

Request for Proposals: Landscape Assessment of the Guatemalan Apparel Sector

June 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 manufacturing supply chains in Latin America as part of a research project on labor conditions in the Guatemalan apparel sector. The research project intends to analyze workforce demographics, including internal migration patterns, and identify potential forced labor risks linked to unethical recruitment and employment practices. The assessment should also identify relevant civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in these sectors and regions who are actively working to address and mitigate similar risks and drive improvements.

The research study will include the development of a research methodology, tools, and protocols; desk research; worker and expert interviews; stakeholder mapping; and drafting a final research report. The research will be carried out **from approximately November 2024 through April 2025** in Guatemala, and the final report will be due by April 30, 2025.

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 September 30, 2024.

Scope of Work

The contractor will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Initial tool and methodology design: Develop a research methodology and tools that are tailored to the context of the Guatemalan apparel sector, including a final report outline, an expert interview guide, and a worker interview questionnaire. This will also include the development of security protocols to reduce risks to both researchers and workers who participate in the study.

2. Desk research on the Guatemalan apparel sector: Conduct desk research to gather information on the geographic concentration of apparel manufacturing, the socioeconomic characteristics and migration patterns of the workforce, documented labor abuses, including indicators of forced labor, and existing stakeholders who have experience working in the sector or with the workforce.

- Round one of research to identify areas of production and areas in which apparel sector workers reside, security protocols, research plan, and research tool development.
- Round two of research to complement findings from the field and fill in gaps for the final report.

3. In-depth field research: Conduct 20-30 expert interviews and 400-500 in-depth interviews with a cross section of workers outside of their places of work to collect information on sensitive topics such as indicators of forced labor and sexual harassment and abuse. Researchers will work with local community leaders to recruit an initial group of workers to participate in the interviews and will then ask these workers to identify additional workers to participate in interviews.

4. Stakeholder mapping: Use desk research and expert consultations to identify civil society organizations that work on labor issues, provide services to populations that work in the Guatemalan apparel sector, and/or are active in the sector or the geographical areas of focus. These could include NGOs, religious organizations, and grassroots community and indigenous groups, such as Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural (COCODEs).

5. Final report: Draft a 50 to 75-page comprehensive final report that details research findings and draft recommendations to address labor risks detected through the research. These risks may include forced labor, recruitment-related risks, and other labor abuses, such as discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse, and wage, hour, and health and safety violations. This report will be drafted based on the information collected from desk research, expert consultations, worker interviews, and the stakeholder mapping process.

Deliverables:

- Deliverable 1: One month after contract signing - Research methodology and tools
 - Research methodology, including security protocols
 - Tools, including final report outline, expert interview guide, and worker interview questionnaire
- Deliverable 2: Four months after contract signing - Preliminary report
 - Five-page report in bullet-point format that describes research carried out to date, including the number of expert and worker interviews, and preliminary findings
 - A preliminary spreadsheet containing the names of stakeholders identified to date
- Deliverable 3: Six months after contract signing - Final report
 - A 50 to 75-page report with the following sections:
 - Executive Summary

- Introduction, including description of methodology and research undertaken
- Background on the apparel sector and workforce
- Labor law review
- Forced labor indicators
- Recruitment and hiring
- Other labor violations documented
- Conclusions and recommendations
- A final spreadsheet containing the names of relevant stakeholders identified, the types of work they carry out, and their contact information

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 conducting research on labor issues in Guatemala.
- Experience conducting interviews with a variety of stakeholders, including vulnerable workers, on labor issues in Guatemala.
- Experience developing tools and materials for worker and expert interviews on labor issues in Guatemala.
- Professional or native fluency in Spanish and English is required.

The research contractor must also include in their proposal their availability to conduct fieldwork in Guatemala while following safety protocols. The project is anticipating at least 400 worker interviews in Guatemala City and other locations.

Contractors will be evaluated based on their cost proposal, relevant background on labor issues in Guatemala, 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 April 30, 2025.

Please see the preliminary schedule of all three deliverables as follows, assuming that the contract is signed by November 1, 2024. Please note that deliverable due dates may change in relation to the date of contract signing.

#	Deliverable	Due Date
1	Research methodology and tools	November 30, 2024
2	Preliminary report	February 28, 2025
3	Final report and stakeholder mapping	April 30, 2025

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 Grace Kintzinger, Program Manager, at gkintzinger@verite.org by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 16, 2024:

- 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/or additional expenses, and estimated number of days needed for this work. Travel expenses should be detailed.
- Sample research report illustrating similar work completed.