Request for Proposals: Research on Labor Conditions in Indonesia’s Cocoa Sector

February 2024

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.

Verité is seeking to hire a contractor with extensive research, research tool development, and worker interview experience within agricultural supply chains in Southeast Asia as part of a research project on labor conditions in Indonesia’s cocoa sector. The research project has a focus on forced labor and child labor. The research study will include desk research, development of a research plan and tools, expert interviews, farmer and worker interviews, and a final research report. The research will be carried out during the 2024 mid-crop harvest season in Indonesia, which begins in March and goes through July and the final report will be due by June 21, 2024.

This Request for Proposals will inform a Verité proposal. The selected contractor will be notified of their selection, but this is not a guarantee that funding will be secured by Verité. A funding decision is expected by April 2024.

Scope of Work

The contractor will be responsible for the following tasks:

1) Developing a research plan, which will include the methodology for the study and timeline for conducting the fieldwork in Sulawesi and Sumatra.

2) Supplementary desk research on Indonesia’s cocoa sector and labor dynamics localized to key cocoa-producing states to inform field research. Research topics include but are not limited to:
   a. Farm worker typologies, farm worker recruitment and hiring practices, farm working conditions, farm worker income, farmer production costs and income
   b. For migrant workers: migrant workers’ places of origin, means of recruitment, and conditions of work.

3) Finalization of research plan, including an outline of the timeline for the work, and identification of where research will be conducted.

4) Development of research tools tailored to Indonesia’s cocoa sector, including:
   • Farmer and worker interview questionnaires
   • Expert interview guides/questionnaires

5) Expert interviews
   • 5-10 interviews with civil society, academic, private sector, and/or government experts (in-person or remote).

6) Farmer and worker interviews in two key cocoa-producing states
40-50 interviews with workers, including local workers and migrant workers. Understanding conditions for workers and workers’ experiences is the primary focus. Supplementary interviews should be conducted with both farmers/landowners and workers to collect information.

There will be four deliverables associated with this study:

1) The draft research plan (including timeline) and tools should be submitted no later than April 12, 2024.
2) The final research plan and tools, and timeline for Indonesia field research should be submitted no later than April 26, 2024.
3) The draft research summary of findings report should be submitted no later than June 7, 2024.
4) The final report should be submitted by June 21, 2024.

All deliverables must be approved by Verité.

**Evaluation Criteria**

The research contractor must have the following technical and professional background:

- At least five (5) years of experience in conducting research on labor issues within agricultural supply chains, and particularly cocoa supply chains, in Southeast Asia.
- Experience conducting interviews with a variety of stakeholders in agricultural supply chains, including vulnerable workers.
- Experience with developing tools and materials for stakeholder engagement in agricultural supply chains.
- Professional or native fluency in English is required. Proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia is required, or in lieu of proficiency, the consultant should submit a clear plan for translation and explanation of how research quality will not be compromised.

The research contractor must also include in their proposal their availability to conduct fieldwork in Indonesia. In your proposal, please also clearly outline your availability for developing this study as well as the number of worker and expert interviews you can conduct. The project is anticipating at least 5-10 expert interviews and 40-50 worker and supplemental farmer/farm owner interviews in the country.

Contractors will be evaluated based on their cost proposal, relevant background on labor issues in agricultural supply chains and the cocoa sector, their professional experience, their language proficiency, and their educational qualifications.

** Deliverables and Timeline **

The Contractor is expected to produce a final report no later than June 21, 2024.

Please see the schedule of all four deliverables as follows:

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Draft Research plan and tools, and timeline for Indonesia field research</td>
<td>April 12, 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Final Research plan and tools, and timeline for Indonesia field research</td>
<td>April 26, 2024</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Draft research summary of key findings report on the field research, including number of worker and expert interviews</td>
<td>June 7, 2024</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Final 10-page research report in English containing findings from desk and field research, incorporating changes based on feedback from Verité</td>
<td>June 21, 2024</td>
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**Instructions for Proposal Submission**

To submit a proposal for consideration, please send the following documents, along with any questions or clarifications you may need, to Justine May, Program Manager, at jmay@verite.org, with a copy to Adriana Isaza Geary, Program Manager, at aisaza@verite.org, no later than March 7, 2024 at 11:59pm EST:

- Detailed proposal for the research approach, including methodology and timeline.
- Summary of organization’s required qualifications, experience, and expertise or individual CV or resume in the case of individual contractors.
- Cost proposal, including rate per day and estimated number of days needed for this work, and any travel or additional expenses. All expenses should be detailed. All cost amounts should be in United States Dollars.
- Sample research report illustrating similar work completed.