

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) for

FINAL EVALUATION OF 12/12: An Alliance for Year-Round Resilience in Tahoua and Maradi activity, Niger

RFP #:	FY21-100-NER-092- Consultancy Niger
Services Requested:	Endline Evaluation Consultancy
Issue Date:	April 13, 2021
Questions Due Date:	April 23, 2021, 12:00 PM EST (Washington, DC)
Response to questions:	April 28, 2021
Closing Date:	May 3, 2021 12:00 PM EST (Washington, DC)
Anticipated Award Date:	May 21, 2021
Anticipated Award Type:	Fixed Price & Fixed Quantity Contract

1. Introduction

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in collaboration with Corus International invites qualified suppliers to submit offers in accordance with the requirements and specifications listed in this document. Quotes must be received by Corus no later than the Date and Time indicated in the above table.

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) was founded in 1945 to respond to the needs of communities devastated by World War II. LWR now works with local implementing partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America to respond to emergencies and seek lasting solutions to rural poverty and health services. LWR works in four core thematic areas of agriculture, climate change, emergency operations and health. Within agriculture it focuses on creating strong local economies and resilient communities.

In 2016, LWR launched a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded activity called 12/12: Alliance for Year-Round Resilience Project in the Tahoua and Maradi regions of Niger. The activity seeks to leverage new private-sector expertise and innovative solutions to improve the resilience of 12,760 households over all 12 months of the year in 10 communes and 115 villages located in agro-pastoral and marginal agriculture livelihood zones of Iléla, Konni and Malbaza departments of the Tahoua region) and Dakoro of the Maradi region--and simultaneously help the 12/12 Alliance's private sector partners expand their market share, mitigate operating risks and secure more reliable supply chains. More specifically, the activity aims to:

- Leverage private sector investment and innovations to increase and sustain household incomes, assets and adaptive capacity, and
- Strengthen the organizational capacity of farmer associations to sustain member services, manage risks and leverage business opportunities.

A baseline study was conducted in 2016 to understand the local context better, refine performance indicators, and set indicator targets for the activity. Similarly, a mid-term

evaluation was conducted in 2019 to assess mid-way performance against the targets and to adjust the programming as needed. The activity is currently running in its final year. Hence LWR plans to conduct an endline study to evaluate the overall performance of the activity and document important success stories and lessons learned. In this regard, LWR invites qualified evaluation firm to conduct the endline performance evaluation of the project.

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE

As noted above, the activity has planned for a final performance evaluation to be undertaken as part of learning agenda. LWR plans to contract an independent third-party evaluator to assess the performance and results of the activity against its results framework¹. The evaluator will need to determine the reasons for success or lack thereof, draw lessons and recommendations for similar future activities. The evaluation will be conducted based on OECD's Development Assistance Program's (DAC) project evaluation criteria which are relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of interventions. Particular attention would need to be given to the gender dimension as it relates to activity outcomes using the above evaluation criteria.

The activity zone has experienced unprecedented climate, security and health shocks (COVID-19) that affected operations, interventions and markets in 2019 and 2020. From the activity and LWR's perspective, it's important to understand activity's performance in the pandemic context as well. Thus, the evaluation should try to examine the potential impact of shocks on activity's performance and interpret the findings accordingly. The evaluation will also investigate on few questions that are important from an organizational learning perspective. The goal of these questions is not to evaluate the success of activity, but more about finding evidence on certain aspects of the intervention or outcomes that offer a new insight or understanding. A list of the priority learning questions is presented in the next section.

The findings of the evaluation will inform LWR, partners and USAID for future programming. In addition to measuring the activity against project objectives, the evaluation will serve as an opportunity to investigate on certain aspects of the activity which were/are assumed to be important, but no objective evidence is searched out for. These aspects are noted as "learning questions" in the following section. All the findings and evidence resulting from this study will be shared with the activity team and partners, broader LWR management and staff, USAID, and possibly with other peer organizations through appropriate conferences or working group meetings (for example, the SEEP annual conference).

3. EVALUATION SCOPE

The main objective of this evaluation is to examine the performance of the activity against its goal and targets. This needs to be done by investigating interventions, results and activity goal from an angle of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The evaluator is expected to investigate in each of these areas with sufficient evidence and justification.

¹ The results framework can be reviewed in the mid-term evaluation report available in the annex of this RFP.

All of the detailed evaluation questions listed below should be compared to activity data-baseline, mid-term review and annual narrative/performance data collection reports and other activity and performance data available in the project's Salesforce instance (exportable to Excel or csv.)- which will be made available to the selected evaluator, and the qualitative endline data collected during the assignment. The major questions to examine in the evaluation are as follows:

3.1 : Relevance: Did the activity address priority problems faced by the target areas and communities, especially that of women and youth, and was the activity consistent with policies of both donors and recipient governments?

- Were the activities and outputs of the activity consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Was the activity in line with the needs and priorities of the targeted populations?
- Were the assumptions in the Proposal reasonable, appropriate and still valid? How well did the response integrate with and build on the affected population's existing capacity and knowledge?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendation for future activity or research?

3.2 : Coherence: Were the interventions compatible with other interventions in the project area?

- To what extent were the interventions coherent to cross-government and/or cross-organizational coordination to avoid duplication of efforts or to create synergies?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendations for future activity?

3.3: Effectiveness – Whether interventions, outputs and outcomes have been achieved?

- To what extent were the objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- How effective was the 12/12 Alliance in terms of activity delivery (coordination, cooperation, efficiency, standardization)? How did ICT/T4D contribute, or not, to this?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendations for future activity or research?

3.3 : Efficiency – Were inputs (staff, time, money, equipment) used in the best possible way to achieve outputs; could implementation have been improved/was there a better way of doing things?

- Were activities cost-efficient? Were objectives achieved on time? Was the activity implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
- Did the activity have adequate and the appropriate resources (human, financial and capital) for implementation?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendations for future activities or research?

3.4 : Impact - The evaluator will assess the positive and negative changes produced by the activity interventions, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

- How did different target groups—beneficiary men, women, youth, and other stakeholders-- fare with respect to various results and targets as expected by the activity? How can the results observed be explained?
- Is there an improvement in households' income, assets and adaptive capacities in target communities? If yes, what factors contributed or were associated with the

changes in these indicators?

- Has the organizational capacity of the farmer organizations improved?
- What are the unintended positive and negative impacts of the activity?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendations for future activity or research?

3.5: Sustainability - The continuation of benefits from the intervention after funding assistance has ceased. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

- To what extent will the benefits of the activity continue after donor funding ceases? Are the positive effects sustainable?
- What were the major factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the activity?
- What sustainability drivers are evident or have potential? (local ownership by national or sub-national government entities, private partners, transformed relationships, advocacy, and household resilience)?
- What lessons were learnt? Recommendations for future activity or research?

Learning Questions

- What were the key drivers to spur application of new approaches or technologies by the beneficiaries for adult men, women and young men and women? How did ICT/T4D contribute, or not, to this?
- Farmers trust in their Union leaders seems to have improved since the baseline. What were the most significant organizational outcomes for the Union and which factors contributed to these changes?

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

LWR seeks a methodology for this evaluation that can effectively answer the evaluation questions and that provide space for participants to flag unintended results. Applicants are encouraged to develop evaluation approach and methodologies that allow sufficient data collection and analysis even during the pandemic situation. An ideal methodology will mix quantitative and qualitative data analysis, with a robust process to analyze existing performance data in the project's Salesforce instance and collect primary qualitative data by participatorily engaging activity participants, cooperative leaders, partner staff and LWR staff. LWR is aware about the fact that the ongoing Covid-19 may hinder primary data collection effort, and as such a complete participation of different stakeholders—especially with participants—may not be possible due to travel restrictions. We expect the consultant to propose alternate plans to collect primary qualitative data if in-country travels become impossible due to Covid-19 or other unexpected reasons.

Creative use of data collection, participatory data analysis, and presentation of findings that maximize the usefulness of the evaluation will be very important. The evaluator will work closely with LWR to finalize the evaluation methodology, participant selection approach for interviews, data collection tools and the work plan before field work. All local hires (data collectors, translators, etc.) must be hired and managed by the evaluator and paid out of their contract; LWR will only manage one contract with the main consultant/firm.

5. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

Inception Report: The consultant will prepare and submit an inception report detailing how the evaluation will be carried out from his/her point of view. The report will outline the study design, tools and detailed work plan for the entire exercise. Draft interview guide and other data collection tools will be submitted to LWR for review and approval before data collection starts. As part of the inception report, the consultant must provide a data analysis plan showing the questions and analysis for each of the activity indicators to be investigated.

Preliminary Report: The consultant will submit draft evaluation report to LWR. The draft report will be reviewed, and comments provided on the report within a week of submission.

Final Report: The consultant will submit detailed final report outlining the evaluation methodology, findings, lessons learned and recommendations. The report shall incorporate specific simple and achievable recommendations, including the most appropriate strategies that can be undertaken and/or incorporated by LWR and partners to attempt to address the issues identified. The final report should address the issues and questions raised in this RFP and correspond to the evaluation objectives set out above. A final report in both hard and electronic copies shall be made available to LWR no later than **Oct 22, 2021**.

The report should contain (but not limited to) the following:

- Executive Summary presenting the major findings and recommendations.
- A short description of the assessment context and process including its constraints and challenges.
- A short description of the methodology used.
- Data and study limitations.
- Detailed findings based on the study, including annexes of all the assessments from all communities, pictures, case studies and any quotations.
- Analysis of the findings (following the key questions outlined in the RFP).
- Lessons learnt; conclusions and recommendations.

The annexes of the report should contain (but not be limited to):

- The evaluation Terms of Reference.
- List of reference documents.
- Copies of tools used.
- List of people interviewed, with affiliation and contact details.
- Cleaned quantitative and qualitative datasets with the memo of the data cleaning process.
- Code book and Data dictionary.

Criteria to ensure the quality of the evaluation report

- ✓ The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well researched and well-organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- ✓ The evaluation report shall address all questions included in the scope of work.
- ✓ The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to

the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing.

- ✓ Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as participants selection strategy, interview guides, checklists, code and memos, will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- ✓ Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on men, women and youth.
- ✓ Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- ✓ Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- ✓ Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- ✓ Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- ✓ Recommendations should be action oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.
- ✓ The report shall be written in English or French and professionally edited.

All deliverables are expected to be provided in either English or French.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Planning and coordination ahead of data collection, especially to finalize evaluation methodology, will be managed at LWR HQ by LWR's Sr. Advisor for Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning, who will serve as the main LWR point of contact from interview to the end of the contract. LWR's 12/12 project M&E Manager will coordinate on-the-ground logistics and participant preparation, with LWR's Sr. Regional Technical Advisor for Program Quality backstopping as necessary. LWR's 12/12 project ICT Manager will provide access to Salesforce data. These staff will provide all necessary activity background, available reports and data such as regular project progress reports, annual performance monitoring data, and baseline and mid-term reports, an orientation to LWR and its work in Niger, and introductions to relevant stakeholders and staff of the activity immediately after signing the contract. LWR staff will likely not participate in the full duration of data collection but will accompany the evaluator/team for important events and make relevant introductions.

7. EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The evaluation is expected to take **60 working days** for the initial planning phase, qualitative and quantitative data collection from appropriate locations, report writing and presentation. Considering that the activity closes at different times in the different locations, the consultancy period will be staggered as summarized in the table below with the final consolidated report submitted by **Oct 22, 2021**.

The schedule is summarized below:

	Activity/Task	Deliverables	District	Proposed Dates	No. of Days
1	Advertise, interview and recruit consultant(s)	Qualified consultant/team selected	All	May 21, 2021	
2	Preliminary meeting with selected consultant to discuss expectations about key deliverables and other associated responsibilities.	Common understanding & agreement on the way forward and expected deliverables. Signing of contract	All	June 1, 2021	1 day
3	Document review Development of the inception report including methodology, data collection tools, analysis plan and work plan for review, feedback and approval. Presentation of the inception report. Planning meeting with 12/12 team	Inception Report developed presented and approved. Agreement on work plan and related logistics	All	June 02-17, 2021	6 days
4	Preliminary quantitative data analysis results	Present preliminary quantitative analysis findings and how it informs evaluation questions and qualitative data collection approach. Updated Inception Report. Slide decks of preliminary quantitative findings.	Desk review	June 02-July 15, 2021	10 days
4	Fieldwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewers' training • Pre-testing data collection tools. • Data collection. 	Qualitative data collected from representative areas	Ajékoria, Birnin Lallé, Korahane (Maradi Region) Konni, Bazaga, Tsernaoua, Dogueraoua, Illéla, Badaguichiri, Malbaza (Tahoua Region)	July 16- August 20, 2020	20 days

5	Data management and analysis: Qualitative transcript development, data coding and analysis, Additional quantitative data analysis as needed. Integration with quantitative analysis, Interpretation Debriefing meeting	Complete and clean datasets, Initial findings shared with LWR team		Aug 23-Sept 10, 2021	10 days
6	Writing and submission of draft report	Draft		Sept 24, 2021	7 days
78	Review of Draft Evaluation report based on feedback provided.	Draft report reviewed based on feedback provided	All	Oct 8, 2020	3 days
8	Presentation of final evaluation report	Slide Decks		Oct 14, 2020	1 day
9	Submission of Final consolidated report and Slide Decks	Final report	All	Oct 22, 2021	2 days
	Total Estimated Length of Evaluation				60 days

The exact timeframe and activities will be negotiated with the selected evaluator, though the major required deliverables are stated here. A regular (weekly or bi-weekly) check-in meeting will take place throughout the contract. All evaluation activities and payments must be finalized before **October 31, 2021**.

8. EVALUATOR QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Required qualifications of consultant(s):

- Individuals, teams, firms, or research institutions are eligible to apply
- Demonstrated experience in final performance evaluation similar to this assignment.
- Experience in Niger, including a deep understanding of the recent and ongoing political crisis and its effects on rural economies; at least one member of the evaluation team should be Niger and should speak Hausa.
- Fluent in English and French: the winning firm/individual will be able to have one team member communicate fluently in both languages in written and verbal communications
- Experience with assessments of gender-integrated agriculture programming, with a preference for familiarity with programming that includes individual farmers, farming households, and farmers' cooperatives
- Independence from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation

- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively for day-to-day logistical and contractual arrangements, engaging participatory analysis, and clearly sharing evaluation findings and recommendations
- Demonstrated ability to communicate with rural families, some of whom are functionally illiterate
- Proven background in evaluation of activities/projects, with a preference for previous ex-post evaluation experience
- Proven expertise with quantitative and qualitative methods
- Experience successfully using participatory approaches, particularly to effectively engage women and other marginalized individuals
- The selected consultant(s) will need to understand the security risk posed, and participate in a security briefing
- The selected consultant(s) will need to sign a waiver accepting the risk before traveling

Preference will be given to applicants who:

- Have experience with designing evaluation studies of USAID Feed the Future funded activities/projects
- Have experience with studies that examine ICT in agriculture

Applications should include:

1. Cover page (1 page) noting:
 - a. Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company (if applicable; if not, similar information about the Team Leader).
 - b. Contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between LWR and the submitting organization.
2. Proposed evaluation design/technical proposal (maximum 5 pages), including:
 - a. Summary of relevant experience.
 - b. Description of qualifications and experience of team members, including their roles on this evaluation. Include as attachments the team members' resumes or CVs, signed to indicate commitment and availability for the proposed period.
 - c. General evaluation approach/methodology including timeline and deliverables (adjusted from illustrative timeline as needed).
3. Cost proposal (maximum 2 pages), including:
 - a. The daily rate of the evaluation team members and the anticipated level of effort (number of days) for each member.
 - b. Costs associated with field work, *exclusive* of international travel and visa fees (if applicable); in-country travel; in-country hotel which will be reimbursed or paid directly by LWR.
 - c. Costs should be detailed in US dollars, with applicable tax clearly identified.
4. List of 2 references who can attest to the applicant's experience and expertise as it relates to this project and this RFP.
5. Writing samples may be requested.
6. 60- days bid validity period.
7. Document demonstrating financial solvency.

Application procedure

Complete applications should be submitted as attachments to an email to: JobsNiger@lwr.org.

The subject line should read: **Alliance 12/12 Final Performance Evaluation**

Deadline for the submission of bids is **on May 3rd, 2021 by 12pm Eastern Standard Time (US)**.

Deadline to submit questions on the RFP is **on April 23th, 2021 by 12pm Eastern Standard Time (US)**.

Applicants who do not follow application instructions will be rejected. ONLY short-listed bidders will be contacted.

9. BUDGET & LOGISTICS

The proposed approach in the application should include a proposed budget. Budget should include an estimated level of effort for all consultants involved from design to completion of deliverables. It should also include costs associated with innovative data collection methods, critical travels expenses and travel to and within Niger (flights, hotel, daily expenses) and hiring local enumerators or translators. All local hires (data collectors, translators, etc.) must be hired and managed by the evaluator and paid out of their contract; LWR will only manage one contract with the main consultant/firm.

The consultant will report to the Chief of Party of the activity and be in day-to-day contact with the Sr. Technical Advisor for MERL in Baltimore. Specific responsibilities between the Consultant and LWR are as following:

LWR Responsibilities during evaluation

- Help with arranging visa for consultant's Niger travel.
- Arrange accommodation and meals if necessary.
- Provide security briefing to consultants.
- Help in arranging key information interviews and focus-group discussions as per the evaluation plan.
- Review all plans/ tools before use.
- Review all reports and provide feedback.
- Liaise with local implementing partners on behalf of the consultant to plan data collection.

Consultant Responsibilities during evaluation

- Work with field staff to coordinate the evaluation schedule.
- Recruitment and training of enumerators.
- Supervision of data collection and entry.
- Verification of collected data.
- Data entry, analysis and interpretation.
- Report writing and presentation.

10. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The evaluation of technical proposals will be based on the requirements set out in this solicitation. The following maximum points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

- Qualifications and experience: Maximum 40 points
- Relevance of proposed methodology: Maximum 40 points
- Appropriateness of proposed timeline: Maximum 20 points

At the sole discretion of LWR, the top proposals may be selected for follow-up questions/interview or to provide an oral presentation.

LWR reserves the right to award the contract to the organization whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of and most advantageous to LWR and the donor. LWR will not award a contract to any bidder where there is indication of a lack of business integrity. The organization with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Those who were not selected may or may not be notified, at the sole discretion of LWR.

11. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- a) The Request for Proposal **is not and shall not be considered an offer** by LWR.
- b) All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated.
- c) Responses that are late, incomplete, or do not follow submission instructions will be rejected.
- d) All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for 60 days after the proposal deadline noted.
- e) All awards will be subject to LWR contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
- f) LWR reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
- g) LWR reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
- h) All information provided by LWR in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. LWR is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted there from.
- i) LWR reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
- j) The contract will be at a fixed price based on the agreed upon deliverables. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of LWR, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.
- k) Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

1. Baseline report:
https://lwr.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/TheHub/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B1F4177E6-2675-46D8-9487-0470365946EA%7D&file=LWR%20GDA%20Baseline%20Rapport_English_Final.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true
2. Mid-term evaluation:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/oynoqrczsz9nc4m/RE%20Draft%20TDR%20Evaluation%20Mi-Parcours.msg?dl=0>
3. Rural Economies and Agricultural Livelihoods Strategy:
<https://indepth.lwr.org/technical-resources/rural-economies-and-agricultural-livelihoods-real-approach>
4. Activity Results Framework (see FY21 AMELP):
https://www.dropbox.com/s/4xffteifywjgov/201026%20LWR%201212%20Alliance%20FY201%20AMELP%20Update_Draft.docx?dl=0