Request for Proposals - Consultancy
Cluster IMS design
Applications deadline: 24 March 2021

RFP #: 2021-March-ASP-UZIMS
Location: Flexible
Start date: 19 April 2021
End date: 20 June 2021

BCI key contact: Leyla Shamchiyeva
Assurance Manager
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All applications must be sent by email, to BCI’s key contact, with the subject header: 2021-March-ASP-UZIMS”.
Questions, requests and applications sent after the deadline (24 March 2021) will not be considered.

Background

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is a multi-stakeholder initiative and the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world. BCI and its Partners currently support over 2.3 million farmers in 23 countries in adopting more sustainable agricultural practices. Thanks to these efforts, Better Cotton accounts for around 22% of global cotton production. BCI works closely with stakeholders all the way from farms to fashion brands and civil society organisations, driving the cotton sector toward sustainability.

Uzbekistan has been applauded for the progress achieved transitioning out of the state-imposed forced labour system in cotton harvest inherited from the Soviet system. However, pockets of non-compliance persist and a proactive approach to managing the risks of forced labour need to be adopted in order to be able to credibly operate in Uzbekistan.

In Uzbekistan, GIZ is piloting the Better Cotton Standards System (BCSS) in the framework of GIZ’s “Sustainability and Value Added in the Uzbek Cotton Economy” project (2020-2021). BCI is supporting this work by providing technical expertise. As part of this support BCI is looking to commission a consultancy to develop decent work specific Internal Management System. Adopted at cluster management level, decent work IMS will help mitigate the risk of forced labour in all aspects of farm operation, including during cotton harvesting.

Objective

BCI is seeking a consultant to develop a decent work focused Internal Management System along with a monitoring approach at cluster level. The IMS will need to incorporate core elements of relevant social management systems, while also accounting for feasibility and applicability to local context. The consultant will need to do a gap assessment against the systems currently in place in the clusters participating in the BCI pilots. Stakeholder consultations will ensure that all risks and opportunities are duly factored in.

The IMS will cover decent work and forced labour risks at farm level, and will include:

- A system for collection, management and validation of worker data to -including the types of workers, activities carried out, origin of domestic migrant workers, etc.
- Analysis of recruitment practices and payment/compensation practices
- Identification of most salient issues and risks related to decent work, which should feed into training at farmer and worker level

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• Analysis of existing grievance mechanisms, recommendations for ways to improve/expand them
• Processes to ensure that feedback received through formal and informal grievance channels is integrated into the IMS to better identify risks and respond to incidents
• Approach to continual monitoring throughout the season, including field visits, interactions with IP and field staff, reviews of the assurance outcomes, field level data, etc.
• Definition of roles and responsibilities to ensure oversight and accountability over corrective actions and responsiveness to issues
• Performance management systems
• Build in ‘pause and review’ points to ensure that the IMS is effective and efficient, identifying areas for necessary adaptations
• System for ensuring that all cluster staff (including field staff) and Local Partner staff, if any, are trained on decent work and forced labour. This may be provided by the Implementing Partner as a Training of Trainers and rolled out on a periodical basis by cluster management staff
• A process to identify and escalate incidences of forced labour to GIZ and BCI Global Decent Work Focal Point
• Consider potential of incorporating worker voice technology as a risk mitigating measure, identifying risks and opportunities
• Ensure alignment with key social management standards, e.g. ISO26000, including human right, labour and fair operating practices
• Data management policy
• Reporting and accountability

Deliverables

The successful consultant will deliver:
• A short final report summarising methodology, consultations, findings and recommendations
• A set of template policies and procedures
• Internal monitoring approach (including monitoring guidance, interview guides for workers, farmers, etc.)
• Organogram outlining roles and responsibilities to ensure clear accountability within the cluster
• A workshop with key stakeholders to validate findings and proposed approach
• Training material for cluster management and other relevant stakeholders

We anticipate the task to take between 12-15 days to complete. This is an indicative number only and will be finalised based on the methodology proposed by the consultant.

Experience, Skills, and Competencies

The consultant (or team of consultants) must demonstrate excellent knowledge of international social management systems as well as a good level of understanding of Uzbekistan’s decent work challenges and the cluster system. The consultants able to demonstrate the following competencies will be prioritised for selection:
• Understanding of context specific decent work risks and mitigation measures
• Expertise in management systems design and operationalisation
• A good understanding of agricultural contexts and large farm management
• Awareness of Uzbekistan’s textile cluster system
• Certification or functional understanding of social responsibility management standards, e.g. ISO 26000
Activities & Milestones

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<th>Activities</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and agree approach with BCI/GIZ</td>
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<td>Consultations with key stakeholders</td>
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<td>IMS design</td>
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<td>Report writing</td>
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<td>Development of capacity building material (slide deck and speaking notes)</td>
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<td>Workshop to validate findings; report finalisation</td>
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High-level Timeline

Application

Proposals that respond to this Terms of Reference should be a maximum of 2-3 pages (excluding CVs), and include the following:

- Overview of relevant experience
- Proposed project approach
- Proposed team names, along with CVs
- Detailed and transparent budget, including time allocation and day rates (preferably in Euro) for each person working on this project
- Pricing including any applicable VAT

All applications must be submitted by email, headed “2021-March-ASP-UZIMS” addressed to Leyla Shamchiyeva at tender@bettercotton.org.

In addition to skills, competencies and expertise, BCI will consider value for money and demonstrable commitment to the sustainability field to evaluate applications.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

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.