

Request for Proposals: Senior Research Contractor on Labor Inspection and Private Compliance Initiatives

December 2023

Project Background

Verité is an award-winning non-profit organization that illuminates and addresses serious human rights and labor rights violations in factories, farms, and other workplaces around the world. We serve private sector and public-sector clients by building their internal understanding of the labor rights problems they face in their supply chains and operations, and their skills to solve those problems.

The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) selected American Institutes for Research (AIR) to implement the Compliance through Mexican Labor Inspections (CAMINOS) project in 2022 with Verité as an implementing partner. Under this project, Verité is supporting AIR in building and advancing the Mexican labor inspectorate's capacity to develop and implement supply chain-focused strategic labor enforcement and compliance plans.

Verité is seeking to hire a Senior Research Contractor to support the initial mapping of Private Compliance Initiatives (PCIs) in two selected supply chains in Mexico, and the PCI's interaction with public labor enforcement mechanisms, including labor inspections.

Scope of Work

The Senior Research Contractor will be primarily responsible for identifying and analyzing existing labor compliance initiatives led by the private sector (Private Compliance Initiatives, or PCIs) in two selected supply chains in Mexico: auto industry and mining. This mapping exercise and subsequent analysis will focus on:

1. Identifying labor compliance initiatives led by the private sector through a combination of desk research and industry and expert interviews, and creating an inventory of such initiatives in the two supply chains, including initiatives with a supply chain and/or due diligence approach.

2. Analyzing the content of the identified PCIs, including producing a comparison of the labor standards set by such PCIs with labor inspection standards, specifically to labor standards and rules as established by Mexican labor law.
3. Analyzing the intersections between identified private standards and public rules as established by the labor inspection regulation.
4. How does the relationship between private- and public-sector compliance initiatives play out in practice? Specifically:
 - a. Do actors involved defer to one set of labor standards or the other?
 - b. Do they try to resolve differences in regulations between private- and public-sector labor standards?
 - c. If the private- and public-sector labor standard regulations are the same, does this make compliance of private sector actors more robust?
5. Identifying how/if supply chain and due diligence approaches have permeated the PCIs identified.

Deliverables and Timeline

Anticipated Start Date: February 2024

Anticipated End Date: End of July 2024

The Senior Research Contractor is expected to perform the following tasks and activities and to produce the following deliverables:

- In coordination with Verité, develop the mapping outline and research methodology.
- Develop research materials and data collection instruments, including interview guides and questionnaires.
- Conduct desk research.
- Conduct virtual interviews with different private and public sector stakeholders. The CAMINOS Project Team will support the contractor in identifying potential interviewees and scheduling interviews.
- Develop a matrix/an inventory of PCIs in the two sectors.
- Draft a 15- to 20-page report with an analysis of the results of the mapping exercise according to outline objectives and submit for review.
- Revise report according to feedback from Verité and finalize report.
- Develop a 5-8 slide Power Point presentation with key findings.

Evaluation Criteria

The Senior Research Contractor must meet and demonstrate the following qualifications:

- Advanced experience carrying out mixed-methods research, including both desk and field research, in similar or relevant topic areas.
- Extensive knowledge and understanding of private and public labor regulatory regimes.
- Knowledge of supply chains. Understanding of due diligence approaches is an advantage.
- Understanding or familiarity with the USMCA.

- Knowledge about and experience working on labor inspection in Mexico and/or in the two selected supply chains (auto industry and mining) is an advantage.
- Fluency in Spanish language required. English-language skills is an advantage.

Instructions for Submission

To submit a proposal for consideration, please send the following documents, along with any questions or clarifications you may need, to Sarah Wentz, Senior Grants Manager, at swentz@verite.org and Georgina Vazquez de los Reyes, Project Director, at gvazquez@verite.org by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday 19th January 2024.**

- CV or resume; or explanation of required qualifications, experience, and expertise.
- Cost proposal, including daily rate and estimated number of days needed for this work, and/or any additional expenses or professional fees.
- Samples of previous work on required areas of expertise, such as a research methodology outline, research articles or reports on relevant topics, etc.