by young women working in agriculture. The detailed theory of change for ASTYE program will be presented through the overall results chain clearly illustrating how the specific interventions of the program will lead to immediate and intermediate results and ultimately the impact. The program aims to achieve what will result in the desired outcomes and impact.



1.2: ASTYE Program Pathways: The program pathways are explained below in detail.

Pathway 1: Promoting Youth Empowerment through skilling and community mindset transformation; This pathway aims at providing youth especially women with technical support for formalization of young women led groups, partnering with Community Based Organizations provide mindset change, soft-skills, and agricultural enterprise selection training, provide leadership training to young women to facilitate community conversations that challenges entrenched social and gender norms to encourage mindset change among gatekeepers regarding young women's participation in economic activities, and provide technical and financial support for the development and utilization of platforms that enable young women to showcase their work. In this pathway the program will train youth champions to gather community level evidence on the needs and challenges of young women in agriculture, connect young women's groups with private sector market players to access agribusiness skills and opportunities for mentorship, inputs, agri-technologies and also deliver Food & Nutrition Household Security for

vulnerable young women to participate in agriculture and provide quality caregiving by strengthening their knowledge and skills on household nutritional practices.

Pathway 2: Engaging young people in agriculture production: This pathway aims at facilitating access to land for young women establishing or strengthen existing groups to enable collective action e.g. block farm rent, demand aggregation and input purchase, improve access to high-quality, climate-smart and nutrient dense inputs alongside technical training to enhance adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture practices, and promote and improve access to labor-saving and gender-responsive technologies. The program will also facilitate access to improved post-harvest handling technologies, and on-farm storage solutions, support the youth to utilize platforms to improve access to timely information for decision-making e.g. weather, prices etc., partner with public and private actors to scale the provision of advisory extension services, particularly for young women farmers, and improve access to micro-irrigation technologies and services to enhance climate resilience and water use efficiency.

Pathway 3: Creating access to markets and trade for young women: This pathway aims at linking young people with agro-processors, exporters, off-takers, and input suppliers who will provide improved inputs, extension services, and a buy-back mechanism for contract farmers. To strengthen their market position, the program will support women-led groups and cooperatives, enabling them to negotiate better input prices and market access. Co-investments will help establish market infrastructure, such as community aggregation stores and roadside marketing hubs, bringing markets closer to young women. Additionally, women-led groups will engage in on-farm value addition (e.g., produce shelling, processing, packaging, and storage improvements) to boost product value and ensure consistent markets with better prices. PSAs will benefit from a steady supply of high-quality produce. The program will also integrate climate-smart solutions to reduce post-harvest losses, mitigate climate change impacts, and improve product quality. The program will strengthen linkages between young women farmers and PSAs through sensitization sessions and B2B meetings, raising awareness of the benefits of collaboration. These engagements will facilitate direct connections, allowing young women to express their needs, explore market.

Pathway 4: Enabling financial inclusion for young people: This pathway aims at addressing the gap of financial access eligibility requirements through delivering training to address the financial needs of young women i.e. mindset, cultural Norms, money management, and business planning, facilitating access to financial services by supporting youth groups to adopt digital farm records management to enhance their visibility and eligibility for financing. The pathway also provides business development services to youth groups to enable formalization and registration and create linkages with formal financial institutions to provide access to value chain financing, tailored loans, banking agency services, and insurance services. The program will organize meetings for young people to engage with off takers and financial institutions,

providing Business Development Services to support young women in transitioning to successful enterprises, and collaborate with financial institutions.

1.3: Key shared Measures: The shared measures enable the tracking, measurement, and assessment of ASTYE program performance through 8 out of 9 Key Measures provided by the Foundation. The measures are intended to be used as relevant and appropriate to the ASTYE Program to support adaptive programming. Below is a summary table for the shared measures.

Indicator Code	Shared Measure/Indicator	Metrics
SM 1	Youth that received and benefited from one or more Program-supported work enabling interventions	Number of Youth accessing work-enabling services (all categories)
		Percentage of youth completing program-supported training, and skilling interventions
		Program-supported participants perceptions on relevance, quality and utility of interventions
SM 3	Representation of young people, particularly young women, in higher end value chains/sub-sectors with growing economic potential.	% and stories of Program supported youth accessing work in higher end value chains/sub sectors (prioritized by in Roadmaps/ Strategies)
SM 4	Program-supported enterprises growing and creating work opportunities for youth, particularly young women	% of youth enterprises showing growth through increased revenue
		% of youth enterprises showing growth through market expansion / diversification
		Average # of work opportunities accessed by youth from Program-supported enterprises
SM5	Program-supported youth accessing new, additional, or improved work (wage or self-employment)	Number of employed youth (wage and self-employment)
SM6	Program-supported young people engaged accessing dignified and fulfilling work	% of Youth accessing Dignified & Fulfilling Work
		Youth experiences in accessing dignified & fulfilling work
SM7	Program-supported young people reporting improvement in their lives	Instances of young people and their households reporting sustainable livelihoods

	and livelihoods and that of their households	% and stories of young people expressing increased agency and voice.
SM8	Program's contribution to strengthening ecosystems to enable and accelerate inclusive and sustainable access to dignified and fulfilling work by young people at scale	Ways in which Program- contributions have influenced or advanced policy environments to improve inclusive youth access to dignified and fulfilling work
		Ways in which social and cultural/gender norms have been changed by Program initiatives to enable inclusive youth participation in work and decision-making.
		Instances of new collaborations (numbers, types and ways) and investments have been catalyzed by the Program and/or its Partners among ecosystem actors that strengthen practices and programs to accelerate and scale inclusive access to dignified and fulfilling work for youth.
SM9	Extent to which GOAL demonstrate stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable systems, with enhanced capacity to drive access to dignified and fulfilling work for young women and men	Instances of partner institutional strengthening demonstrating stronger, more inclusive and sustainable systems

1.4.0: Purpose and Objective

1.4.1: Baseline Assessment Purpose

The overall purpose of the baseline assessment is to establish pre-intervention status of key project indicators and against which performance of the ASYTE Project will be measured. The study should establish benchmark conditions for youth employment, participation and inclusion within Uganda's agrifood system.

1.4.2: Baseline Specific objectives

The baseline assessment will:

1. Establish baseline data for the set indicators against which progress, and impact of the program will be measured.
2. Review and validate the Project Theory of Change (ToC), Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan to ensure strategic alignment with and Shared Measures 2.0 framework

3. Assess the underlying contextual and structural factors , formal and informal market standards, and regulations shaping the market and labour system in Tooro and Bunyoro sub-regions with focus on how they facilitate or constrain young people’s entry, retention and transition into dignified and fulfilling
4. Examine key challenges and opportunities for young people’s equitable participation especially women in the Agrofood system value chain.
5. Analyze the Agrofood market system identifying key value chain actors, incentives, disincentives, and systemic changes required to improve inclusive, efficient, sustainable participation and transition of young people especially women into dignified and fulfilling work.
6. Generate actionable recommendations and evidence to inform adaptive programme implementation and learning, identifying opportunities and constraints for achieving systemic change and sustainable youth employment within Uganda’s agrifood ecosystem

1.4.3: Expected Outcomes of the Baseline Assessment

The consultant will be expected to deliver a baseline assessment that:

Expected Outcome	Description
Comprehensive baseline profile of target youth established	A detailed socio-economic profile of target youth (particularly young women, refugees, and persons with disabilities) is generated, including employment status, livelihoods, income sources, and quality of work within the agrifood ecosystem.
Baseline values for project indicators established	Reliable baseline values are generated for all outcome and impact indicators in the project’s Results Framework, enabling future measurement of progress and attribution of project results.
Youth empowerment status documented	Evidence is generated on youth empowerment, including technical and business skills, agency, decision-making power, aspirations, leadership, participation in producer organizations, and engagement across agrifood value chains.
Agricultural productivity and resource access assessed	Baseline information is established on productivity levels, adoption of improved agricultural technologies and climate-smart practices, access to productive assets (especially land), extension services, inputs, and participation in priority value chains.
Market systems and business participation analyzed	The assessment provides evidence on market access, trade opportunities, value addition, business linkages, buyer relationships, market constraints, and competitiveness of youth-led enterprises.

Financial inclusion landscape documented	A clear understanding is obtained of youth access to formal and informal financial services, savings mechanisms, credit, insurance products, digital finance, and financial literacy levels.
Gender, disability and refugee inclusion participation and transition to work barriers identified	Social, cultural, institutional, economic and policy barriers limiting equitable participation of young women, refugees and persons with disabilities in agrifood employment and entrepreneurship are documented.
Systemic constraints and opportunities mapped	The assessment identifies market system failures, institutional bottlenecks, enabling factors, and opportunities for systemic change that can sustainably improve youth employment outcomes.
Evidence generated for adaptive programme management	Practical recommendations are developed to inform project implementation, targeting strategies, intervention refinement, partnership development, and adaptive management throughout the project lifecycle.
Learning and accountability framework strengthened	The baseline establishes a credible evidence base for future monitoring, midline and endline evaluations, learning, accountability, and reporting against donor requirements.
Benchmark for measuring project impact established	A robust benchmark is created against which changes in employment, empowerment, productivity, market participation, financial inclusion, and systems of change can be measured over the life of the project.
Actionable recommendations produced	The assessment delivers context-specific recommendations to strengthen programme design, improve inclusion, address identified barriers, and maximize sustainable employment outcomes for youth within Uganda's agrifood ecosystem.

1.5: Scope of Work

The baseline will cover:

- Geographic coverage: All the 17 districts in Tooro and Bunyoro regions of ASYTE implementation
- Target population: 500,000 youth aged 18-35 years, 80% women, 5% refugees and 5% PLWD.
- Thematic areas aligned to ASYTE objectives, typically including:
 - Livelihoods and income levels
 - Skills and employment status
 - Access to services and opportunities

- Institutional capacity
- Inclusion and participation (gender, youth, disability inclusion)
- Knowledge, attitudes, and practices relevant to project outcomes

1.6: Target Participants and Stakeholders

The study should engage, at minimum, the following categories of stakeholders:

- Young women and men, including persons with disabilities
- Refugee youth, especially young women
- Refugee youth with disabilities
- Youth groups and cooperatives, SACCOs
- Family members
- Community gatekeepers and leaders
- CBOs and local civil society organizations
- Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)
- Refugee-led organizations
- Local government officials
- Agro-dealers and private sector actors
- Safeguarding, gender, disability, and inclusion of actors.

1.7: Key Baseline research questions and Key Indicators

The baseline will answer the following and also in reference to RF in Annex.

Assessment Area	Key Research Questions	Key Baseline Indicators
Youth Employment & Livelihoods	What is the current employment status and quality of work among target youth?	● % of youth in dignified and fulfilling work ● % of youth employed/self-employed in agrifood enterprises ● Average monthly income from agrifood activities ● % of youth with stable income sources ● % of youth reporting job satisfaction ● % of youth with diversified livelihoods Coping Strategies Index
Youth Empowerment	What are the current levels of empowerment, agency, and participation, and influence in	● % of youth with entrepreneurial skills ● % of youth demonstrating business competencies ● Youth Empowerment Index score

	decision-making processes within the community	● % of youth participating in decision-making making forums, leadership or community activities ● % of youth expressing positive employment aspirations ● % of youth expressing increased agency and voice
Agricultural Productivity & Value Chain Participation	What are current productivity levels and youth participation in agrifood value chains? What are the current levels of agricultural productivity among the youths and their engagement in agrifood value chains	● Average production per acre/unit for targeted value chains ● % adopting improved agricultural practices ● % of youth using certified quality seeds, improved inputs, or climate-smart technologies ● % of youth accessing and using improved technologies (e.g., mechanization, irrigation, storage solutions) ● % of youth participating in targeted value chains ● Average farm/business productivity ● % receiving extension service ● % of Households with acceptable Food Consumption Score
Access to Productive Resources	What is youth access to productive resources? How effective are young men and women and men engaged in agrifood value chains and how are they accessing resources for value addition, market access, productivity and income	● % of youth accessing agricultural land ● Average acreage under production ● % accessing quality inputs ● % accessing irrigation or mechanization ● % accessing extension and advisory services
Market Access & Trade	How do youth participate in markets and commercial agriculture?	● % selling through structured markets ● % of youth with formal contracts or agreements with off takers ● % engaged in value addition ● Average annual sales revenue ● Number of market channels accessed ● % reporting improved market information access
Financial Inclusion	What is the current level of financial inclusion?	● % with access to formal financial services ● % saving regularly ● % accessing business loans

		● % with agricultural insurance ● Financial Literacy Index score ● % using digital financial services/mobile money
Gender Equality & Social Inclusion (GESI)	What barriers affect young women, refugees and persons with disabilities?	● % of women with control over productive resources ● % of women participating in economic decision-making ● % of refugees participating in agribusiness ● % of persons with disabilities engaged in productive employment ● Gender Empowerment Index ● Perceived discrimination index
Institutional Support & Market Systems	What institutional support currently exists?	● % of youth accessing extension services ● % receiving business development services ● Number of institutions supporting youth agribusiness ● Satisfaction with public support services ● Level of private sector engagement
Systemic Constraints & Opportunities	What systemic barriers and opportunities exist?	● Top market system constraints identified ● Policy barriers affecting youth employment ● Availability of input/output markets ● • Availability of business support services ● Opportunities for private sector investment
Programme Learning & Adaptive Management	What evidence should inform programme implementation?	● Priority intervention areas identified ● Key implementation risks documented ● Recommendations for programme adaptation ● Stakeholder priorities identified ● Existing partnerships mapped

2.0: Methodology

The MEAL Consulting firm will propose and articulate the most suitable study design, sampling of participants, data collection methods, data analysis to be applied and give rationale for the choice of each approach.

2.1: Deliverables

The below highlights key deliverables by the consultants

Deliverable	Description	Indicative Timeline
Inception Report	Prepare and submit a comprehensive inception report detailing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, evaluation framework, methodology, sampling strategy, work plan, data collection approach, quality assurance measures, ethical considerations, risk mitigation plan, and stakeholder engagement strategy. The report should also include a detailed implementation schedule and staffing plan. Hold the inception workshop and invite key downstream partners-CSO to be part of the workshop.	Within 7 days of contract signing
Baseline Study Protocol and Data Collection Tools	Develop and submit the baseline study protocol together with quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments aligned to the ASYTE Results Framework, Theory of Change, MEAL Plan, and indicator reference sheets. All tools should be programmed into the agreed digital data collection platform and approved by GOAL before fieldwork commences. Data collection tools should include those that will profile target participants and subsequent follow ups.	Within 10 days of contract signing
Sampling Framework and Enumerator Training Report	Develop a statistically sound sampling framework covering all target districts and beneficiary categories. Recruit, train and certify enumerators and supervisors on research ethics, safeguarding, informed consent, data quality standards, digital data collection, and field protocols. Submit a training report including attendance records and competency assessment results.	Before commencement of field data collection
Pilot Test Report and Final Data Collection Tools	Conduct pilot testing of all data collection instruments, analyse findings from the pilot, revise tools where necessary, and submit the final approved tools for implementation.	Prior to full-scale data collection
5 Clean Baseline Dataset	Submit complete, cleaned and validated quantitative and qualitative datasets together with codebooks, syntax files (where applicable), GPS coordinates, metadata and data quality assessment report. Data should be anonymized and provided in agreed formats (Excel, SPSS, STATA or CSV).	Within one week after completion of fieldwork
Preliminary Findings Presentation	Prepare and present preliminary findings to GOAL Uganda, consortium partners, implementing partners and key stakeholders through a validation workshop. Facilitate discussions, capture comments and recommendations, and incorporate agreed revisions into the final report.	Within one week after data analysis
Draft Baseline Assessment Report	Prepare a comprehensive draft baseline report presenting methodology, limitations, respondent profile, baseline values for all	Within two weeks after completion of fieldwork

	project indicators, analysis by gender, age, disability, refugee status and location, key findings, lessons and recommendations for implementation. The report should include statistical tables, qualitative findings, data visualizations, and annexes.	
Final Baseline Assessment Report	Submit a revised final baseline report incorporating comments from GOAL Uganda and key stakeholders. The report should include executive summary, methodology, findings, conclusions, recommendations, indicator baseline tables, annexes and all supporting documentation.	Within one week after receiving consolidated comments
Indicator Baseline Matrix	Prepare a comprehensive baseline matrix presenting all project indicators, definitions, baseline values, data sources, disaggregation, assumptions and recommendations for future monitoring and target tracking.	Together with the final report
Presentation Slides	Develop a high-quality PowerPoint presentation summarizing the methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations suitable for management, donors and project stakeholders.	Together with the final report
Final Data Repository	Submit all project materials including cleaned datasets, transcripts, photographs (where consent has been obtained), GIS data, analytical syntax, questionnaires, training materials, field reports, consent forms, and other supporting documentation in both editable and PDF formats.	At completion of the assignment

Narration on Key Deliverable:

- Final reports of all work packages incorporating inputs and feedback from the validation workshop. Based on feedback provided in final draft and validation workshop, the consulting team shall prepare and submit a final report.
- Participants of the dissemination workshops shall include, government line ministries, civil society organisations implementing youth enhancement programs, academia, private sector, religious and cultural institution representatives.
- The summary of the study presentations shall include methodology used in the study, a list of performance indicators and their baseline values, Key findings, challenges, emerging issues, and recommendations.
- An assessment summary report (2-3 pages) shall be prepared highlighting key findings and recommendations for wider use and communication purposes.

- Proposed conceptual framework to use in the study and Specific plan for data for review and learning questions.
- Data analysis plan, addressing how the primary and secondary data will be systematically analysed to address the learning questions.
- Study workplan and specific deliverables and milestones (Clear Activities and timelines for delivery of field activities and report sharing, including roles and responsibilities of all team members.
- A power point presentation, a digital copy of the full report of the final findings from the baseline and market systems (One report with sections). The report should clearly present a summary of all indicators and final baseline values for the respective indicators.
- Data sets- The baseline team shall submit a soft copy of a clean data set (in SPSS/STATA /Access/ Excel) of all the quantitative data as well as the original transcribed qualitative data gathered during the exercise. All data delivered will be anonymous. Data sets should be provided at the time of submission of the final report.
- Data generated is GOAL Uganda property and may not be distributed without her consent. The firm Will conduct sense making workshop after report writing

Required Submission Formats

The consultant shall submit:

- One (1) editable Microsoft Word version of report.
- One (1) PDF version of the report.
- Adopted Data collection toolkit as based on ASYTE Results framework
- Microsoft Excel datasets.
- SPSS/STATA datasets and syntax files (where applicable).
- PowerPoint presentation.
- Digital data collection tools (ODK/Comm Care/KoBo or agreed platform).
- GIS and GPS data (where applicable).
- Indicator baseline matrix.
- All raw qualitative data and transcripts.
- Complete data dictionary and codebook.

2.2: Duration

The assignment is required to be completed as soon as possible. Hence the bidder should propose a

feasible workplan for this assignment.

2.3: Qualifications and Experience

GOAL welcomes qualified and experienced consultants in handling similar assignments of Studies. The lead consultant's profile and qualifications should include:

- Documented experience of minimum 10 years in related studies in the field of Agriculture and Youth Employment.
- Strong experience conducting social research and Assessment skills
- In-depth knowledge in gender, inclusion, and safeguarding programming.
- Capacity to work collaboratively with multiple stakeholders.
- Proven experience in conducting social inclusion, disability inclusion, refugee inclusion, gender, or barrier analysis studies
- Demonstrated expertise in qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Strong understanding of intersectional of gender, disability and social inclusion issues
- Experience working on livelihoods, youth employment, agrifood systems, market systems, or inclusion programs;
- Experience working in Uganda's refugee hosting contexts
- Strong analytical writing and reporting skills

2.4: Application process

Qualified and interested Consultancy firms are invited to submit the following application documents

- Cover letter
- Technical proposal detailing the methodology, data management and analysis plan, and timeframe for the exercise.
- The financial proposal is based on the requirements for successfully undertaking the exercise.
- The deadline for this application is 13th October 2026 23:59hrs EAT. The technical and financial proposals should be submitted to the following email address HQTenders@goal.ie

2.5: Evaluation criteria of the proposals

The award of the contract shall be made to the consultancy firm whose offer has been evaluated and determined as responsive with the highest combined score based on the following:

Criteria	Description	Weight
	1. Methodology - Demonstrating understanding of the assignment as required by the TOR and clearly	30

Technical Capacity/Quality (55%)	demonstrating how the entire assignment will be performed	
	2. Experience - Demonstrated experience in conducting assignments of similar nature and scope. Submit abridged contracts, recommendation letters or completion reports/certificates from at least three different clients.	15
	3. Key Personnel/Technical Team with relevant qualification and experience: Present Academic certificates/transcripts and CVs for the technical team indicated below that will perform the assignment. The team Lead MUST possess the qualifications and experience listed below; • Master's degree in economics, Statistics, Development Economics, Agribusiness, Agriculture, or a related discipline from a recognized University. • Documented experience of minimum 10 years in leading complex program Impact Tracer Studies or related studies in the field of Agriculture, Market Systems development and youth Employment.	10
Delivery Period (10%)	Practicality of proposed workplan (delivery timeline and feasibility). Provide a detailed work plan showing what will be done and at what stage	10%
Financial Proposal (35%)	Financial Proposal (in Ugx)	35%
Total (100%)	The cost should be inclusive of VAT	100%

2.6: Payment approach

All payments shall be tied to milestones and timeframes laid out in the contract. The consultant will ensure satisfactory accountability for any funds provided for reimbursable expenses.

Milestone	% of Payment
Approved Inception report	40%
Initial report draft and presentation	20%
Final report and all the deliverables	40%