

Call for Applications Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist

Summary

Verité is seeking qualified applicants to conduct monitoring and evaluation for its grant project, *Fostering Fee Accountability and Cost Tracking (FFACT)*, to be implemented in Bangladesh, Malaysia, India, and Qatar between September 2022 and September 2024.

Verité Overview

Verité is an international non-profit consulting, training and research organization that has been a leader in supply chain social responsibility since 1996. Verité's mission is to ensure that people worldwide work under safe, fair, and legal working conditions.

Verité's work is funded by public agencies, international organizations, private foundations and fee-for-service corporate clients. The organization implements international programs through its headquarters in Massachusetts, United States, offices in the Philippines, Mexico, and Ghana, and an international network of civil society partners across South Asia and Latin America.

Verité is a thought leader on fair migration, responsible recruitment and migrants' rights in the global economy. Verité has implemented projects in this field for over ten years, most recently with a focus on vulnerabilities to human trafficking in supply chains across economic sectors intersecting with the Gulf States. Verité's work leverages the unique and interconnected influence of multiple stakeholders – from business and government to civil society and international organizations – to ensure respect for the rights of migrant workers in migration and employment.

Project Background

Verité's extensive experience of tracing forced labor in supply chains shows that migrant workers pay recruitment fees to obtain jobs. These fees are a root cause of worker vulnerability to debt bondage and other indicators of forced labor.

Low-waged migrant workers underpin much of the global economy and are among the most vulnerable to serious exploitation, including debt bondage and forced labor due to recruitment fees. There are an estimated 169 million labor migrants globally, with over 24 million working in the Gulf States and over 2 million working in Malaysia.ⁱ India formally exports the largest number of migrant workers, estimated at 805,000 annually. An estimated 96 percent of Indian migrant workers take jobs in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Jordan.ⁱⁱ India is followed by Nepal, and the Philippines, for the top countries exporting migrants to Qatar. Based on 2019 estimates, the annual outflow of Indian migrants to Qatar totaled 700,000, and Bangladeshi migrants to Malaysia totaled 400,000.ⁱⁱⁱ Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh are the leading sending countries of migrant workers.

Previous Verité research has extensively documented the link between recruitment fees and debt bondage,^{iv} including in Malaysia^v and GCC countries.^{vi} The lack of transparency or public information

around recruitment costs opens the door for corruption, bribery, or exaction from vulnerable workers.^{vii}

Reimbursement of recruitment fees has emerged in CSR initiatives as a potential, though partial, remedy to debt bondage induced by recruitment fees, which should spur corporate actors to prevent fee-charging to migrants in the first place. For example, in 2019 a disposable glove brand came under large public scrutiny for allowing their workers to be charged thousands of dollars in recruitment fees,^{viii} and U.S. Customs and Border Protection issued an import ban on products from the brand's subsidiaries. In response, the brand developed a remediation plan to reimburse its migrant workers for recruitment fees.^{ix} Transparency is lacking regarding the terms by which reimbursements were made in this case, and others.

A similar outcome followed in Qatar when public pressure forced a response to the widespread abuses of migrant workers in the construction of the FIFA 2022 World Cup Stadiums. Amnesty International reported that migrant workers were each charged recruitment fees of up to USD 2,000, and had between USD 2,000 and 16,000 worth of wages withheld.^{xi} Migrant workers also reported navigating abuses ranging from deception, passport retention, intimidation, and verbal and physical abuse. The FIFA contractors and employers agreed to establish a repayment fund of about USD 30 million to reimburse workers.^{xii} Like many reimbursement programs, originally the payments were only reimbursed if the worker provided receipts of fees paid, which is a prohibitive barrier common in reimbursement programs. Under further reform, the burden of proof has been shifted to contractors who are required to pay back workers their recruitment fees unless the company can prove they made the payment. In many cases, the reimbursement only covers part of the recruitment fees, and does not provide any additional compensation or account for the cost of the workers' loans.^{xiii} Amnesty International has pushed for a more extensive compensation program in Qatar, of at least USD 440 million.^{xiv}

Project Overview:

This project is funded by the US Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour (DRL). The project aims to enable civil society and workers organizations to take more active roles in initiatives which utilize available data about recruitment fees or fee reimbursement to reduce or eliminate migrant workers' risks of debt bondage. With greater capacity to enumerate and illuminate worker vulnerability as a result of recruitment fees, and linkages to common abusive recruitment practices, CSOs will be able to apply pressure on, and contribute to, greater transparency, fairness, and accuracy in private and public sector initiatives to eliminate recruitment fees from labor supply chains.

While discussions of recruitment fees and action towards remedy initiatives have been growing within Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) circles, there is a need for more civil society and workers' voices and initiatives to promote more stringent standards of transparency, fairness, and accuracy in efforts to drive changes that will combat workers' vulnerability to recruitment fees, related debt bondage, and other abuses of migrant workers.

Verité and primary partners (Free the Slaves in India, Sheva in Bangladesh, and Verité Southeast Asia in Malaysia) will engage CSOs and workers' organizations in sending and host countries of two labor migration corridors where high risks of debt bondage are present and persistent: **India-Qatar** in sectors such as construction, hospitality and other low-wage service sector jobs, and **Bangladesh-Malaysia** in sectors such as for manufacturing, hospitality, and agriculture. CSOs and workers' organizations in the four target countries will receive training and be guided through praxis interventions in the field to act on new knowledge and capacities to track, analyze, and use recruitment fee data in multi-stakeholder dialogues. These interventions will be supported by the fourth objective, increasing public access to learning tools to combat debt bondage via a project website. The project objectives include:

- **Objective 1:** Increase knowledge and demonstrate transparent, accurate, and fair methods to track debt bondage indicators data.
- **Objective 2:** Increase knowledge and demonstrate transparent, accurate, and fair methods to analyze and use debt bondage data in multi-stakeholder dialogues.
- **Objective 3:** Advance multi-stakeholder dialogue to promote greater transparency, accuracy, and fairness in identifying, eliminating, and/or remedying debt bondage.
- **Objective 4:** Increase public access to tools and knowledge about methods to promote greater transparency, accuracy, and fairness in identifying, eliminating, and/or remedying debt bondage.

Evaluation Overview

Monitoring and evaluation will be integral to this project throughout its duration. Assessing the impact of the planned activities will be critical to ensure the effectiveness of the program design. In addition to internal monitoring, Verité is seeking to hire a third-party evaluator to conduct a midline evaluation of progress in project implementation, and an endline assessment and evaluation of project implementation and impact at the conclusion of the project, utilizing a framework of indicators established during the project inception. The objectives of the external evaluation are to: (1) Assess the effectiveness of the project in reaching its stated objectives; and (2) Identify lessons learned and best practices in order to make recommendations for improving future project implementation.

The evaluator will be responsible for designing an evaluation method consistent with international best practice and the requirements of the project. The methods proposed by the evaluator will be reviewed and approved by the Verité project leads.

The evaluation design should include a review of project documentation and related records to conduct a process evaluation aimed at understanding the strengths and weaknesses of project implementation, as well as performance evaluation measuring progress reached on goals of the project. Methodology should include review of documentation collected by the project implementers (and provided to the external evaluator by Verité) on qualitative and quantitative indicators, in alignment with the Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT) for the project. The methodology could also include innovative methods to track behavior and knowledge change of participating CSOs and workers' organizations, such as Outcome Harvesting.

While data will be collected and reviewed quarterly by Verité and its implementing partners, the external evaluation team will conduct a midline assessment at the project half-way point in order to evaluate project progress on expected outputs and targets, as well as indications of how well the project implementation is affecting the desired results, long- and short-term outcomes, and long term impacts as outlined in the PITT table. The midterm assessment will focus on highlighting lessons learned and identifying any opportunities for the project implementation team to adjust project implementation plans to better align with desired outcomes and impacts. The endline project assessment will focus on documenting promising practices and lessons learned on techniques used by the project to further the project outcomes and impacts.

Evaluation Implementation

The evaluator will be responsible for consulting closely with Verité on design and implementation of the evaluation plan throughout the two-year project ending September 2024. The mid-term evaluation will take place halfway through the project, approximately September 2023. The final evaluation will take place at the end of the project in July-September 2024. Final deliverables per the contract will be due no later than September 30, 2024.

The evaluator will be responsible for planning and implementation, including:

- Evaluation preparation, including external evaluation design and work planning for midline and endline assessments, desk review of project materials, etc.
- Data analysis and synthesis, including for mid-term and final evaluations, report drafting and incorporation of feedback, as relevant.

Verité will provide technical support throughout the evaluation process.

Deliverables

The evaluator will be expected to produce the following deliverables:

1. Evaluation Design and Work Plan for Midline and Endline Assessments (minimum 10 pages) (Please note that a logic model and preliminary monitoring and evaluation plan for the project will ultimately be supplied to the successful candidate, to be referenced for design of assessments.)
2. Consult Verité team on survey and other data collection instruments to be utilized by project implementors.
3. Draft Midline Assessment Report (no more than 20 pages, not including annexes)
4. Revised Final Midline Assessment Report – based on Verité and USDOS-DRL feedback on Draft Midline Assessment Report.
5. Draft Endline Assessment Report (no more than 40 pages, not including annexes)
6. Revised Final Endline Assessment Report – based on Verité and USDOS-DRL feedback on Draft Endline Assessment Report.

Budget and Payment Schedule

The projected budget for this evaluation is \$40,000-50,000 USD. This includes all costs relevant to conducting the external evaluation, including professional fees. Payment will be disbursed according to the following schedule:

- Final Evaluation Work Plan: 30%
- Final survey and data collection instruments 10%
- Final Midline Assessment Report: 30%
- Final Endline Assessment Report: 30%

Applicant Profile

The selected consultant should have demonstrated expertise in results-based project evaluation and familiarity with the intersection of migration and labor rights. Additional qualifications will include:

- Minimum 5 years of experience in designing, overseeing, implementing and evaluating international programs;
- Experience with qualitative and quantitative M&E data collection and analysis;
- Previous regional experience in one or more of the following implementing countries: India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and/or Qatar or other Gulf Cooperation Council countries;
- Strong communication and facilitation skills;
- Strong ability to communicate effectively in English; and
- Strong collaboration skills and ability to work closely with Verité, local partners and other stakeholders, as relevant.

Contact Information

Interested applicants are encouraged to submit an Expression of Interest of no more than one page briefly describing relevant experience and the proposed approach to this project with a current CV by April 7, 2023. Please email to Sarah Lince (slinec@verite.org) and Max Travers (mtravers@verite.org). Candidates selected for further consideration will be contacted. If requested by Verité, an additional 2-3 page brief proposal would be submitted upon request by April 28, 2023. The proposal would outline a concise description of the evaluation approach, proposed data sources and collection methods, as well as identify possible data limitations and ways to mitigate them.

ⁱ World Bank. 2020. "Who is Keeping Score? Estimating the Number of Foreign Workers in Malaysia." Kuala Lumpur: The World Bank. documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/892721588859396364/pdf/Who-is-Keeping-Score-Estimating-the-Number-of-Foreign-Workers-in-Malaysia.pdf

ⁱⁱ Government of India. Ministry of External Affairs. Annual Report: 2018-19. 2019. www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/31719_MEA_AR18_19.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2019. "International migrant stock 2019." www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp

^{iv} Verité. 2019. "Thailand Bound: An Exploration of Labor Migration Infrastructures in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Lao PDR." Verité. 2010. "Help Wanted: Hiring, Human Trafficking and Slavery in the Global Economy."

^v Verité. 2014. "Forced Labor in the Production of Electronic Goods in Malaysia: A Comprehensive Study of Scope and Characteristics."

^{vi} Verité. 2010. "Indian Workers in Domestic Textile Production and Middle East-Based Manufacturing, Infrastructure, and Construction."

^{vii} Verité, and the Freedom Fund. 2016. "An Exploratory Study on the Role of Corruption in International Labor Migration."

^{viii} Transparentum. 2019. "Forced Labor Probe in Malaysia Drives Buyers to Act." transparentem.org/project/probe-of-forced-labor-in-malaysian-garment-industry-drives-buyers-to-act/.

^{ix} Transparentum. 2020. "Buyer/Supplier Collaboration Leads to Partial Recruitment Fee Reimbursement for Migrant Workers in Malaysia." transparentem.org/project/buyer-supplier-collaboration-leads-to-immediate-fee-reimbursements-for-migrant-workers-in-malaysia/

^x Transparentum. 2021. "Varied Responses from Companies Implicated in Transparentem's Third Investigation in Malaysia; More Work to be Done." transparentem.org/project/varied-responses-from-companies-implicated-in-transparentems-third-investigation-in-malaysia-more-work-to-be-done/.

^{xi} Amnesty International. 2019. "Reality Check: Migrant Workers rights with Two Years to Qatar 2022 World Cup." www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2019/02/reality-check-migrant-workers-rights-with-two-years-to-qatar-2022-world-cup/

^{xii} The Goal. 2020. "Qatar World Cup: Workers set to receive over \$30 million in reimbursement." www.goal.com/en-ie/news/qatar-world-cup-workers-to-receive-reimbursement/1eflit6qt4iv21ap2gb6bj9oew.

^{xiii} The Guardian. 2022. "Revealed: migrant workers in Qatar forced to pay billions in recruitment fees." www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/mar/31/migrant-workers-in-qatar-forced-to-pay-billions-in-recruitment-fees-world-cup

^{xiv} Amnesty International. 2022. "Predictable and preventable: Why FIFA and Qatar should remedy abuses behind the 2022 World Cup." www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde22/5586/2022/en/