Request for Proposals Endline evaluation of WWF Pakistan Punjab's 3 years of GIF project funding

RFP n#: 2026-1-GIF-WWFENDLINEPAK
Location: Punjab, Pakistan
Start date: 16 March 2026
End date: 20 December 2026
Technical Team: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

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

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org – RFP n# 2026-1-GIF-WWFENDLINEPAK" until 6th February 2026, noting that the **final submission deadline for bids is the 15 February 2026**.

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.

AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT, THERE IS A QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION WHICH YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO GO THROUGH IN PREPARATION FOR SUBMITTING YOUR BIDS

Summary

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is seeking evaluators to conduct the endline evaluation of a BCI funded project implemented by WWF Pakistan in Punjab. The project is aimed to support farmers to cultivate cotton in a more sustainable way whilst achieving a reasonable profit. BCI would like an independent evaluation to assess the extent that results were achieved, for which farmers, why success happened, why it did not happen and provide recommendations. Descriptions of the project, detailed evaluation questions, key considerations, expected deliverables, project timeline and application details are provided below.

Background

Better Cotton Initiative

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 Pakistan) 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 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 the changes for farmers, their communities and environments.

Better Cotton Initiative in Pakistan

Better Cotton Initiative began working in Pakistan in 2009, launching its first programme in partnership with WWF-Pakistan. The work responded to pressing challenges in Pakistan'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, BCI 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 Initiative's work in Pakistan has evolved to include traceability systems and regenerative agriculture approaches, aiming to embed sustainability across the entire cotton value chain.

WWF Pakistan Punjab programme

BCI provides annual repeat funding to WWF-Pakistan to train farmers and collect data for BCI's learning 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).

Scale

Smallholder Farmers (those less than 20 hectares). Smallholder farmers are organised into groups called Producer Units (PU) with a Manager (PUM) and Field Facilitators (FF) (who train the farmers and collect data). These PUs are managed by Programme Partners (in this case WWF Punjab) 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
Khanewal	PKKW01	2,873
Khanewal	PKKW02	2,994
Khanewal	PKKW03	2,862
Khanewal	PKKW06	2,875
Khanewal	PKKW09	2,819
Khanewal	PKKW10	2,978
Khanewal	PKKW11	3,460
Lodhran	PKLD04	3,044
Lodhran	PKLD05	2,808
Lodhran	PKLD06	2,371
Lodhran	PKLD07	3,068
Lodhran	PKLD08	2,530
Lodhran	PKLD09	2,899
Multan	PKML01	3,274
Multan	PKML02	2,776
Multan	PKML03	3,070

Multan	PKML04	2,750
Multan	PKML11	3,148
The below PUs were not in baseline sample but added to the project in seasons 2024/25 and 2025/26. We'd like evaluators to consider how best to include them in the endline. See Key considerations section for more information.		
Bahawalpur	PKBW22	3,290
Bahawalpur	PKBW23	3,247
Bahawalpur	PKBW24	3,001
Bahawalpur	PKBW25	3,202
Bahawalpur	PKBW26	3,036
Bahawalpur	PKBW27	3,291
Bahawalpur	PKBW28	3,016
Bahawalpur	PKBW29	3,006
	Total	77,688

Medium size farms (farms sized 20 hectares to 100 hectares). Medium size farms are organised into producer units of 60-100 medium sized farmers and have the same organisational support structure as smallholder farmers.

District	Producer Unit Codes	Number of Farmers
Khanewal	PKKW05	100
Khanewal	PKKW08	99
Lodhran	PKLD01	100
Lodhran	PKLD02	100
Lodhran	PKLD03	100
Lodhran	PKLD10	100
Lodhran	PKLD11	91
Lodhran	PKLD12	100
	Total	790

Training:

WWF Pakistan trains farmers via the cascade model. Guidance and requirements are provided by BCI Pakistan, which is then used by WWF Pakistan to train PUMs, who then train Field Facilitators. FFs then provide training to farmers/farming household members and workers in learning groups and include information dissemination, practical demonstrations and demonstration plots.

Results Chain

Activities	Outcomes with targets	Pathway specific Impacts	Cross-cutting Impacts
Train farmers on Soil Health practices Demonstration Plots for 4R (fertilizer: Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place) nutrient management, compost, use of fermenter and crop residue management Soil test analysis of 20% sampled Learning Groups (LGs)	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended soil health practices including: • Organic seed coating (2000 farmers trained, 40 adopted) • Crop residue management (6000 trained, 300 adopted) • Reduced tillage • Use of 1 micronutrient (79,002 trained, 54,511 adopted) • Application of organic fertiliser (79,002 trained, 31,600 adopted) • 4R nutrient management • Regenerative agriculture (79,002 trained, 11,850 adopted)	• Increased NPK • Improved pH of soil (closer to neutral) • Reduced salinity of soil (electrical conductivity)	• Increased soil organic carbon • Increased /maintained yield • Increased /maintained profit • Reduced Greenhouse gas emissions
Train farmers on Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended IPM practices, including use of:	• Reduced toxic load of pesticide use	

Demo plots for HHP alternatives, reduced pesticide use, botanicals and biopesticides, and alternate pest control methods Sensitisation of pesticide dealers and Govt. officials Distribution of PPE kits among spray applicators	• HHP alternatives (79,002 trained, 67,151 adopted) • Biopesticides and botanicals (79,002 trained, 3,450 adopted) • Minimum PPE (79,002 trained, 35,551 adopted) • Alternate pest control methods (79,002 trained, 39,501 adopted) • Reducing /ha pesticide use • Avoid cocktails (self-mixed pesticides) (79,002 trained, 67,151 adopted)		
Train farmers on climate change mitigation practices Demo plots for laser land levelling, crop rotation, reduced tillage, and mulching	Farmers effectively implement multiple recommended climate change mitigation practices including: • Laser land levelling (79,002 trained, 33,970 adopted)		

Development of Climate Change Resilience Index Development of Biodiversity Enhancement Plan for 35 PUs Identification of degraded areas, developing and implementing their restoration plan	• Crop rotation/early sowing (79,002 trained, 5530 adopted) • Reduced tillage (79,002 trained, 3950 adopted) • Mulching (1,000 trained, 50 adopted) • Water scouting and water stewardship (79,002 trained, 41081 adopted)		
Women's Empowerment Linkages to social security institutions developed Staff Training on fundamental principles and rights	• 2000 women adopting crop management practices (25,000 trained) • 6500 women contributing to decision making about farming activities (10,000 trained) • 2500 women practising their rights (25,000 trained) • Women have access to social security benefits	• Women have a say in important production/income generation decisions	

	• Gender Leads established and active. • Gender Committees established and active		
Sustainable Livelihoods Access to information for farming families about technical training opportunities using the platform of vocational training institutes	• 5,000 farming HHs adopting crop diversification (10,000 trained) • 6320 farmers adopting intercropping • 1500 farming HHs maintain vegetable-growing plots (1500 provided kits and training) • 225 entrepreneurs identified from farming HHs run successful businesses • 1,000 farming families linked to social security schemes.	• Increase in family's average monthly income	
Decent work Promotion of knowledge on good working conditions so these can be experienced by workers	• Farmers and workers trained on working conditions and laws	• Reduction in number of injuries or illness that caused 2 or more days off • Payment meets fair levels for work delivered • Increase in percent of workers with	

		access to clean water, shade, breaks and ensured don't access fields soon after pesticide spraying • National and BCI Child labour guidance followed (working age, suitable tasks, supervision)	

Scope of Work of evaluation

The evaluation is 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 because 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/market, etc.?

6. What are the key recommendations for WWF Pakistan, BCI Pakistan 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?

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 district of Bahawalpur was added to the project in year 2. It should be noted that approximately 30% of the farmers in the Bahawalpur PUs participated in previous BCI/WWF projects, but 70% can be considered 'new farmers'. BCI would like Bahawalpur to be considered as part of the evaluation if possible. We can see different opportunities (with their benefits and limitations) for how to include Bahawalpur – perhaps as a comparison to the more established PUs (controlling for district factors), but note it does not have baseline data. We'd like evaluators to explain if and how they would include Bahawalpur in the evaluation
- 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.
    - The baseline report and data cannot be made available before contracting.
- 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.
    - Historically, it has been a challenge to identify enough comparison cotton farmers to act as a counterfactual. WWF Pakistan Punjab believe it could be possible to identify around 150 non-BCI/WWF cotton farmers at endline. If these farmers become part of the design, then it should be clear how:
        - These farmers will be identified.
        - How any possible influential differences will be controlled for as part of the analysis.
        - How the lack of baseline will be considered.
        - How ethical issues will be considered - that farmers will be asked to provide time to assess a project they will perhaps not benefit from.
        - A 'plan B' in case sufficient comparison farmers cannot be found.

- 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 Pakistan 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 and want applicants to explain and justify which approach they plan to use.
- When comparing baseline to endline values there is a risk that comparison of values of single season indicators will be misleading as they are influenced by external climate, pest and price changes. An option to reduce this risk is to use 2- or 3-year averages of available data (see below) around the baseline time, and for the endline, so as to show if there is a consistent direction of change.
- 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, number of years within BCI/WWF project (note – this length of time in project could be used to explore impact of years in project).
    - 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.
- Better Cotton Initiative and the baseline study used the Cool Farm Tool to calculate greenhouse gas emissions. The same or similarly respected tool should be used in this endline.
- Toxic Load calculations of pesticide use https://www.pestizidexperte.de/Publikationen/Neumeister_17_Toxic_Load_Indicator_Documentation.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- 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.

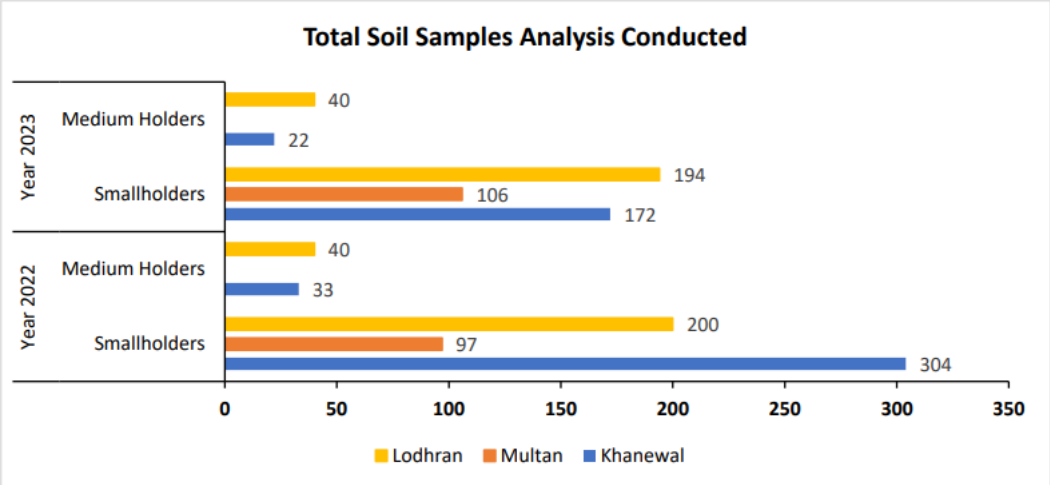
- Identifying indicators that are seen as most important and prioritising data collection on these, whilst keeping to a minimum the questions on less important indicators.
- Splitting the sample so that all farmers are asked 'core questions' but then one group are asked questions on some issues/practices, 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 and sharing of 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. Typically, BCI have used 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error as the desire for the overall precision but also want consultants to consider precision for sub-samples, power and design effect if clustering is used. 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 each cluster to avoid too large a design effect.
  - Baseline samples were all randomly selected for districts Khanewal, Lodhran and Multan (with Muzaffargarh excluded) through multistage sampling. At the first stage the Producer Units were sampled from all districts through systematic sampling by selecting the respondents with regular interval from registered farmers lists. After sampling of PUs, the learning groups (LGs) were sampled systematically. The farmer's sampling was done as per number of farmers in each PU and sample of farmers was proportionally divided into each sampled LG. Below is the sample size for quantitative survey for the baseline:

Sr. No	District	No. of PU's	Sampled PU's	No. of Reg. Farmers	Sample Size
1	Khanewal	10	PKKW01	2946	**80**
			PKKW03	2957	**80**
			PKKW05 (Medium Farm)	82	**21**
			PKKW09	3066	**79**
			PKKW11	3503	**117**
2	Lodhran	12	PKLD02 (MF)	97	**20**

			PKLD04	3119	**152**
			PKLD06	2587	**118**
			PKLD08	2751	**91**
			PKLD10 (MF)	100	**20**
3	Multan	5	PKML01	3586	**92**
			PKML02	2881	**56**
			PKML03	3288	**63**
			PKML04	2600	**97**
			PKML11	3300	**79**
Total		**27**	**15**	**36,863**	**1,165**

- Soil samples: The data for the baseline soil results was taken from soil samples that WWF Pakistan collected in 22/23 season and 23/24 season. This samples were collected in April of 2022 and 2023 (before soil nutrients applied). The data came from one farmer randomly selected from 20% of the LGs in each PU (each PU has around 100 LGs, so 20 samples per PU per year). The samples were analysed at a government laboratory. In the WWF Pakistan soil test data, there was soil analysis data available for most of the LGs that were sampled for baseline. For those LGs whose soil analysis was not available, the neighbouring LG soil analysis in the same PU were used.
- Note – longitude and latitude data is available for the 2022 soil samples, but not for 2023 samples.



- WWF are currently taking their annual soil samples from 20% of LGs.
- Endline applicants will be expected to include in their application both farmer and soil sampling methodologies, together with which soil sample laboratories to use – this could be using WWF data or collecting additional data, or a combination of

both. Please note, Khanewal district cotton sowing is late February, before the start of this consultancy. BCI are likely to commission some soil sampling of Khanewal in February of a sample of farmers, likely from some of farmers in the baseline sample to allow for baseline to endline comparison of key soil results. It is hoped this data can be included by the independent evaluation team in their evaluation.

- We expect the final results 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

6 February 2026	Questions deadline All questions must be sent only to tender@bettercotton.org with the RFP Reference in the Subject line.
15 February 2026	**Applications deadline** All applications must be submitted via this **form**.
16 February to 02 March 2026	Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews
By 6 March 2026	The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful shortlisted applicants will also be notified shortly afterwards
16 March 2026	**Start of the consultancy**
By 6 April 2026	Deliverable 1 – Inception Report – an update of the evaluation proposal (methods, sampling and workplan) based on document review and interviews.
By 20 April 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-June	Main farmer survey completed

By 30 September 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 20 December 2026	Deliverable 4: Final report and Presentation Deliverable 5: Raw and cleaned data set with data analysis code book

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's 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 Pakistan
Ability to organise data collection in Punjab Pakistan in project locations, in Urdu 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: BCI's language of operation is English
Desirable
Lead and other team members with master's degree in agriculture, related topics and/or research and evaluation
Experience in Greenhouse gas emission calculations
Experience in Toxic Load of pesticide use calculations (or similar)
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 **25,000-35,000 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 2026-1-GIF-WWFENDLINEPAK

1. **Question 1**

   Inclusion of Bahawalpur farmers: Given that approximately 70% of farmers in Bahawalpur are new participants without baseline data, could you provide guidance on the preferred approach for including them in the evaluation? Would a contribution analysis, or another methodology, be considered appropriate to assess the impact of WWF activities in this district?

   Answer
   The inclusion of Bahawalpur farmers offers interesting opportunities as the 'new' farmers could be seen as a group which have had less exposure to project support and so offer a partial comparison to farmers in districts that experienced support from WWF for longer. However, the suitability of comparison would depend on similarities between the farmers in different districts.

   BCI has no preferred approach to assess impact in Bahawalpur, 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 and also determining the baseline values without the baseline data for these farmers being available.

2. **Question 2**

   Soil sampling and laboratory protocols: Considering the existing WWF soil data, what is your expectation regarding additional soil sample collection by evaluators? Are there any preferences for sample size, timing, or lab procedures that we should follow to ensure comparability with baseline data?

Answer

It depends and is for the applicants to clearly state in their application
If they feel that WWF and government lab is sufficient, they can use the results from WWF/government labs. However, if they feel this is not suitable, they should propose and cost their own approach (including sample size and required lab procedures). The soil data should be collected in April 2026.

3. **Question 3**

Survey design and indicators: With many outcome and impact indicators to assess, are there preferred approaches for managing questionnaire length while maintaining data quality—such as prioritizing core indicators, splitting samples, or leveraging existing partner data?

Answer

In the past, we have split samples and prioritised core indicators, but we are open to seeing what options are proposed by the evaluation team.

4. **Question 4**

Comparison farmers / counterfactuals: Could you clarify expectations regarding the inclusion of non-project cotton farmers, including sample selection, ethical considerations, and handling the absence of baseline data?

Answer

These considerations are all relevant, and for the evaluation team to address; we have noted them in the RFP to see what approach is suggested by the applicants and why they feel this is suitable.

5. **Question 5**

Team composition and expertise: Are there specific expectations for the number or roles of team members, provided the required expertise in sustainable agriculture, rural research, evaluation design, and quantitative/qualitative analysis is met?

Answer

There is no specific expectation when it comes to the number or roles of team members, except that each member of the team should be a necessary addition in terms of meeting the required competencies and skill set mentioned in the RFP.

6. **Question 6**

Budget alignment and value-for-money: Could you provide guidance on how proposals will be evaluated in relation to the allocation of budget between fieldwork, analysis, and reporting, particularly within the indicated €25,000–35,000 range?

Answer

The budget should be clear and show days per staff per task, together with daily rate. The other judgement is the extent the proposed budget offers good value against – experience/skills of the team, the days per core team, and the days of data collection. The allocation of time between tasks is up to the judgement of the evaluation team and should be sufficient to perform the task to a good standard.

7. **Question 7**

Inclusion of Bahawalpur District in the Evaluation

The RFP mentions that Bahawalpur PUs were added in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 seasons and do not have baseline data. Could you please clarify:

Should Bahawalpur be treated as a separate cohort for comparison, or integrated into the overall analysis with appropriate statistical adjustments?

Are there any specific indicators or outcomes where BCI is particularly interested in assessing Bahawalpur's performance?

Answer

We would like to see how the evaluation team would include Bahawalpur into the evaluation. Ideally, we would like Bahawalpur to be evaluated on the same indicators and outcomes that are considered for other districts, and the applications to clarify how to include it in the analysis.

8. Question 8

Approach to Causation and Contribution Analysis

The RFP emphasizes going beyond simple baseline-endline comparisons and suggests methods like contribution analysis. Could you provide:

Examples of successful causation assessment approaches used in past BCI evaluations?

Any specific contextual factors (e.g., market trends, policy changes) that BCI considers particularly relevant for this evaluation?

Answer

BCI is in its early stages of exploring different causation approaches and so does not have a definitive 'success' case we want to highlight at this time. We are open to different approaches providing they seem suitable for the evaluation questions, the likely data available, and the evaluation team have the experience and competency to use this approach.

Key contextual factors are likely price of inputs, price of cotton, pests/disease, weather. There may be other key factors specific to Punjab that could be identified through further research.

9. Question 9

Use of Existing WWF-Collected Data

The RFP notes that WWF collects annual data on training attendance, farmer characteristics, input use, yields, etc. To avoid survey fatigue and duplication:

Which indicators should be prioritized for primary data collection vs. those that can be reliably sourced from WWF?

Is there a preferred format or platform for accessing WWF's existing datasets?

Answer

Indicators that need to be prioritised include the ones pertaining to our thematic areas: soil health, crop protection, etc, and those the evaluation team identify as most important to answer the key evaluation questions.

The evaluators can consider WWF data, but should identify which data they feel needs to come from third party independent data collection.

Data annually collected by WWF will be available in the form of raw excel and as online dashboard and includes all indicators that have been clearly listed in the RFP. This dashboard will be shared with the evaluation team after their selection.

10. Question 10

Comparison Group Consideration

The RFP mentions the potential inclusion of ~150 non-BCI/WWF farmers as a comparison group. Could you clarify:

Whether BCI has existing criteria or methods for identifying and selecting such farmers?

Any ethical considerations or community engagement protocols that should be followed?

Answer

See answer to Question 4.

11. Question 11

Soil Sampling Methodology

BCI may commission additional soil sampling in Khanewal in February 2026. Could you confirm:

Whether this data will be shared with the evaluation team, and if so, in what format?

Whether the evaluation team is expected to collect additional soil samples beyond those taken by WWF?

Answer

Yes, this data will be shared with the evaluation team in the form of list (with details) of sampled farmers, soil test protocol and equipment used, soil test results and their analysis and report. The evaluation team is expected to collect independent soil samples beyond the ones selected by WWF in the districts of Lodhran, Bahawalpur and Multan.

12. Question 12

Questionnaire Length and Sampling Strategy

Given the need to limit surveys to 45–55 minutes:

Does BCI have a preferred method for prioritizing indicators (e.g., core vs. secondary modules, split sampling)?

Are there any specific indicators that BCI considers non-negotiable for inclusion in every farmer survey?

Answer

See answer to Q3. Also, we don't have a preferred method for prioritising indicators. BCI does have 5-6 thematic areas, and their prioritisation varies across our program partners depending on the activities they have implemented over the past 3 years. The evaluation team is expected to identify those indicators based on review of partner data, project documents and their meetings with BCI and WWF staff.

13. Question 13

Budget and Deliverable Expectations

The budget range is indicated as €25,000–35,000. Could you clarify:

Whether this budget is expected to cover all costs, including fieldwork, laboratory analysis, travel, and reporting?

Whether there is flexibility for additional costs such as translation, validation workshops, or extended stakeholder engagement?

Answer

The top budget available is presented in the RFP and is felt to be reasonable for the expected deliverables including inception report, field work (travel and data collection), analysis and reporting. To go beyond this budget would require justification from the applicant. For the lab analysis costs, it is for the applicants to clearly state in their application. If they feel that WWF and government lab is sufficient, they can use the results from WWF/government labs. However, if they feel WWF/Gov soil data is not suitable, they should propose and cost their own approach.

14. Question 14

Data Sharing and Reporting Timeline

The RFP mentions early access to data via dashboards. Could you specify:

The preferred digital data collection tools (e.g., ODK, SurveyCTO) and reporting platforms?

Whether intermediate reporting or validation workshops with WWF/BCI are expected during the data collection phase?

Answer

Yes, we'd like access to the data from the farm survey within 2-3 days (ODK, SurveyCTO, KoboCollect etc. are all fine) so we can check the initial 30-50 responses to the survey questionnaire. We wish to check the responses are both within expected range and distribution, and questions seem to be understood as intended by the respondents.

15. Question 15

I would be grateful if you could kindly advise whether I may submit a proposal as an individual academic / institutional affiliate, and guide me regarding any specific procedural requirements, eligibility criteria, or submission protocols related to this RFP

Answer

The eligibility criteria have been listed in detail in the RFP, and we are aware of the skill sets required being quite niche. If an individual can prove through his/her technical and financial proposals that he/she has the required skill sets, we can consider the applicant. Having said that, for data collection, an individual will not be enough. He/she will have to

sub-contract to a data collection firm, which is permitted. If this is done, we will verify 1) whether the lead agency and sub-contractor have worked together before (number of times and content of collaborations), and 2) the experience of the sub-contractor with this type of work.

16. Question 16

We don't see any specific requirements for the applicant company/firm, e.g. type of registration, years of experience, etc. Our understand from this is that BGN is eligible to apply, kindly confirm?

Answer

We don't understand what is meant by BGN. The required experience and skill set for each team member has been listed in detail in the RFP. We understand the importance of registration, but we are aware of the skill sets required being quite niche and therefore are happy to accept submissions from a pool of individual experts.

17. Question 17

Our understanding is that the skills & knowledge of individual team members are mentioned and not of the company. The same applies to "an example of other work" (p16, line 2)? Kindly confirm, so that we present evidence of the required experience, skills, and example of other work of our team members.

Answer

We are open to receiving applications from both organisations/consulting firms and a pool of independent experts as long as the criteria for skill set and years of experience are being met. We want the examples and experience to relate to the team proposed as it is not relevant experience if the team members were not involved in the provided examples. If a pool of independent experts it would be helpful to clarify if they have worked together before.

"An example of other work" means research/evaluation assignments (reports, case studies, presentations) of a similar nature that have been done by the organisation or the experts in the past. We wish to see how information is clear presented in a succent and engaging way.

18. Question 18

Before finalizing our proposal submission, we would like to inquire whether BCI has specific **templates, formats, or guidelines** for:

1. **Technical Proposal** (structure, required sections, page limits per section)
2. **Financial Proposal** (budget format, required cost breakdowns, currency specifications)
3. **Evaluation Reports** (if there are standard templates for inception reports, draft reports, or final reports that successful bidders must follow)

If such templates or guidelines exist, we would greatly appreciate receiving them to ensure our proposal aligns with BCI's requirements and expectations.

Answer

The Technical proposal should be maximum 12 pages. The sections should prioritise explaining how the evaluation would be conducted – what happens in inception, choice/design of data collection tools, choice/design of sample, data collection process, analysis process, and how this will answer the key evaluation questions. If space, also to identify risks / challenges in the evaluation and how these would be mitigated. The RFP gives guidance on the scale of project, results chain and key considerations to ensure the application covers.

The CVs can be provided separately. It is appreciated if the CVs could highlight example research/evaluation on smallholder agriculture (especially cotton), in the project locations and that involved similar research/evaluation approaches and tools as proposed for this evaluation.

The financial proposal needs to show days per team member and their daily rate. It is helpful if it is clear how much time each team member spends on each stage of the evaluation – for example on inception, data collection, analysis/reporting.

For suitable work examples – “An example of other work” means research/evaluation assignments (reports, case studies, presentations) of a similar nature that have been done by the organisation or the experts in the past. We wish to see how information is clear presented in a succent and engaging way.

19. Question 19

Could you please confirm whether the baseline report and raw datasets will be shared immediately upon contracting, so they can inform the inception phase, sampling refinement, and data collection tool design?

Answer

Yes – they will be shared once the contract is signed so they can inform the inception phase and all subsequent phases.

20. Question 20

Given the absence of baseline data for Bahawalpur Producer Units, does Better Cotton have a preferred expectation for how Bahawalpur should be analysed (e.g. learning-oriented sub-analysis or quasi-comparison based on exposure duration), or should evaluators propose and justify their own approach?

Answer

See answer to Q1

21. Question 21

Could you clarify whether the endline evaluation team is expected to independently commission additional soil sampling beyond the soil data that WWF/BCI plan to collect in early 2026, or whether reliance on WWF-collected soil data is acceptable where analytically robust?

Answer

See Q11

22. Question 22

To manage questionnaire length and respondent burden, is Better Cotton open to evaluators relying on existing WWF monitoring and administrative datasets for selected outcome indicators, with primary data collection focused on validation and impact-level indicators?

Answer

Yes. The choice of what data to use can include WWF monitoring data and administrative data. The choice of data for each indicator and evaluation question should be justified.

23. Question 23

In the event that identifying a sufficient number of non-BCI comparison farmers proves infeasible, would a contribution-analysis-based design relying on internal variation (e.g. years in programme, intensity of exposure) be considered an acceptable alternative?

Answer

Yes, contribution analysis would be acceptable.

24. Question 24

Does BCI expect re-contacting baseline farmers (panel design), or is a repeat cross-sectional sample acceptable?

Answer

The choice of sample for endline is for the evaluation team to decide. Repeating baseline or repeating cross-sectional are acceptable. The choice should be explained.

25. Question 25

For Bahawalpur (without baseline data), should it be analysed separately or integrated into pooled analysis with appropriate controls?

Answer

Both approaches could be used. It is likely that some separate analysis should be used for some results to ensure that the lower level of project exposure is considered.

26. Question 26

If sufficient non-BCI comparison farmers cannot be identified, would a theory-based approach (e.g., Contribution Analysis) without a formal counterfactual be acceptable?

Answer

Yes see Q23

27. Question 27

Is statistical precision required at district level and for smallholder vs. medium farms, or only at overall project level?

Answer

Overall project. However, the precision required for other levels would be useful to propose and include for us to understand.

28. Question 28

Are there expectations regarding minimum detectable effects for key outcome indicators (e.g., pesticide use, yield, GHG emissions)?

Answer

No, these should be proposed by the evaluation team based on their experience.

29. Question 29

Should the endline replicate the baseline soil sampling methodology (20% of LGs), or may an adjusted design be proposed?

Answer

An adjusted design can be proposed with justification.

30. Question 30

Will the February Khanewal soil data commissioned by BCI be made available in time for integration into the evaluation?

Answer

Yes. It is hoped this data will be available by May. Note – the data is collected in March, with the timing of results dependent on lab processing times.

31. Question 31

Is use of the Cool Farm Tool mandatory for GHG calculations, or may an equivalent internationally recognised tool be proposed?

Answer

As the cool farm tool was used at baseline and also is currently BCI's preferred tool we would like Cool Farm Tool to be used. If another tool is proposed there would be need for both justification and also re-analysis of baseline data.

32. Question 32

Will baseline toxic load calculation sheets, pesticide coefficients, and related documentation be shared to ensure methodological consistency?

Answer

Yes.

33. Question 33

In what format will baseline datasets, questionnaires, and codebooks be shared following contracting?

Answer

Excel

34. Question 34

Will WWF routine monitoring datasets be provided in cleaned/validated format, or is further verification expected from the evaluation team?

Answer

The data will be excel and likely cleaned. However, as the season is only being completed there may be some cleaning to do for the current season being completed.

35. Question 35

Does BCI require formal ethical/IRB approval?

Answer

No, however, we expect data collection to follow good practice in line with BCI's own ethical data collection standards.

36. Question 36

Is compensation for non-BCI comparison farmers permissible, if included in the design?

Answer

This can be proposed and should be included in the design.

37. Question 37

Does the 45-minute questionnaire limit apply to all modules combined, and is a modular/split-sample design acceptable?

Answer

It's the total length of questionnaire any farmer should experience if interviewed.

38. Question 38

Should the proposed budget include laboratory soil testing and full field logistics across all districts?

Answer

If the soil sampling is not using WWF soil sampling (where they do one farmer per year from 20% of LGs and tested at government lab), then the budget should include soil testing. The cost should be clearly stated in the budget.

39. Question 39

Is there a standard reporting template to follow, and will the final presentation be virtual or in person?

Answer

Yes, Better Cotton will provide a reporting template ahead of the report. The final presentation is likely virtual to allow attendees from Europe, Lahore and WWF Punjab office. However, evaluators are welcome to propose some additional in person presentations.