Request for Proposals - Endline Evaluation of WWF Telangana GIF Project

RFP n#: 2025 – 12 – GIF - WWFTGEV

Location: Telangana, India

Start date: 9 February 2026

End date: 30 November 2026

Technical Team: MEL and GIF

All applications must be submitted via this **form**.

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org – RFP n# 2025 – 12 – GIF - WWFTGEV until 9 January 2026 (with responses not being available until 5 January) noting that the **final submission deadline for bids is the 15 January 2026**.

Please note that the responses over the Christmas and new year period may be delayed, however we will endeavour to work on these as quickly as possible.

Questions, requests and applications sent after the deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Important Submission Process Information:

After submitting your details through the **form**, you will receive a separate email to upload your supporting documents to a secure platform.

Summary

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is seeking evaluators to conduct the endline evaluation of two BCI funded projects implemented by WWF India in Telangana. Both projects aimed to support farmers to cultivate cotton in a more sustainable way whilst achieving a reasonable profit. One project was a regular BCI project, but the second project (called enhanced regenerative project)

had a slightly more regenerative focus and also spent more resources per farmer. In addition to evaluating both projects it is hoped the evaluators provide some learning on the pros and cons of each of project approaches when they are compared. Descriptions of both projects, detailed evaluation questions, key considerations, expected deliverables, project timeline and application details are provided below.

Background

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) 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 BCI Standard and our membership network includes more than 2,400 members.

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

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) Standard System is a holistic approach to sustainable cotton production which covers all three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social and economic. The System has six key elements:

1. Providing a global definition of BCI Cotton through 6 key principles and 2 cross-cutting priorities – BCI's Principles and Criteria.
2. Supporting and training farmers in growing BCI Cotton, through working with experienced partners (such as WWF in Telangana) at field level.
3. Regular farm assessment and certification – including regular self-assessments by Producers themselves, monitoring visits from BCI Country Teams and, from January 2025, third-party assessments. The model puts a strong emphasis on capacity strengthening and continuous improvement. Producers are required to focus on sustainability improvements in order to maintain their certification. First and second-party assurance focuses not only on compliance but also on identifying areas where further support or capacity strengthening is needed.
4. Chain of Custody to connecting supply and demand in the BCI supply chain.
5. Claims Framework to ensure that claims made about BCI's work and that of our partners and members are credible, transparent, and accurate is crucial for maintaining trust and accountability.
6. Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) – measuring the reach of BCI programmes and also the changes for farmers, their communities and environments.

Better Cotton Initiative in India

Since the first Better Cotton harvest in India in 2011, the country has been a pioneering force within the global Better Cotton Programme. The work responded to pressing challenges in India's cotton sector, including inefficient water use, over-reliance on harmful pesticides, soil degradation, low yields, poor labour conditions, and limited market access for smallholder farmers. Cotton is a critical crop for the country's economy and rural livelihoods, but production practices were often unsustainable and risky for both people and the environment.

To address these issues, Better Cotton focused on building farmer capacity through training on sustainable farming practices. This included integrated pest management, improved irrigation techniques, soil health improvement, and promotion of decent work—especially tackling child labour and gender inequality.

The programme also partnered with local organisations, research institutions, and later with government bodies, to expand its reach. Over time, Better Cotton's work in India has evolved to include traceability systems and regenerative agriculture approaches, aiming to embed sustainability across the entire cotton value chain.

Telangana context

Of the 4,514,000 Ha of cultivated land in Telangana, 44%, or 1,991,000 Ha1, is used for cotton production. Despite the semi-arid climate of this state, most farmers rely on rain for irrigation of their crops. This is becoming extremely problematic as, in common with other states in India, Telangana is experiencing increasingly erratic weather with rainfall ranging from -42% to +62% under and over the norm, and long dry spells recorded in 11 of the last 15 years.

WWF Telangana programme

Since 2013, BCI has provided funding to WWF in Telangana to train cotton farmers, collect data for BCI's MEL and claims process, whilst also facilitate the chain of assurance/certification, market access to farmers and chain of custody process so that licenced Better Cotton can enter the cotton supply chain. The funding is managed and dispersed by BCI's Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF).

In April 2023 BCI GIF provided two 3-year grants to WWF Telangana, these grants are to be evaluated by the evaluators selected through this request for proposals (RFP). The description of the scale, locations, activities and desired outcomes are provided below.

Project – Regular BCI project

Scale[1]

Smallholder Farmers (those less than 20 hectares)

Smallholder farmers are organised into groups called Producer Units (PU) with a Manager and Field Facilitators (who train the farmers and collect data). These PUs are managed by Programme Partners (in this case WWF Telangana) who coordinate the Managers and provide training to both Managers and Field Facilitators. It is the PUs that are assessed for licencing.

District	Producer Unit Codes	Number of Farmers
Karimnagar	INTL01*	3,750
Karimnagar	INTL02*	3,700
Karimnagar	INTL023*	3,000
Warangal	INTL04	3,500
Bhupalapally	INTL06	4,500
	Total	18,450

In 2023/24 (second season of the current grant's 3-year funding), PUs INTL01, INTL02 and INTL023 were merged into a single management unit as part of the PURE pilot project. Details of the PURE pilot are provided underneath the Results Chain section.

Training:

Training is provided to farmers/farming household members and workers in learning groups and include information dissemination, practical demonstrations and demonstration plots.

Results Chain – BCI Regular Project

Activities	Outcomes	Pathway specific Impacts	Cross-cutting Impacts
Train farmers on soil health and climate mitigation practices Identification of degraded areas, riparian areas,	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended soil health management practices, including: • mixed cropping, • intercropping, • fertiliser use informed by soil tests, • adding organic manures, • adding composts, • use of other biofertilisers, • reduce tillage,	• Increased soil organic carbon • Increased NPK • Improved pH of soil (closer to neutral)	• Increased / maintained yield • Increased / maintained profit

[1] The project scale are numbers from the project planning documents and may have slightly changed during the 3 years of implementation.

common lands, together with provision of saplings	• bund plantation, • agroforestry, • seed treatment, • use of Trichoderma, • Navadhanya, • reduction in use of synthetic pesticides • crop residue management • Significant numbers of plants planted and maintained as part of land conservation.		• Reduced Greenhouse gas emissions
Train farmers on integrated pest management	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended integrated pest management practices, including: • Pest / beneficial insect scouting and application of pesticides based on economic threshold levels, • green / bio-pesticides, • not using Highly Hazardous Pesticides or pesticide cocktails, • wearing protective equipment when mixing/spraying synthetic pesticides, • safe disposal of pesticide containers	• Reduced toxic load of pesticide use	

PURE Pilot

In the second season of the 3-year project, 3 PUs were merged into one delivery unit (INTL01, INTL02, INTL23). In addition, training was no longer focused on farmers registered on BCI farmer lists, but provided to anyone involved in cotton farming in the villages within this geographic location. The objective of the pilot was to reduce administrative burden and increase both the time field staff could spend with farmers and increase the reach of project activities to all relevant individuals in the locations. This pilot is currently being evaluated and the end of pilot report will be available for the consultants to help consider as a possible influence on the changes in key results.

Project – Enhanced Regenerative BCI project

Scale

Smallholder Farmers (those less than 20 hectares)

District	Producer Unit Codes	Number of Farmers
Hanamkonda and Warangal	INTL03	4,045
Warangal	INTL05	4,030
	Total	8,075

Results Chain – enhanced regenerative project

The enhanced regenerative project has similarities with the regular BCI project, but the increased spend per farmer allow more field trails and demonstrations on developing organic manures/ composts and activities / collaborations to increase supply of bio-inputs to the farmers. There is also increased involvement of women and youth.

Activities	Results		
	Outcomes	**Pathway specific Impacts**	**Cross-cutting Impacts**
Train farmers on soil health and climate mitigation practices Provision of organic fertiliser	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended soil health management practices, including: • mixed cropping, • intercropping, • fertiliser use informed by soil tests, • adding organic manures, • adding composts, • use of other biofertilisers, • reduce tillage, • bund plantation, • agroforestry, • seed treatment, • use of Trichoderma, • Navadhanya, • reduction in use of synthetic pesticides • crop residue management High quality organic fertiliser available to farmers.	• Increased soil organic carbon • Increased NPK • Improved pH of soil (closer to neutral)	• Increased / maintained yield • Increased / maintained profit • Reduced Greenhouse gas emissions • Increased CO2 sequested

Train farmers on integrated pest management	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended integrated pest management practices, including: • Pest / beneficial insect scouting and application of pesticides based on economic threshold levels, • green / bio-pesticides, • not using Highly Hazardous Pesticides or pesticide cocktails, • wearing minimum protective equipment when mixing/spraying synthetic pesticides, • safe disposal of pesticide containers	• Reduced toxic load of pesticide use • Reduced poisoning rates due to pesticides	
Livelihoods	• Information provided on alternate livelihood opportunities and available government schemes • Local women's groups/farmer producer companies (or LGs) have started bio-input centres	• Increased availability and use of locally-sourced inputs (e.g., organic fertilizers, natural pest control) • Women and youth have diversified sources of income, which improve their livelihoods and economic security	
Women's Empowerment	• Women staff are recruited in the project team • Women farmers receive training on regenerative agriculture, plantation and BCI • Women self-help groups (SHGs) are supported and are involved in the project activities	• Women self-help groups (SHGs) participate in farm-related entrepreneur activities • Increased awareness among project team members about the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture	

Scope of Work of evaluation

Both evaluations are expected to answer the below questions:

1. What are the baseline to endline changes in farmer results against the i) outcome (practice adoption and input use) and ii) impact indicators?
2. What is the likelihood that farmers continue to follow sustainable practices and reductions in use of synthetics (if these have occurred)?
3. Are there any unexpected (positive or negative) changes that happened as a result of the projects?
4. Do farmer stated claims about awareness and adoption stand up to preliminary scrutiny? (physical checks, follow-up questions, cross referencing with alternate sources of data from input shops)
5. Theory of change / causation assessment:
    a. Which activities carried out by the WWF are identified as contributing to change in farming practices? Why did some activities lead to change in practices, whilst others did not (please consider issues of project design / relevance, budget, delivery etc)
    b. Which farming practices in this context were notably effective in leading to the reduction in use of synthetics, improved soil health, reduced GHG and resilience/increased profit? Why?
    c. Are there any socio-economic characteristics of farmers which influence whether they implemented new practices and had positive results?
    d. What contextual factors were notably influential on whether change happened or not – geographic (soil, water), weather, economic etc?
6. Did the enhanced regenerative BCI project increased investment per farmer and types of activity contribute towards changes that were worth the increased investment?
7. What are the key recommendations for WWF Telangana, BCI India and BCI in relation to what types of support are most effective to help farmers follow sustainable practices which also enable a resilient source of profit for farmers?

Other secondary question to consider when making recommendations:

8. Are farmers limiting themselves to practices that ensure compliance with Better Cotton standards or they going beyond the requirements to extract more benefits? In case of the latter, which practices have they adopted and why and what are the additional benefits?

Key considerations

Below is some key information which we expect the applicants to use to inform their applications and where required to **explicitly state in their applications how they will manage the issues mentioned**.

- The baseline study assessed the adoption rates of all key farming practices, usage of synthetic inputs, soil health practices and took soil samples. It also calculated the toxic load and greenhouse gas emissions per area and per KG cotton produced.
    - The baseline reports and raw data will be made available to the endline evaluators.
- At baseline the soil samples were taken in February 2024 (after the first year of cultivation). It is understood that changes in the soil organic carbon often needs 3 years to show notable change, therefore, it may be suitable to propose the soil sampling for endline are done in February 2027, nearly 12 months after the endline farmer survey. We expect the applicants to specify when they will conduct soil tests and why. Note – soil testing can be organised in collaboration with WWF Telangana, it is not expected that the evaluators have their own soil testing laboratory, however, the costs for soil testing should be in their application's budget. If desirable, please provide possible costs of laboratories in your budget. We do not wish the quality of soil data to be compromised by low cost / quality testing and would be open to spending increased costs of quality soil testing if required.
- The project activities were provided to all farmers, there was no randomisation of treatment.
    - Except for the baseline, no 'control' or non-treatment 'comparison' farmers are available to assess project farmers' change in outcome/impacts
- It is expected that the endline evaluation should have a clear approach to determine causation that goes beyond simple comparison of baseline vs endline quantitative results – the extent that WWF Telangana activities contributed to desired changes and what other factors were influential. In other recent BCI project evaluations the evaluators have used contribution analysis whilst also scheduling focus group / interviews after farmer survey data so these could explore, interrogate and validate the initial findings from the survey data. BCI is open to this and other approaches.
- Cyclone Mentha caused heavy rains in the projects' locations during October 2025. As a result, adoption rates, input usage, and yields will all be affected. It will be important for the evaluation approach to be able to take this into account when assessing impact.
- WWF collects the following data which will be available to evaluators together with annual reports and other relevant project documentation.
    - Number of farmers attending training
    - Farmer characteristics – age, gender, cotton land cultivated
    - If the farmer is practicing a specific cultivation method (such as pest scouting, or use of cover cropping)

    - The amounts and types of synthetic pesticide and synthetic fertiliser used, the amount of water used, the costs of cultivation per key categories (labour, inputs etc), the yield, the income.
- In BCI research we've noted that in order to assess all outcome and impact indicators that farmer questionnaires can become very long and result in reduced quality of responses to later questions. Therefore, we request that questionnaires be kept to 45 minutes (55 minutes maximum). We expect applications to explain how they will ensure this given the large number of outcome and impact indicators. Some approaches that have been used in other research and evaluations include:
    - Making use of some of the data collected by partners (such as WWF) on some of the relevant indicators.
    - Identifying indicators that are seen as most important and prioritising data collection on these, whilst keeping to a minimum questions on less important indicators.
    - Splitting the sample so that all farmers are asked 'core questions' but then one group are asked questions on some issues/practices, whilst another group questions on other issues/ practices. Therefore, the questionnaire length for each group is reduced, the core questions have high precision, and the secondary questions still are asked.
- Data quality is a key issue for BCI and we'd like applicants to provide information on how they'd ensure data collected from surveys, focus groups, interviews and other methods is accurate. We'd also hope to have access to data in the first few days of data collection (often through access to digital data collection dashboards) to confirm responses to questions are within expected ranges.
- Sample size and selection. We do not have a required sample size, confidence level, margin of error or statistical power. We expect the consultants to propose a strong sample size and sample selection approach with justification for why it will enable BCI to have confidence in the findings. If cluster sampling is used then BCI would like individual clusters to have no more than 10 farmers in to avoid to large a design effect (this is a change from baseline).
    - Baseline samples were (all randomly selected)
        - Regular BCI project: 432 farmers (from 25 villages),
        - Enhanced Regenerative project: 397 farmers (from 20 villages),
    - Soil samples:
        - Regular BCI project: 206 farmers
        - Enhanced Regenerative project: 94 farmers
- We expect the presentation to be part of a 2 hour meeting, with up to 1 hour presentation time of no more than 30 slides.

High-level Timeline

Below is a proposed timeline for applicants. All dates, except application deadline, can be changed. WWF Telangana proposed April is the most suitable time to collect data from farmers (this is based on farmer availability and weather).

9 January 2026	Questions deadline All questions must be sent only to tender@bettercotton.org with the RFP Reference in the Subject line.
15 January 2026	**Applications deadline** All applications must be submitted via this **form**.
15 January to 31 January 2026	Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews
4 February 2026	The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful shortlisted applicants will also be notified shortly afterwards
9 February 2026	**Start of the consultancy**
By 6 March 2026	Deliverable 1 – Inception Report – an update of the evaluation proposal based on document review and interviews.
By 20 March 2026	Deliverable 2 - Data collection tools (note – there should be time for at least 2 rounds of comments from BCI/WWF, with BCI/WWF needing 1 week to comment each time)
By mid-May 2026	Main farmer survey completed
By 31 August 2026	Deliverable 3 Draft Report (note – there should be time for at least 2 rounds of comments from BCI/WWF, with BCI/WWF needing 1 week to comment each time)
By 30 November 2026	Deliverable 4: Final report and Presentation Deliverable 5: Raw and cleaned data set with data analysis code book Note – If soil sampling is conducted in February 2027, then the final deadline will be extended to end March 2027.

Required Skills & Knowledge

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
Team Lead with 10+ Years of experience in sustainable agriculture or related sectors
Team Lead with 7+ Years of experience in research and evaluation studies, including experience of rural locations
Multiple team members with Bachelor degree in agriculture, related sectors and/or research and evaluation topics
Significant experience of designing survey methods and other relevant data collection tools
Significant experience of organising quality data collection using surveys and qualitative tools
Experience of research and data collection in rural areas in India
Ability to organise data collection in Telangana, in project locations, in Telagu language.
Significant experience of quantitative and qualitative data analysis
Experience producing clear, precise and succinct written reports with text, tables and charts and giving presentations
Professional working proficiency in English: Better Cotton's language of operation is English
Optional
Lead and other team members with Masters degree in agriculture, related topics and/or research and evaluation
Experience in cotton cultivation programmes and studies
Experience in certification standards

Application Requirements

Please note that we have changed our RFP submission protocol, and this is now in two phases;

- **Phase 1: Initial details will be submitted on the form found in this link.**
- **Phase 2: You will receive an email with live links to upload relevant documents (please check your Spam and Junk folders)**

Proposals responding to this Request for Proposals should be a **maximum of 12 pages** (excluding budget, an example of other work and also excluding CVs which should be no more than 4 pages per CV), and include the following:

- Overview of relevant experience of your team
- Proposed methodology (include how causality will be determined, data collection tools, sample selection and sample size, data quality protocols)
- Timeline
- Detailed and transparent budget, in EUROS, including time allocation per team member per task, and day rates

    - Note – there is no set budget for this work. We have an expected budget range of **35,000-55,000 Euros** and will assess applications based on suitable costs and value for money.
- An example of some relevant piece of work – this could be a research study, presentation, case study – to show how you present information.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted after applications are closed.

BCI 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 BCI's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Technical Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of this RFP – responding to its requirements
- Quality and clarity of the proposed approach and methodology
- Feasibility of the proposed activity plan and timeline, and appropriateness of time allocated to delivering each task
- Relevant professional experience of the proposed consultant(s)
- Quality and relevance of the sample work submitted

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
- Adherence to the available budget

Questions & Answers for RFP 2025-12-GIF-WWFTGEV

1. **Question 1**

   After completing the application form linked in the Call for Proposals, I received a submission link with an expiry date of 31 December 2025, whereas the stated proposal submission deadline is 15 January 2026. Kindly confirm whether a new submission link will be issued after 31 December?

   Answer

   Provided by Procurement Team:

   Thank you for this question. Based on our security requirements our links only stay valid for 15 days and after that they will become inactive.

   The easiest solution is to complete the form again or you can write to us before the deadline at tender@bettercotton.org and we can reactivate the links and share them with you directly.

   Although not an ideal system it is a good thing to complete the Form early so we have your details and can easily share any updates to the RFP.

2. **Question 2**

   Are applications expected strictly from registered organizations, or may a pool of experts submit a proposal with one individual acting as a Lead/Primary Applicant?

   Answer

   We recognise the importance of registration; however, we are aware of the skill sets required being quite niche and therefore are happy to accept submissions from a pool or individual experts.

3. **Question 3**

   If only organizations are eligible, could you please clarify the minimum eligibility criteria, such as legal status, minimum turnover, staffing requirements, or prior experience thresholds?

   Answer

   Please refer to the response to Question 2

4. **Question 4**

   The ongoing evaluation of the PurePilot Project is likely to have implications for the methodology of the evaluation of the BCI project, particularly with respect to the measurement of spill-over effects. Given that three out of five Project Units reportedly did not have control groups, we would appreciate clarification on:

   a. The methodology applied in the evaluation of the PurePilot Project.
   b. How attribution and spill-over effects were addressed in the absence of control groups.

   Answer

   It is not felt that the methodology of the evaluation of the PurePilot Project has any implications for this evaluation. If helpful, a brief summary of the PurePilot methodology is: Assessment of the relevance of project design (can PURE project design still meat all BCI objectives)

   Comparison between Pure and non-Pure PUs in terms of:
   - the cost-efficiency of administrative and training activities (cost / time per administrative task, cost per community member trained, cost per key results)
   - experience of key staff – manager, field facilitators
   - quality of training,
   - farmer adoption rates.
   - Quality of data produced
   - Quality / efficiency of certification processes.

   There is no significant expected spillover effect from the Pure project to non-Pure project PUs as the same content of farming assistance from the PurePilot was provided to the PUs not in the Pure project. The main difference between Pure project farmers and non-Pure project farmers being the Pure pilot had:
   - differently organised PUs (that sought administrative and training efficiency and effectiveness gains),

- different approaches to farmer registration and training attendees --in the PurePilot all community members in the location could attend training, in the non-Pure projects it was registered farmers who were prioritised for training and sometimes other household members).

5. **Question 5**

In the Request for Proposals (Section: Key Considerations), it is stated that "The baseline study assessed the adoption rates of all key farming practices."

a. Could you clarify whether the baseline measured pre-intervention farming practices, or whether it assessed adoption after certain interventions had already commenced?
b. What indicators or measurement approach were used to assess adoption rates? When was the adoption study conducted?

Answer
The baseline measured the adoption rates of key practices at the time of the baseline. Many of the farmers would have already received training from WWF in years before the current project started. Therefore, the 'baseline' could be seen as more start of project status assessment for key indicators, not a pre-training baseline.

The adoption rates were assessed using a farmer survey to ask farmers if they were adopting each method being promoted. For example, Do you use bio-pesticides such as neem extract to manage pests on cotton – yes/no?

6. **Question 6**

The same district (Warangal) appears to be covered under both the regular BCI project and the Enhanced Regenerative BCI project. Could you please clarify whether there is any overlap in the target population between these two interventions?

Answer
There is no overlap in target population between the two projects. Each project has different producer units they support with different farmers in different locations within Warangal district.

7. **Question 7**

The proposed survey period (April–May) coincides with harsh summer conditions in the study area. Additionally, soil sampling is indicated for February 2027. Could you please clarify whether there is a specific synchronization or rationale behind these timelines, particularly in relation to data quality and respondent availability?

Answer
The timeline for the survey period was identified as the best option between the end of current farming season, enough time to develop the data collection tools but before the extreme heat arrives. It is also a time when it is felt farmers will be available, and also not be too long after the end of the project's 3rd year. Data collection can start as soon as the data collection tools area agreed. Our experience is that this can take at 4 weeks of documentation review and discussion of drafts. Potentially data collection could be completed by mid / end April.

Soil sampling is proposed for February 2027 to allow a full 3 years between soil sampling so that there is sufficient time for changes in soil organic matter to become measurable.

The consultants can propose changes to the timeline with justification.

8. **Question 8**
Would it be possible to:

Share the baseline study report prior to proposal submission, or alternatively, we would appreciate clarification on:

a. The methodological design used in the baseline study.
b. The types of data collected (e.g., household survey, farm observations, soil data, etc.).
c. The timeline, including when the baseline study was conducted and finalized.

Answer
We cannot share the baseline study as it is an internal document that will only be shared with the selected consultancy.
The methodology used was a household farmer survey and some focus groups, together with soil testing with soil samples analysed at a laboratory. No farm observations were conducted at baseline.

The baseline survey was conducted in January 2024, but questions asked about the season before April 2022-March 2023 to try and create a 'pre-project' situation of the adoption rates on key practices.

9. **Question 9**
For soil analysis under this project, we assume it is mandatory to use NABL-accredited laboratories?

Answer
We would like the consultants to propose laboratories they feel are credible.

10. **Question 10**

Does WWF Telangana currently operate its own soil testing laboratories, or is soil analysis conducted in collaboration with external laboratories or universities?

Answer

WWF has soil testing facilities, however, it is hoped that this endline uses external laboratories to add increased precision and independence.

11. **Question 10**

Since a formal control group is not available, does BCI have a preferred approach for assessing causality (for example, contribution analysis), or are consultants expected to propose and justify their own approach?

Answer

BCI has no required approach, however, we have used contribution analysis and can see some benefits. Equally, we see some limitations too. We are open to consultants proposing approach(es) they feel are suitable to provide to most credible evaluation of causality.

12. **Question 10**

How does BCI expect findings from the ongoing PURE pilot to be used while interpreting endline results?

Answer

This could be an option as it is likely that some of the findings could be relevant. However, it will be part of the inception period and judgement of the consultants to decide the extent that the finding of the PURE pilot evaluation should be used.

13. **Question 10**

For assessing whether the enhanced regenerative project outcomes were "worth" the higher per-farmer investment, does BCI have a preferred value-for-money or cost-effectiveness framework?

Answer

BCI does not have a preferred value for money framework. It is familiar with the 4 Es approach – economic, efficiency, effectiveness and equity and combinations of this such as cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The consultants should clarify and justify their approach to comparing the two projects.

14. **Question 10**
    Should the comparison between the two project models be treated as a core evaluation objective or as a secondary learning question? Are there specific dimensions (e.g., district-level findings, cost-effectiveness, resilience, depth of practice adoption) that BCI is particularly interested in comparing?

    Answer
    The comparison between the two project models should be seen as a core evaluation objective. BCI is very interested to know if the enhanced regenerative project's design and increased funding per farmer contributed to notable improvements for farmers in that project. The key comparisons would be the cost-effectiveness and likelihood of sustained change of key results (reduced use in synthetics, yield, profit).

15. **Question 10**
    Since the baseline was conducted in early 2024, have there been any changes in indicator definitions, calculation methods (e.g., toxic load, GHG estimation), or MEL protocols that the endline evaluation is expected to follow?

    Answer
    There have been no changes in calculation approaches for toxic load or GHG. Projects have now started collecting data using digital handheld devices (practice adoption, synthetic input use, costs, yield and income).

16. **Question 10**
    PURE pilot influence:

    a. Should evaluators analytically treat Producer Units affected by the PURE pilot (merged PUs and widened beneficiary definition)?
    b. Should these be analysed separately, flagged as a quasi-variant, or integrated into the Regular BCI analysis with appropriate caveats?

    Answer
    It is expected that the endline evaluations considers farming households within all project locations, including those in the PURE pilot project. It is likely suitable to treat these as a quasi-variant.

    This means there are three intervention designs, 1) Typical BCI approach, 2) PURE approach (BCI content but merged PUs and community wide training) 3) Enhanced regenerative approach (BCI content with increased spend per farmer and deeper engagement).

17. **Question 10**

Are there known government schemes, NGO programmes, or private sector initiatives operating in the same villages during the project period that evaluators should explicitly account for when assessing contribution? In reporting, does BCI prefer cautious language around plausible contribution rather than attribution, particularly given the absence of a comparison group?

Answer

There are no specific schemes the evaluators should explicitly account for. However, part of the evaluation design should be able to consider any contribution of other programmes/initiatives.

Yes, BCI prefers cautious language on contribution due to the absence of a comparison group. It is hoped the design of the evaluation allows for as clear as possible understanding on the extent to which the project contributed to any benefits for farmers and the community.

18. **Question 10**

Should endline soil testing strictly replicate the same laboratories and methods used at baseline, or is methodological improvement acceptable provided comparability is maintained?

Is there an expectation that endline soil samples be collected from the same farmers/plots sampled at baseline, or is representative resampling acceptable?

Answer

The choice of soil sampling strategy (methods, labs and sample) is is for the evaluation consultants to propose based on what they feel is most suitable for credible results. It will be helpful if the approach can be explained and justified in the applicants' proposal for this evaluation.

19. **Question 10**

Could you please clarify whether the baseline datasets include household-level unique identifiers and sufficient location or contact information to enable re-contact of the same households or plots at endline? Additionally, would such information (if collected at baseline) be shared with the selected consultant upon award of the contract?

Answer

Yes, the baseline has farmer identification and contact information to enable re-contacting if this is felt to be a suitable approach. This information would be shared with the selected consultant.

Additional explanation of BCI's sampling for practice adoption, use of synthetics (fertiliser, pesticides), water, costs, yield and income
Each PU (not the PURE pilot) is divided into Learning Groups of about 35 farmers, meaning there are around 100 Learning Groups for each Producer Unit. To collect data BCI randomly selects 3-4 farmers per Learning Group so that around 350-400 farmers per PU have their data collected. The data collection for the 25-26 had four phases:

1. Land preparation and soil health practices – Sample A (350 – 400 farmers per PU)
2. Crop protection practices – Sample B (350 – 400 farmers per PU)
3. Livelihood and other practices - Sample C (350 – 400 farmers per PU)
4. Synthetic use, water use, costs, yield, income - Sample C (350 – 400 farmers per PU).

The samples A, B and C are different farmers with the sample size seeking to have 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error for each PU (this accuracy per PU is not a requirement for the independent evaluation). This allows averages to be calculated per PU, but does not allow data for the same farmer to be known for all indicators. This trade off is made to avoid Partners focusing support on just one set of farmers (those that are within the known sample A which is collected in the first half of the season). If the evaluators intend to link data sets they will need to consider how the sample was selected in BCI data.

In the PURE pilot, with no Learning group organisation, the sampling randomly selected equal number of farmers from cotton farming households within the villages within the project area to produce a sample size of 493 selected out of 8676 growing farmers. This sample size was chosen as BCI aimed for 95%/5% together with selecting 3-4 farmers for every village (replicating same concept as a standard PU). For the merged PUREpilot the number of villages is higher than if just one PU, and so the sample is slightly higher than for a single PU.