

Request for Proposals-

Baseline Study of GIF-funded Project of GAP RDA in Turkey

RFP n#: 2024-03-GIF-GAPRDA
Location: South Easter Anatolia, Turkey
Start date: 29.04-2024
End date: 10.10.2024



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

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org-RFP n~2024-03-GIF-GAP RDA

Questions, requests, and applications sent after the deadline (14.04.2024) 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

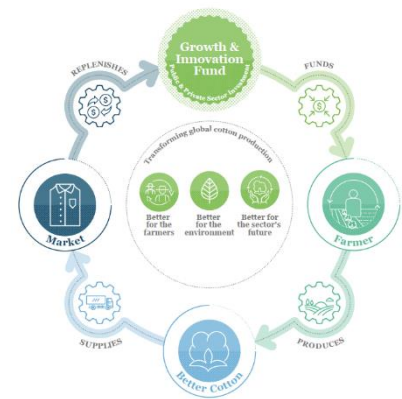
Background

Better Cotton Growth & Innovation Fund (Better Cotton GIF) was established in 2016 to transform cotton production globally and develop Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity. Its

mission is to help cotton communities, through effective and transformative funding, to survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment.

Better Cotton GIF addresses vital sustainability issues such as climate change, soil health, pesticide use, smallholder livelihood, and women’s empowerment through its support of the Better Cotton Standard System (BCSS), which is a holistic approach to sustainable cotton production that covers all three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic.

The fund provides a mechanism for retailers and brands to make investments that can lead to a tangible impact at the field – level, which cannot be achieved alone. The Better Cotton Council, in partnership with Retailers and Brands, civil society members, and government bodies, governs the GIF. Its governance model provides contributing partners an active voice in driving the success of their investments and creating a more sustainable future for the farmers, businesses, brands, and consumers that are involved in the cotton industry. The Fund also enables public-private cooperation on an unprecedented scale – laying the foundation for successful long-term implementation.



Project information

This year GIF has awarded a three year long grant to GAP RDA_UNDP, in South East Anatolia, Turkey which has served as a Programme Partner for Better Cotton for over a four years and supporting the implementation of the Better Cotton Standard System in Turkey. In the season 2024-25, GAP RDA_UNDP will be implementing a project Sanliurfa, Bismil and Çınar in Diyarbakir.

The project goals are::

- Maintain or improve soil health (Soil Organic Carbon).
- Reduction in pesticide use and reduction in Toxic Load.
- Improved working condition of workers (wages, working conditions)

The project interventions include the capacity building of farmers and workers on:

- soil health practices (Green Manuring, Sulfur Testing, Zinc Testing, Liquid Animal Manure, Vegetable Waste Mixing Organomineral, Use of Climate Station Data, water management, reduced tillage, use of soil testing to inform practice)
- strategies to reduce pesticide use (including stopping unnecessary spraying and conducting spraying based on necessity and economic thresholds, use of satellite images),
- the use of non-chemical/synthetic pest management strategies (Pheromone Traps, Trap Plant Cultivation, Application of Sticky Soap,
- use of personal protective equipment when using pesticides,
- decent work practices (safe work practices, minimum wages, non-discrimination, freedom of association)

In addition, the project facilitates market linkages for farmers. The project will target around 619 (571 men and 48 women) smallholder Better Cotton farmers (farm size below 20 hectares), 1,861 (1592 men and 269 women) medium farmers (farm size 20-200 hectares), and 1,500 farm workers (900

women and 600 men). The project farmers are divided into 14 Producer Units¹ (PUs) as shown in the table below:

District	No. of PUs	No. of Farmers
Sanliurfa	10*	1,910
Diyarbakir	4	573
Total	14	2,483

*All of the smallholder farmers are in one PU in Sanliurfa. All other PUs have between 130 and 190 medium farmers.

To guide the project implementation, measure the progress of the project, and evaluate its achievements, GAP RDA has designed a project logframe, specifying the expected project results for the different impact areas and indicators to measure them. The project indicators consist of standard indicators from Better Cotton's [Results Indicators](#) and [Delta Framework](#), as well as project-specific indicators focusing on measuring changes in knowledge, awareness, skills and adoption of sustainable agricultural and decent work practices.

Better Cotton GIF is highly committed to ensuring learning throughout the implementation of the project and Programme Partners are required to have strong project M&E systems. Moreover, Better Cotton GIF is also invested in finding out the extent to which the project is successful in meeting its expected outcomes and whether there are any unintended or negative effects of the project interventions.

In this regard, Better Cotton is seeking to hire an external consultant (individual or organization) to conduct a baseline study of the project being implemented by GAP RDA in the targeted districts in South Eastern Anatolia in 2024 that will serve as a benchmark to conduct an evaluation of the project in 2027.

Purpose & Scope of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct a baseline study of the GIF-funded project of GAP RDA to be implemented in South Eastern Anatolia region in Turkey in the cotton season 2024-2025. The baseline study will serve as a benchmark of key project indicators for evaluating the project in 2027. The baseline will also help GAP RDA make any needed adjustments to its project plans and activities.

The study will be carried out in the targeted districts of South Eastern Anatolia, Turkey. It will cover all the project interventions funded by GIF, targeting 619 smallholder Better Cotton farmers, 1,861 medium farmers, and 1,500 farm workers, covering 14 Producer Units (PUs).

¹ Producer Unit: The farmers in Better Cotton's programme are grouped into Producer Units (PU). A Producer Unit is a group of farmers who participate in the Better Cotton programme through a group assurance model. The optimal size of a PU is between 3,500 to 4,000 farmers. Farmers in a Smallholder PU are further divided into Learning Groups (LGs), each with around 40 farmers.

The assignment will consist of baseline study design, data collection, analysis and reporting with the following key tasks:

- Review and refine the project Logframe including result statements, indicators, and means of verification (MOVs) proposed by the Programme Partner
- Define sample size and methodology for the baseline, considering the geographical distribution of farmers, farmers' engagement with the program, gender, and other related factors. Note – as standard Better Cotton seeks sample sizes for quantitative data that allows 95 Confidence Interval at 5% Margin of Error.
- Develop guidelines and quantitative tools for the baseline data collection on all the project outcome and impact indicators, informed by the data collection methods for Better Cotton Results Indicators and Delta Indicators and in consultation with Better Cotton and the Programme Partner.
- Develop guidelines and qualitative tools for any additional qualitative data needs for the baseline report.
- Design the data collection plan and quality assurance in coordination with the Programme Partner and GIF Team
- Pre-test the tools and finalise after consultation with the GIF Team
- Collect baseline data from the sampled respondents following the study methodology and tools and according to the data collection plan and quality assurance protocols.
- Undertake internal quality control procedures including verifying the accuracy of a random sub-sample of questions
- Use a digital data collection tool for the data collection if possible
- Clean the data and deliver a final dataset to Better Cotton with verified and validated data
- Review and analyse the baseline data and develop draft reports and submit datasets and draft reports to Better Cotton
- Identify gaps and needs related to the project such as at the community or organisational level and provide recommendations to design interventions that are tailored to address specific needs.
- Assess the project implementation arrangements that the Program Partner has in place, including the project implementation process, resources, and capacities
- In addition to the baseline status in the report, also propose the most suitable evaluation methodologies that could be used to undertake the final evaluation at the end of the project and provide recommendations on the data that needs to be tracked throughout the project implementation that would be useful in the final project evaluation.
- Integrate comments from Better Cotton and the Programme Partner on the draft and submit a final report.

Methodology

Better Cotton expects the study consultant to develop a framework (approach, design, and methods) based on the objectives of the baseline study. The consultant should also provide justification for proposing a particular approach and methodology with a detailed discussion in their proposal. The final decision on the approach and methodology to be used will be done in consultation with the Better Cotton team. Note – Better Cotton GIF currently favours contribution

analysis for its evaluations, however, we are open to discussing alternative approaches if these are suitable.

Deliverables

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

a. Inception Report

Upon the review of available documents including proposals of the Programme Partner and logframe and based on an initial discussion with Better Cotton, the consultant should submit an inception report and give a presentation to the Better Cotton project team. The inception report and presentation will:

- Describe the baseline study approach and methodology including sampling
- Detailed work plan and schedule, including plans for data collection
- Adapted and translated tools for data collection
- Plan for the training of enumerators, pre-testing and a detailed data collection plan
- Present outline for the final baseline study report

b. First draft of baseline study report

- The consultant should provide the first draft of the baseline study report to Better Cotton following the agreed schedule, along with the raw dataset and the requirements mentioned in the TORs
- Draft report will initially be shared with the Better Cotton team for review and input before being revised and then shared with relevant stakeholders for feedback. Stakeholders will be given a reasonable timeframe in which to respond.

c. Final reports and presentation

- The consultant should submit the final report incorporating comments from Better Cotton and other key stakeholders.
- The consultant should also hand over a complete data set including transcripts of stakeholder interviews and any other data collected to Better Cotton at the end of the assignment.
- Along with the final report, the consultant should submit a monitoring framework for the project, with guidelines and tools in consultation with the Programme Partner, to track the indicators that require yearly data collection.
- The consultant should also submit a PowerPoint summary of the main findings in the report and give a presentation to the Better Cotton team.

These deliverables are to be prepared in English only and submitted to Better Cotton electronically via email.

High-level Timeline

Activity	Tentative Deadline
Tender date	15th March 2024
Deadline for submission of proposals	14th April 2024
Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews	15th-22nd April 2024
Successful applicant to be notified and contracted.	29th April 2024
Start of assignment	29th April 2024
Inception Report and Presentation	20th May 2024
Enumerators training, piloting tools and field data collection (followed by data analysis)	From 27th May 2024
Presentation of Preliminary findings	1st or 2 nd August 2024
First draft of the baseline study report	9 th August 2024
Final draft of the baseline study report along with project monitoring framework	30 th August 2024
Presentation of key findings & recommendations	By 10 th September

Required Skills & Knowledge

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
The lead consultant and co-consultant either (individual or representing a consulting firm) must have:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A postgraduate qualification in a relevant field such as agriculture, research, statistics, or social sciences • 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. • 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 • Fluent in written and spoken English and Turkish • Excellent facilitation and coordination skills
Desirable
It would be desirable for the lead consultant/co-consultant or another member of the named team to have:

• Working knowledge of the cotton industry/sector
• Knowledge and experience of research/evaluation related to soil health, pesticides and decent work practices
• Working knowledge of sustainability standards
• Experience in working in Turkey, ideally in South Easter Anatolia region

Application Requirements

Interested parties are requested to submit a detailed proposal including at a minimum:

- A succinct, well-documented Technical Proposal that includes:
 - A summary of the main objectives of your proposed baseline evaluation
 - The proposed baseline approach and methodologies, also the inclusion of some information of the possible endline evaluation methodology
 - Proposed activities and a corresponding timeline
 - A clear description of the project team for each task, detailing the relevant expertise and experience of team members.
 - CVs of the lead consultant, co-consultant and other team members
- At least one sample of previous relevant work (the contents of which will remain confidential and will be used for the sole purpose of evaluating the submission). This sample report must be less than three years old.
- Financial Proposal:
Please provide a detailed budget for each task including time allocated and daily rates. All costs must be included in the detailed budget including expenses and taxes.

Consultants, either individual or firms, are invited to submit their proposals before **5.00 pm CET on 14.04.2024** to tender@bettercotton.org

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 an equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption, and conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Technical Evaluation Criteria

- 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 and team members
- Quality and relevance of the sample baseline/evaluation report

Financial Evaluation Criteria

- 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

Payment to the consultant will be made based on the following schedule.

Upon acceptance of the inception reports and presentation and submission of the advance invoice	30%
Upon acceptance of the draft baseline study report and presentation as per the agreed timeline	30%
Upon acceptance of the final baseline study report and presentation as per the agreed timeline	40%