

## CLARIFICATIONS AND ANSWER TO CONSULTANTS

**RFP Title:** Implementation of “Alianza para el Corredor Seco” Activity (ACS-USAID)

**RFP No.:** RFP/ACS/USAID/QCSB/01-2014

**Issued:** October 01, 2014

1. **Question:** Is there a way to supply the solicitation in a word document, in particular the technical forms?

**Answer:** Yes, Section 4A. Technical Proposal Forms and Section 4B. Financial Proposal Forms are available at the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1dqpy5mly8dlff3/AABj6sdy7nMRM3F69INVzgLea?dl=0>

2. **Question:** The RFP mentions Assistance Agreement No. 522-0470 and Implementation Letter No. 007 several times. Given the importance of these documents to consultants, would INVEST-H please provide a copy of each to consultants for their review and consideration? Neither, to our knowledge, is available on the MCA Honduras website.

**Answer:** See Amendment No. 1

3. **Question:** The RFP refers to potential tax obligations, exemptions, and reimbursement differently throughout the document. Please clarify whether consultants are exempt from Honduran tax obligations, including but not limited to VAT, similar to other USAID-funded programs. Please also clarify individual tax withholding requirements for activity staff that perform work for the selected consultant.

**Answer:** as specified in Section 1, point 3.7 except as may be legally exempt, a Consultant (including its associates, if any), Sub-Consultants, and their respective Personnel shall be subject to certain Taxes under applicable law (now or hereafter in effect). The Consultant, (including its associates, if any), Sub-Consultants and their respective Personnel shall pay all such Taxes. In the event that any Taxes are imposed on the Consultant, its associates, Sub-Consultants, or their respective Personnel, the Contract price shall not be adjusted to account for such Taxes. INVEST-H shall have no obligation to pay or compensate the Consultant, its associates, Sub-Consultants, or their respective Personnel for any Taxes.

Regarding income taxes for the Consultant including its associates, such taxes are not exonerated.

In regards to duty free importation of equipment, etc. "Dispensa Only" requests will need to be submitted to InvEst-H, for project/activity related machinery, equipment, etc. This would NOT include household effects (menaje) for individual consultants.

Regarding to sales exoneration for an INVEST-H Consultant receiving USG funds a sales tax exoneration request must be submitted by the Consultant for project/activity related to INVEST-H in order to process it.

4. **Question:** Financial proposals are intended to be designated in U.S. dollars. Please confirm that payment will be provided in U.S. dollars based on the USD dollar value provided in the financial proposal. Please also clarify whether payment will be provided to a U.S. bank account. If direct transfer to a U.S. bank account is viable, please clarify if there are any withholdings (tax or otherwise) associated with such transfers.

**Answer:** Payments will be made in Lempiras to the designated local bank account specified in the contract. Regarding the exchange rate, INVEST-H will follow USAID's exchange rate policy. No taxes or withholdings are applicable to the payment transaction.

5. **Question:** Can INVEST-H please confirm that the presentation of the financial proposal is limited to the forms included in Section 4B of the RFP, including Forms FIN-3 and FIN-4 given that the forms specify that they are intended to be used for possible additional services requested by INVEST-H?

**Answer:** Confirmed, the Standard Forms listed in Section 4B shall be used for the preparation of the financial proposal in accordance with the instructions provided in Sub-Clause 3.6 of Section 1: Instructions to Consultants.

6. **Question:** Can INVEST-H kindly confirm if a narrative should accompany the forms included in Section 4B of the RFP to describe rationale and reasonableness of the proposed costs?

**Answer:** It is not necessary; please proceed as indicated under each form.

7. **Question:** Can INVEST-H please clarify whether the lump sum payment schedule under this contract will be tied to deliverables, and if so, whether a payment schedule should be submitted as a part of the financial proposal?

**Answer:** No payment schedule is required, As specified in Section 1 point 3.6 Consultant's financial proposal shall be prepared using the forms provided in section 4B Financial proposal forms. regarding payments INVEST-H proposes quarterly payments directly linked to deliverables.

8. **Question:** Can INVEST-H please provide consultants with the Microsoft Word version of all technical and financial proposal templates?

**Answer:** See answer to query No. 1

9. **Question:** Can INVEST-H please confirm that TECH-8, TECH-9, and TECH-10 found in Section 4A of the RFP are not included in the page count indicated for TECH-6 on page 30?

**Answer:** The page count set in the TECH-6 is specific to this form

10. **Question:** Could INVEST-H kindly confirm that the Southern Zone of Influence includes the whole of the three departments (Lempira, Intibucá, and La Paz), rather than the southern region of those departments? (The Letter of Invitation for Proposals states, "The Alianza para el Corredor Seco (ACS) USAID zone of influence (ZOI) includes several municipalities; primarily the southern region of the departments of La Paz, Intibucá, and Lempira." (emphasis added). However, the Terms of Reference indicate that, "This initiative will promote the implementation ... in the departments of La Paz, Intibucá, and Lempira, which will be henceforth referred to as USAID's Southern ZOI (SZOI).")

**Answer:** Yes, the southern Zone of Influence includes the whole of the three departments, consultants are expected to follow wording specified in the RFP activity description.

11. **Question:** The Terms of Reference, Output 1.4 (page 95), states that "Microinsurance and savings products will be developed through the parallel USAID FTF Activity Mercado. The consultant will work closely with the Mercado implementer to tailor these financial products and services to the needs of the clients in the SZOI." This Output also includes targets for value of agricultural and rural loans. We respectfully note that it may be difficult for the ACS-USAID implementer to have control over reaching this and other Output 1.4

**Answer:** The consultants will need to manage the activity challenges and difficulties and are expected to work closely with the Mercado Implementer, nevertheless consultants may modify inputs of the Statement of Work, as long as the interventions lead to meeting, or exceeding outcomes.

12. **Question:** Could INVEST-H please clarify what the roles and responsibilities of the Mercado implementer versus the ACS-USAID implementer will be?

**Answer:** This will be discussed during contract negotiation and Activity implementation, the RFP in Section 6, Table 10. briefly describes bilateral activities and linkages.

13. **Question:** Could INVEST-H please provide more information regarding the 10,000 families that will be inherited from ACCESO, such as location by municipality, average size of arable land owned (e.g. 1-2 ha.), crops currently under cultivation, approximate percentage or number of families that have access to water for irrigation, and approximate percentage or number of these families that have already received assistance with home improvements?

**Answer:** Please refer to the applicable documents for more information regarding ACCESO clients. Client information may be found in USAID-ACCESO Annual reports (2012, 2013) and ACCESO's Baseline Report among others.

14. **Question:** The Terms of Reference (Guiding Implementation Strategies, page 89) indicate that, "Moreover, private sector partnerships that are currently in place under USAID's Feed the Future program must be transitioned into practice under this contract." Could INVEST-H please list the referenced private sector partnerships and their current status, if they are not already in practice?

**Answer:** Please refer to the applicable documents for more information regarding sector partnerships. Some information regarding partnerships may be found in USAID-ACCESO's Annual reports.

15. **Question:** The Terms of Reference (Output 1.1, page 92) indicate that "GOH funds will be used for any construction of water harvesting, piping and conduction systems. USAID funds cannot be used for anything beyond light construction." Could INVEST-H clarify how "light construction" is defined or provide some examples of how USAID funds may be used for water-related light construction?

**Answer:**

USAID considers the following as "light construction":

- water harvesting for domestic use, up to 1,000 square meters of construction
- water harvesting for irrigation, up to 160 Ha. using drip irrigation
- water harvesting for community from 15 to 500 beneficiary families; communities with no more than 3,000 people; and the total cost do not exceed USD 150,000.00 (including local counterparts).

16. **Question:** The Terms of Reference (Monitoring and Evaluation, page 107-109) indicate that the consultant shall create one database management system and two platforms. Regarding the M&E system platform (Points 3 – 8 on page 107), point 5 indicates that the consultant must specify the platform, which will be approved by INVEST-H. Points 3 and 7 indicate that the system and platform must be compatible with other GOH systems to facilitate analysis. Could INVEST-H please provide information regarding current GOH platforms with which the ACS-USAID project platform should be compatible, to facilitate consultants' proposal of feasible solutions?

**Answer:** There are no specific compatibility requirements for the ACS-USAID information management system with current GOH platforms. Nevertheless, the Consultant will make adjustments necessary regarding system designs to meet USAID/Honduras and INVEST-H needs. Compatibility issues will be addressed individually during negotiations.

17. **Question:** The Terms of Reference (Environmental Requirements, page 102) state that "An IEE (set forth in Appendix II of the IL 007) has been approved for the Activity funding this RFP." Could INVEST-H kindly provide this IEE to consultants?

**Answer:** See Amendment No. 1

- 18. Question:** Page 103 6a) states that, “Cost and technical proposals must reflect IEE or EA preparation costs and approaches.” Could INVEST-H please confirm that an IEE has already been conducted and will not be required of the consultant and also clarify whether an EA has been conducted and, if not, whether it will be required of the consultant?

**Answer:** The IEE has been already been conducted (IEEs are the responsibility of the USAID Mission) and please review link suggested in answer 17. An EA will not be required, under the current project conditions.

- 19. Question:** Page 103 references an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). Is this the same as the Environmental Mitigation and Report (EMPR) listed in Reports and Deliverables (page 109)?

**Answer:** They are considered two separate documents: The initial Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP ) and the Environmental Management plan and Report (EMPR), that contains the subsequent annual reporting. Both of them are the Consultant’s responsibility, and must be done using the Format and the 3 tables included in the IEE. More detailed information is available at the following link: [http://www.usaidgems.org/Documents/lopDocs/ENCAP\\_EMMP\\_Factsheet\\_22Jul2011.pdf](http://www.usaidgems.org/Documents/lopDocs/ENCAP_EMMP_Factsheet_22Jul2011.pdf)

- 20. Question:** Can INVEST-H please confirm that the award will contain the applicable ADS 302.3.5.6 and 302.2.4.13 authorizing the contractor to execute grants under contract?

**Answer:** Since the Implementation Letter is signed between USAID and the GOH, the “consultant” will work under INVEST-H and NOT as a direct contractor for USAID, therefore ADS 302 does not directly apply. The GUC implementation will be entirely governed by the Grants Manual that will be developed jointly by INVEST-H and the “consultant” with USAID’s concurrence.

- 21. Question:** Can INVEST-H confirm that it will issue a waiver to ADS 303.3.30 for certain grants under contract that may require small scale improvements (considered construction) per the ADS 303 definition?

**Answer:** ADS 303.3.30 does not apply. The GUC implementation will be entirely governed by the Grants Manual that will be developed jointly by INVEST-H and the “consultant” with USAID’s concurrence.

- 22. Question:** Can INVEST-H confirm that the Grants Manual referenced on page 109 and the Grants Instruction Manual referenced on page 100 are the same document?

**Answer:** Indeed, they both refer to the same document. Wording will be set to "Grants Manual".

- 23. Question:** The Terms of Reference (Gender Inclusion Requirements, page 103) indicate that the “Consultant will implement the Gender Strategy and Plan (See Annex I Applicable Documents).” However, we do not see a Gender Strategy and Plan in Annex I. Could INVEST-H please provide this document, or clarify whether the Consultant should prepare this during implementation? Is this the same as the “Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming Plan,” listed under Reports and Deliverables (page 109)?

**Answer:**

- (a) Indeed, the Gender Strategy and Plan and Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming Plan refer to the same document. Consultants are expected to consider this Strategy/Plan in proposal preparation and will be expected to improve documents before and during implementation of Activity.

- (b) See Amendment No. 1.

- 24. Question:** Section 6.4 on P. 111 refers to “the preliminary M&E Plan prepared by INVEST-H” – would it be possible to get a copy of this plan?

**Answer:** See Amendment No. 2

- 25. Question:** On page 37, in the Form TECH 6 description there is a request for "a list of final documents, including reports, drawings, and tables to be delivered as final output, should be included here". Form TECH-10 appears to make a duplicate request for deliverables. Should we include the list of deliverable in both Form TECH 6 and Form TECH 10?

**Answer:** Please proceed as indicated under each form.

- 26. Question:** Page 20 of RFP (Section 3: Qualification and Evaluation Criteria) references the following for the evaluation of technical proposals: "Feasibility and rigor of the year one work plan, monitoring and evaluation plan, and the strategy for gender integration". Meanwhile, page 111, (Sub-section 6.4: Terms of Reference, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan) states that the Consultants are expected to revise the preliminary M&E Plan prepared by INVEST-Hand submit a final version within the first 90 days after mobilization ... and before major implementation actions begin. The M&E plan submission requirement is not referenced in the Sub-section "Technical Proposal Format and Content" on page 9 (Section 1: Instructions for Consultants) and the Technical Proposal Forms (including Form TECH-6, Description of Approach, Methodology and Work). Based on the above please clarify, should a M&E plan be submitted as a part of the proposal?

**Answer:** Please refer to amendment 1.

- 27. Question:** Are Forms Tech-4 and Tech-5 required for the prime firm only or for subcontractors as well?

**Answer:** TECH-4 and TECH-5 forms applies to both prime consultant and sub consultants.

- 28. Question:** For Form Tech-4, is there a maximum number of projects which may be included on this form?

**Answer:** No maximum number of projects is set, but there is a maximum of 20 pages for the referred TECH.

- 29. Question:** Section 3.4 says "Consultant must have experience as the prime consultant in the execution of at least 2 Activities of a similar nature and complexity during the last 5 years." Regarding Form Tech-4, does this mean projects that are older than 5 years may be submitted and will be positively evaluated assuming they are in addition to the 2 Activities of a similar nature and complexities during the last 5 years?

**Answer:** The 5 year restriction applies to TECH 5, regarding TECH-4, INVEST-H has no time reference.

- 30. Question:** In sections 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, a Master's Degree is listed as a requirement for the Chief of Party and the Deputy Chief of Party. For otherwise well qualified candidates, would it be possible to substitute work experience for the Master's Degree? One of the candidates we are considering has a bachelor's degree and over 30 years of experience on the field. However, he does not have a Master's Degree.

**Answer:** No, requirements will remain as specified in the RFP.

- 31. RFP pg. 100, section 3 indicates that small grants will be disbursed under contract.**

**Question:** Can INVEST-H confirm that the Consultant will be responsible for managing these GUC funds?

**Answer:** Grants will be disbursed under contract, specific roles and management responsibilities will be part of the Grants Manual and will be defined between INVEST-H and the "consultant" with USAID's concurrence.

- 32. USAID ADS defines "small grants" as a grant that is less than 1 year and less than \$150,000. It also cannot be given a follow on.**

**Question:** Does INVEST-H apply this same definition to the “small grants” under ACS-USAID? If not, given the large amount allocated and the wide range of uses for these grants, can INVEST-H provide guidance on the expected size range for small grants?

**Answer:** Applicable definitions, arrangements and grant descriptions will be defined within the Grants Manual. This will be developed by INVEST-H and the consultant with USAID’s concurrence.

33. RFP language on pgs. 17 and 87 states that up to 20 million can be used for GUCs, therefore indicating that the Consultant can decide to allocate less than 20 million for GUCs.

**Question:** Will INVEST-H kindly clarify if there are evaluative properties around the Consultant’s maximized allocation of the 20 million for GUCs? If less than 20 million is allocated for GUCs, can the remaining funds be moved under the fixed price contract?

**Answer:** INVEST-H has predefined its evaluation criteria, specified in section 3, numeral 3.4. The consultant shall make a consistent effort to allocate the amount of GUC funds that is required to achieve its intended results. Remaining funds, if any, shall be reprogrammed as part of the lump-sum contract.

34. **Question:** Are the indicators listed in the RFP illustrative or required?

**Answer:** Indicators listed in the RFP are required.

35. **Question:** For indicators with TBD listed as the target, should these targets be provided by the Consultant? Or will they be provided by INVEST-H?

**Answer:** They will be provided by INVEST-H.

36. We note that the USAID guidance around several FTF indicators listed for ACS-USAID have changed – for example:

- pg. 94, Indicator 1: Value of incremental sales (collected at farm and firm level) now excludes measurement of firm-level sales.
- pg. 96, Indicator 5: Number of people with a savings account. This indicator has recently been dropped from the list of FTF indicators.

**Question:** Will INVEST-H please advise on which set of guidelines should be followed – USAID’s current FTF indicator guidelines or indicator information provided in the RFP?

**Answer:** The FTF Indicator handbook is meant a guideline and will be the reference for most indicators. Nevertheless, final considerations for certain indicators will be developed during contract negotiations.

37. RFP pg. 95 Indicator 1: Number of new jobs attributed to ACS-USAID implementation. Based on the poverty level of the average household, smallholder farmers are unlikely to generate employment of more than one continuous month per FTF indicator guidance (as per the footnote).

**Question:** Would INVEST-H consider a substitute custom indicator allowing for temporary employment to be included, or a revised target?

**Answer:** No, wording and targets regarding employment will remain as specified in the RFP.

38. RFP pg. 108 provides information that should be collected for each beneficiary including Area planted by crop type and date; costs and investments undertaken; credit accessed, including source and terms of credit; Type, quantity and price of products that have been sold and value of sales, etc.

**Question:** Is the Consultant expected to collect that information on all 18,000 households? Considering the significant cost associated with this effort, would INVEST-H accept a representative sample as a lower-cost, yet equally accurate method of data collection?

**Answer:** The Consultant is expected to collect monitoring data on all 18,000 households. Nevertheless, the Consultant could propose sampling for performance monitoring of higher-level standard indicators, collected through a population-based survey (PBS) of the SZOI.

39. RFP pg. 111, first paragraph under Section 6.4 states “The consultant is expected to revise the preliminary M&E Plan prepared by INVEST-H and submit a final version within the first 90 days after mobilization”.

**Question:** If INVEST-H is responsible for developing the preliminary M&E Plan (inclusive of the monitoring portion), what is required of the Consultant in terms of M&E at the proposal stage?

**Answer:** Regarding what INVEST-H expects in the proposal stage please refer to Section 4A and 4B; specifically regarding M&E, please see RFP, Section 6 (Terms of Reference), numeral 5. Monitoring and Evaluation (page 107-109).

40. **Question:** What is the difference between “associate” and “sub-consultant”? Both terms are defined on pages 1 and 2 of the RFP. However, the definitions are similar enough that we would appreciate getting further clarifications on the relationships meant by these terms.

**Answer:** Consultants may associate with other in the form of Joint Venture or of a sub consultancy agreement to complement their respective areas of expertise, strengthen the technical responsiveness of their proposals and make available bigger pools of experts, provide better approaches and methodologies, and, in some cases, offer lower prices.

- In the form of Joint Venture, the association shall appoint one of the firms to represent the association; all members of the Joint Venture or their representative with a power of attorney, shall sign the contract. All members of the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for entire assignment.
- In the form of Sub consultant, means any person or entity to whom/which the Consultant subcontracts any part of the Services.

41. **Question:** Section 2 ITC 3.8 requests proposals in USD. However, the FIN forms have a column for local currency and Section 5 clause 6.2 states that payments will be made in Lempiras. Please confirm the contract will be awarded and paid in USD and that no local currency values are required to be input on the “FIN” forms.

**Answer:**

- The Financial Proposal Forms in Section 4B are standard forms, please proceed as stated in the Section 2 ITC 3.8 Currencies.
- The Contract will be awarded in USD but will be paid in Lempiras, following USAID exchange rate policy.

42. **Question:** Please confirm that no other spreadsheets or budget forms are required for the financial proposal other than Forms FIN-1 through FIN-4.

**Answer:** We confirm, there is no other financial form required (spreadsheets or budget forms), please proceed as stated in Section 1 ITC, 3.6 Financial Proposals.

43. **Question:** Please confirm that the contract will be a lump sum contract and that there will be no reimbursable expenses.

**Answer:** We confirm, INVEST-H proposes a Lump Sum contract, stated in Section 5 Contract Forms, III Special Conditions of Contract, 6.1 Contract Price.

44. **Question:** Please clarify how the Consultants should present Associates’ costs. Should the costs be presented separately, or as a part of Consultant’s financial forms?

**Answer:** The proposal shall indicate the total price to be paid by INVEST-H; associates' costs must be part of the total price.

- 45. Question:** Please confirm whether there are any local tax exemptions that are applicable through bilateral agreements?

**Answer:** See answer to query No 3.

- 46. Question:** Section 2, ITC 4.3 requests "electronic copies in CD format, readable in MS Word and/or Excel, as appropriate." In addition to excel spreadsheets, would INVEST-H allow Consultants to submit the technical and cost proposals as PDF documents?

**Answer:** Yes, PDF format will be accepted.

- 47. Question:** Section 3, Qualification and Evaluation Criteria on page 20 lists Organizational Development as one of the sub-criteria of the evaluation criteria, but Terms of Reference on page 87 does not mention organizational development as part of Consultant's scope of work. Would INVEST-H clarify the organizational development requirement and elaborate on the following evaluation criteria: "Organizational Development: the extent to which the methodology and approach demonstrates a clear understanding and detailed approach in how to achieve the organizational development goals?"

**Answer:** INVEST-H refers as organizational development as the deliberately planned, organization-wide effort to increase the consultant's effectiveness and efficiency to enable the consultant to achieve the ACS-USAID goals. INVEST-H will grade the extent to which the methodology and approach demonstrates a clear understanding and detailed approach in how to achieve the ACS-USAID results.

- 48. Question:** Form Tech-5. References of the Consultant on page 29 states that Consultant must "provide contact information for at least three references that can provide substantial input about the type of work performed." Will INVEST-H accept references for Associates as well?

**Answer:** Within TECH 5, references will be accepted for the associates (entities that declared their commitment to form a Joint Venture) to develop this consulting services (See answer No. 40), sub consultant's references will not be accepted.

- 49. Question:** Form Tech-3. Organization of the Consultant on page 27 requests "the organization chart of your firm/entity." Would INVEST-H confirm that Consultants must submit the organization chart of the Alianza para el Corredor Seco Activity, not the organization chart of our firm?

**Answer:** Tech 3 Organization of the Consultant, is meant for the consultants organization. Details for organization and staffing for ACS-USAID Activity is detailed in TECH 6 Description of Approach, Methodology and Work Plan for Performing the Assignment.

- 50. Question:** Section 2. Proposal Data Sheet states that "the estimated cost for this procurement is USD 40.0 million over five years, of which up to USD 20.0 million will be set aside to scale up technologies that facilitate higher incomes and lower under-nutrition, under the Grants mechanism established in Section 6 Terms of Reference." Please define "scale up technologies."

**Answer:** Ways in which the appropriate technologies are widely adopted for scaled up impact (higher productivity, poverty reduction, improved nutrition, etc.)

- 51. Question:** Section 6 – Terms of Reference, Table 2 on page 93 suggests that the target for Indicator # 4: Number of hectares of land under improved technologies or management practices as a result of ACS-USAID assistance is 18,000. Could INVEST-H confirm that the target number of hectares is indeed 18,000?

**Answer:** Indeed, 18,000 hectares.

- 52. Question:** Section 6 – Terms of Reference, Table 2 on page 93 suggests that units for indicators 2 and 3 are Farmers/MSMEs. Could INVEST-H please confirm if farmers, MSMEs, and rural households are different ways of describing the same family units?

**Answer:** The indicator in mention specifies farmers and MSMEs (there is no mention of rural households). Farmers, MSMEs and rural households are ways of describing the beneficiaries, but have different characteristics.

- 53. Question:** Section 6 – Terms of Reference, Table 2 suggests that targets 1-6 are for Life of Project (LOP) while the targets on pages 94-100 do not. Please confirm that the targets on pages 94-100 are for the Life of Project as well?

**Answer:** Yes, the targets on pages 94-100 are for the Life of Project as well

- 54. Question:** It is stated in page “vi” on the subject RFP: “The Alianza para el Corredor Seco (ACS) USAID zone of influence (ZOI) includes several municipalities; primarily the southern region of the departments of La Paz, Intibucá, and Lempira.” and “Within the Alianza para el Corredor Seco (ACS), USAID will fund an Activity that will move families out of poverty and reduce stunting of children in the ACS-USAID ZOI. INVEST-H now invites entities to provide the consultant services referenced above (“Proposals”). More details on these consultant services are provided in the Terms of Reference (ToR).” Nevertheless, no specific list of municipalities is provided by the RFP for the ACS-USAID ZOI or SZOI. Please provide the list of municipalities belonging to each zone of influence.

**Answer:** The ACS-USAID ZOI includes all municipalities in Lempira, Intibucá and La Paz, and considers some investments in the MERCADO ZOI.

- 55. Question:** The ACS-USAID SZOI is limited to certain municipalities. How many of the ACCESO current clients are living in the SZOI? What will be the carry-over target if there are not 10,000 ACCESO households in the SZOI municipalities?

**Answer:**

- Please see answer to query no. 13.
- Although final figures will depend on follow up households from the ACCESO Activity, INVEST-H expects at least 10,000 households.

- 56. Question:** What will be the baseline for the indicators for the ACCESO carry-over households; the ACCESO baseline? Or the ACS-USAID baseline?

**Answer:**

The implementer for ACS-USAID will have its baseline to measure progress made derived from its work. Baseline for carry-over households will be established as they are enrolled.

- 57. Question:** On page 87, the RFP states that the “ACS-USAID will enroll farmers and families that are currently being assisted by ACCESO that have not reached income above the official poverty line.” On page 89, “The Consultant will serve approximately 10,000 continuing beneficiaries who have been receiving assistance through ACCESO.” Can INVEST-H please provide the characterization of these households, such as where they are located (numbers per municipality or community), current incomes and livelihoods, number of members per family, etc.? This information is needed to propose an appropriate design.

**Answer:** Please see answer to query no. 13.

**58. Question:** How will ACS-USAID complement activities led by MERCADO? For instance in the work with anchor firms and value chain development? Also, for instance, donations or grants, are limited to the entire Zone of Influence, six departments. What shall be the project implementation policy, since, these small grants are expected to impact significantly on the poverty reduction Contract goals, and then what would be the implementation rule which would balance our contract's convenience with donor and government interests in the entire zone?

**Answer:** Please see answer to query no. 12

**59. Question:** On page 91, the RFP calls for enable access to "smart" water management practices and technologies. Is this envisioned for only the SZOI?

**Answer:** The consultant is responsible for the smart water management practices and technologies implemented in SZOI; nevertheless, scaling up irrigation systems will be carried out throughout the entire FTF ZOI. For the departments of the NZOI, Ocotepeque, Copan, and Santa Barbara, will be carried out in close coordination with the FTF funded contract – Mercado –to serve FTF clients.

**60. Question:** On page 91, table 1 states that the unit of measurement is Household, please confirm that the household definition is the same as the one used by INE: people living together under the same roof.

**Answer:** Yes, household definition is the same as the one used by INE.

**61. Question:** One page 88, Table 7 indicator 3 states that the target is 30%. To be consistent with the set targets for Table 6, should this target be labeled -30%? and the unit should be "% decrease under baseline?"

**Answer:** Please refer to amendment 1.

**62. Question:** On page 98, table 7 indicator 4 states that the unit of measurement is "# decrease." Should the unit be "number of children under two years old"?

**Answer:** Please refer to amendment 1.

**63. Question:** Please confirm that Consultants are allowed to include additional annexes, such as letters of commitment from Associates. If additional annexes are not allowed, please clarify how Consultants should present letters of commitment from Associates.

**Answer:** Please, proceed as stated in Section 4A Technical Proposal Forms, Tech 1.

**64. Question:** Considering ACCESO's household selection methodology where some households receive production assistance, some nutrition/health, and some both, please provide additional information on the numbers of households that received each type of intervention in the selected municipalities under ACS-USAID, as well as their locations (municipalities)

**Answer:** Please see answer to query no. 13.

**65. Question:** Form TECH-2 requests audited financial statements (or substitutes) for the past three years. Because we are not a publicly traded company, our audited financial statements are sensitive and proprietary documents. Is there particular language we should use to mark these documents as proprietary, to ensure they are not inadvertently shared with any parties outside of the procurement process?

**Answer:** No particular language is necessary since all information is considered confidential.

- 66. Question:** Given the fluid nature of a grants program and the need for the ACS-USAID program to respond to dynamic opportunities and needs of local organizations through the grants program, will INVEST-H consider using a hybrid type contract to allow the grants to be funded through a cost reimbursable mechanism while the remaining amount is fixed price?

**Answer:** As stated in Section 5 Contract Forms, III Special Conditions of Contract, 6.1 Contract price INVEST-H proposes a Lump Sum contract; regarding grants please refer to answer 31.

- 67. Question:** In Section 5, on page 67, the RFP states that the “Contract Price” includes “up to \$20.0 Million that will be set aside to scale up technologies that facilitate higher incomes and lower undernutrition, under the Grants Mechanism established in Section 6 Terms of Reference.” However, according to GCC 6.1, payment to the Consultant shall be made based on the completion of milestones/deliverables. Can the Government of Honduras/USAID please clarify how the Consultant will be reimbursed for grants?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer 66 and 31

- 68. Question:** Bidders are required to submit a breakdown of price by activity (Form FIN-3). Given the fluid, demand-driven nature of a grants program and the need to provide a significant amount of funding to grantees on a regular basis, it is unfeasible for bidders to accurately predict the amount of grants that will be issued under specific activities. Can the Government of Honduras/USAID please clarify how bidders should budget for grants in Form FIN-3?

**Answer:** INVEST-H expects budgeting to be consistent with proposed strategy and work plan.

- 69. Question:** Would INVEST-H consider substituting 5 years of additional work experience for a master’s degree for the COP and DCOP positions?

**Answer:** Please refer to answer 30.

- 70. Question:** Could you USAID please confirm that the Master Water Management Plan will cover only the six departments of the Northern and Southern ZOI? (Or: Could INVEST-H confirm which departments or area the Master Water Management Plan will cover?)

**Answer:** Yes, the Master water management plan focuses investment in the six departments of the northern and southern ZOI; the ACS-USAID consultant is responsible for the smart water management practices and technologies implemented in SZOI. For the departments of the NZOI, Ocotepeque, Copan, and Santa Barbara, the Master water management plan will be carried out in close coordination with the FTF funded contract – Mercado –to serve FTF clients

- 71. Question:** Please confirm that Consultants may submit documents formatted for US letter-size paper. (p. 9)

**Answer:** Please, see Section 1, numeral 3.4 Technical proposal Format and Content.

- 72. Question:** The PDS directs Consultants to submit electronic copies in MS Word and/or Excel. May documents requiring signature, such as Form TECH-11 (CVs) be submitted in pdf format? (p. 18 – PDS ITC 4.3)

**Answer:** See answer No. 46

**73. Question:** Are the Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal Form templates available in Microsoft Word? If not, would Invest-H please provide guidance on the font type and sized to be used, and any other format guidelines or limitations by which bidders will be bound? In particular, it would be important to know whether smaller fonts are permitted in the schedules and tables such as TECH-9 and TECH-10. (pp. 22, 37).

**Answer.**

- Please, refer to the answer No. 1.
- We suggest apply a consistent criterion with the proposal to be submitted; the Consultant shall use a font and size that will be readable at a glance.

**74. Question:** Form TECH-11 regarding CVs states, “Among the assignments in which the staff has been involved, include the following information for those assignments that best illustrate staff capability to handle the tasks listed under point 11.” Please clarify what “point 11” is and/or where to find it. (p. 35)

**Answer:** Tech-11 refers to “Detailed Tasks Assigned”, Please refer to answer 1, the link specified there will clarify about the “point 11” within the referred TECH.

**75. Question:** Form TECH 10, as provided has space for activities in months 1-12 only. Since implementation of the ACS Activity will be for 5 years, may Consultants show scheduled activities for years 2-5 by quarter rather than by month? (p. 34)

**Answer:** Quarterly schedules for years 2-5 are allowed; the consultants must present a schedule in accordance with the activities during the validity of the contract.

**76. Question:** The Terms of Reference, under Output 1.1, states “USAID funds cannot be used for anything beyond light construction.” What size projects would be considered “light construction”? Can Invest-H provide any further guidance on the specific definition of “light construction”? (p. 92)

**Answer:** Please read answer to query no. 15.

**77. Question:** Please explain the difference between “Associate” and “Sub-Consultant”, as both seem to have similar definitions. What specific TECH and FIN forms documentation Associates and/or Sub-Consultants required to submit? (pp. 1, 2)

**Answer:** Please read answer to query No 40

**78. Question:** Please confirm if Sub-Consultants/Associates are required to submit Forms TECH-4 and TECH-5. If so, will their submissions count toward the 20 page limit and 3 page limit in Forms TECH-4 and TECH-5 respectively? If not, how should experience of Sub-Consultants/Associates be included in the proposal? Is each Sub-Consultant/Associate also required to submit 3 references or is this only required of the Consultant? (pp. 28, 27)

**Answer:** Please read answer to query No. 48

**79. Question:** Where should Letters of Support be included in the proposal? May the Consultant provide Letters of Support as Technical Annexes? If included as Annexes, will Letters of Support count toward page limits? May Letters of Support from local actors be submitted in Spanish or must they be translated into English?}

**Answer:** Letters of support are not required; please proceed as indicated in Section 4A and 4B.

**80. Question:** Footnotes 5 and 6 on page 89 state “Final figures will depend on number of follow-up households from the ACCESO Activity.” Does this mean that the 18,000 household target to overcome the International extreme poverty level addressed on page 88 could potentially change? (pp. 88, 89)

**Answer:**

No, footnotes are meant to clarify that figures specified for carry-over clients from the ACCESO Activity and new clients (10,000 and 8,000 respectively) are estimates, final figures depend on the number of follow-up households from the ACCESO Activity.

- 81. Question:** On page 92, the second input to achieve Output 1.1 reads “Improve productivity and facilitate crop diversification through irrigation (All ZOI).” Please confirm that this input is to take place in “All ZOI” and not just the Southern ZOI.

**Answer:**

Confirmed, for more information please refer to answer 59.

- 82. Question:** The footnote on page 89 (“final numbers will depend on number of follow up households from the ACCESO Activity”) seems to indicate targets for the higher level indicators may change. Can Invest-H comment on this?

**Answer:** Please read answer to query 80.

- 83. Question:** On pages 113 and 114 the COP and DCOP positions include the requirement of a Masters’ degree or higher. Would Invest-H consider years of relevant experience in lieu of a Master’s degree?

**Answer:** Please read answer to query 30.

- 84. Question:** FIN-2 (pg. 39) notes the need to add option year financial information, yet the PDS does not mention option years. Can INVEST-H clarify if there are option years as part of this procurement, or if the full 5 years worth of costs should be included in the “base years” column?

**Answer:** Please, use the Base Year space to fill the information for the 5 years cost, the Option Years option does not apply to this RFP.

- 85. Question:** Do FIN-3 (activity) need to be broken down by month to match TECH-10 (activity)? Similarly does the information presented in TECH-9 need to match information in FIN-4, i.e. In terms of dividing out the time over months?

**Answer:** The information provided in the proposal shall be consistent and logical; please consider the answer to question No. 75.