

Request for Proposals

Baseline/Mapping Study on Sustainability Practices in Cotton Farming in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire

Ivoire

RFP n#: 2023-09-FR-BASECDI

Location: Côte d'Ivoire and Mali

Start date: 1st November 2023

End date: 31st December 2023

Better Cotton key contact:

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Africa Team



All applications must be submitted via [this form](#).

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org - RFP n# 2023-09-FR-BASECDI.

Questions, requests and applications sent after the deadline (1st October 2023) will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Description

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In difficult times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we have provided training on more sustainable farming practices to more than 2.9 million cotton farmers in 26 countries. More than a fifth of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard and our membership network includes more than 2,400 members.

More information about Better Cotton can be found on our website: www.bettercotton.org

Background

We are seeking expression of interest from skilled individuals or organisations interested in guiding the Better Cotton's implementation in Cote d'Ivoire and to measure progress and evaluate achievements in

Mali, Better Cotton plans to conduct a study to assess the sustainability performance and the current practices in use by cotton farmers in both countries.

Scope of Work

The expected output will be leading a comprehensive baseline/mapping study and assessment, covering aspects of sustainability performance, practice adoption, and current farming methodologies among cotton farmers in Mali and Cote d'Ivoire. This assignment will serve as a benchmark for measuring change over time and evaluating the project's progress in the future.

Key Responsibilities :

Desk Research :

- Conduct desk research on sustainable cotton production capacities, fibre quality, and pricing mechanisms in Mali and Cote d'Ivoire.
- Analyse existing reports, data, and information from Better Cotton and sector stakeholders.

Baseline Scoping & Methodology Development:

- Design the baseline study approach for each country, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.
- Develop sampling strategies, data collection tools, and quality assurance guidelines.

Data Collection:

- Acquire necessary clearances and permissions for data collection.
- Pre-test tools and finalize them after consultation.
- Recruit local enumerators, conduct training, and oversee data collection.
- Ensure internal quality control and data validation.
- Compile, clean, and deliver datasets to Better Cotton.

Data Analysis and Reporting:

- Analyse collected data, utilizing external data sources for triangulation.
- Produce comprehensive baseline reports for each country, highlighting gaps, challenges, and opportunities.
- Develop specific recommendations to enhance current interventions (Mali) and design new interventions (Cote d'Ivoire).
- Create PowerPoint presentations summarizing key findings and recommendations.

Methodology:

Better Cotton expects the study consultant to develop a framework (approach, design, and methods) based on the objectives of the baseline/mapping study. The consultant should also provide a detailed justification for suggesting a particular approach and methodology in their proposal. The final decision on the approach and methodology to be used will be done jointly with the Better Cotton team.

Better Cotton expects a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, and an analysis of indicators that are part of the new Better Cotton's MEL Framework (Results Indicators, Delta Framework, and indicators to be used for the measuring and reporting on Impact Targets 2030)

Deliverables:

- Desk Research Report
- Inception Report

- Raw and Clean Datasets, Preliminary Findings
- First and Final Drafts of Baseline Study Report for each country
 - PowerPoint Presentation summarizing key findings
 - Presentations of findings and recommendations (online meetings)

Below is the list of deliverables to be submitted by the consultant(s).

Desk research report

Desk report (approx. 10-20 pages) that provides an overview and an analysis, for both Mali and Cote d'Ivoire, of the following topics:

- Sustainable cotton production capacities
- Fibre quality
- Pricing mechanisms

Inception report

Upon the review of available documents including proposals of the Programme Partners and based on an initial discussion with Better Cotton and its partners, the consultant should submit an inception report including:

Description of the baseline studies approach and methodology including sampling

- Detailed work plan and schedule, including plans for data collection in both countries
- Data collection tools and questionnaires adapted to each country context, both in English and in local language (based on quantitative survey and FGD questionnaires to be provided by Better Cotton in English).
- Plan for the training of enumerators, and for the pre-testing of the quantitative survey tool with farmers present in the region but not part of the sample.
- Presentation of the structure of the baseline study report

Clean datasets, preliminary findings and draft of baseline studies report

- The consultant should provide the first draft of the baseline studies report to Better Cotton following the agreed schedule, along with the raw and clean datasets.
- It is preferable to have one baseline report per country, but if more convenient, one report for both could be submitted, provided that the findings and recommendations per country are clearly separated.
- The draft reports will be reviewed by the Better Cotton team and input will be provided for revision before a second draft is shared with the Programme Partners for feedback. Partners will be given a reasonable timeframe in which to respond.

Final reports and presentations

- The consultant will submit the final report having incorporated the comments from Better Cotton and partners. The final report will need to include an Executive Summary that can also be used as a standalone document.
- The consultant will hand over the complete raw and clean datasets including transcripts of stakeholder interviews and any other data collected to Better Cotton at the end of the assignment.
- The consultant will also submit a PowerPoint presentation (in English and in French) to summarize the main findings of the reports and will give 2 presentations to the Better Cotton team and to the Partners (one for Mali and one for Cote d'Ivoire).

These deliverables are to be prepared in English, unless otherwise specified, and submitted to Better Cotton electronically via email.

In addition to skills, competencies and expertise, we will consider value for money and demonstrable commitment to the sustainability field to evaluate applications.

High-level Timeline

1st October 2023	Applications deadline All applications must be submitted via this form .
15th to 25th October	Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews
By 31st October 2023	The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful <u>shortlisted</u> applicants will also be notified
1st November 2023	Start of the consultancy
By 15th December 2023	Deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk Research Report • Inception Report • Raw and Clean Datasets, Preliminary Findings • First and Final Drafts of Baseline Study Report for each country
By 31st December 2023	Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint Presentation summarizing key findings • Presentations of findings and recommendations (online meetings)

Required Skills & Knowledge

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
<i>Essential</i>
The lead consultant should have a minimum of eight years of professional experience in conducting baseline studies and evaluations of development projects whereas the co-consultant should have a minimum of five years of relevant experience.
A postgraduate qualification in a relevant field such as agriculture, research, statistics, or social sciences
Experience in conducting evaluations in the sustainable agriculture sector
Extensive conceptual and methodological skills and experience in delivering evaluations including evaluation designs, and qualitative and quantitative methods
Excellent written and verbal communication skills
Excellent report-writing skills
Fluency in written and spoken English and French
Excellent facilitation and coordination skills

<i>Optional</i>
Working knowledge of the cotton industry/sector
Working knowledge of sustainability standards
Experience working in Mali and/or Côte d'Ivoire

Application Requirements

Proposals responding to this Request for Interest should be a maximum of 2 pages (excluding CVs), and include the following:

- Demonstrated understanding of this RFP, and the responsiveness of the proposal to it
- Conceptual framework and methodology proposed
- Feasibility of the proposed activity plan and timeline, and appropriateness of time allocated to delivering each task
- Relevant professional experience of the proposed consultants
- Quality and relevance of the sample baseline/evaluation report
- Quality and clarity of budget provided, and level of detail included
- Alignment of the budget to the activity timeline detailed in the technical proposal
- Value for money

Budget and Payment

Even though our preference is to have a single consultancy firm covering both countries, we would also accept applications for one country only.

Payment terms would be as follows:

Upon acceptance of the desk review report (a), inception report and data collection plan (b), and clean data sets and draft baseline study report (c).	50%
Upon acceptance of the final baseline study report and presentations (d).	50%

Working Arrangements

The position is a consultancy for the duration of the assignment- possibly 2 months engagement, according to the scope of works

Travel to cotton production areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali will be required.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Better Cotton is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources. All applications will be reviewed under the principles and subject to Better Cotton's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.

