

# Request for Proposals: Research on Human and Labor Rights Risks in Coffee-Growing Areas of Colombia

*December 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. Aiming to promote human and labor rights, 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.

For a research project on human rights risks in the Colombian Coffee sector, Verité is seeking to hire a contractor with extensive research, research tool development, and worker interview experience within agricultural supply chains in Latin America, preferably in Colombia, the coffee sector, and/or conflict-affected areas. The research project intends to assess the level and nature of human and labor rights risks on coffee farms in the coffee supply chain in Colombia, mainly those related to forced labor and child labor, as well as other issues such as occupational safety and health, living wages, discrimination based on gender and ethnicity, among others

The research study will include a security assessment, development of a research plan and tools, worker interviews, and a final research report. The research will be carried out from February to March 2025 in Colombia, and the final report will be due in June 2025.

The selected contractor will be notified of their selection. A funding decision is expected by January 15, 2025.

## **Scope of Work**

The contractor will be responsible for the following tasks in close coordination with Verité:

### **1. Field research preparation and security assessment**

The contractor will be responsible for preparing a detailed plan for field research, including a research methodology and tools. This plan will guide the fieldwork process, ensuring that all aspects are well-structured and grounded in prior findings. Additionally, the contractor must develop robust security protocols aimed at minimizing risks to both the researchers and the workers participating in the study.

## **2. In depth field research**

The contractor will be responsible for conducting field research to gather information on human rights risks in the coffee supply chain in Colombia. The contractor will conduct structured interviews with a total of 100 to 120 workers, comprised of 25-30 workers who have worked on coffee farms, along with 8-12 semi-structured case study interviews. This will include interviews with local workers who live close to farms, as well as migrant workers, who will be interviewed in their communities of origin. These off-farm interviews will be conducted outside of the harvest season so that workers do not face time or production pressures, and so that they may share sensitive information free from potential employer interference, coaching, or reprisals.

The research contractor will be responsible for delivering several key outputs throughout this phase. These include a comprehensive research plan, tools, and a security assessment to ensure the safe and effective conduct of the study. Additionally, the contractor will provide a preliminary list of workers interviewed early in the process, followed by a finalized list of all workers interviewed upon completion of the research phase

## **3. Data Analysis and drafting of research report**

Based on the information collected from field research, expert and worker interviews, draft an in-depth report detailing the findings on forced labor and other human rights related issues, and recommendations for how to address and prevent the recurrence of such issues.

The research contractor will deliver a five-page summary report detailing the field research conducted. This report will include the number of interviews with workers, producers, and experts, along with a summary of the key findings. Additionally, a comprehensive final research report will be submitted. The length and format of this report will be determined in consultation with the contractor but will not exceed 75 pages in total.

**All deliverables must be approved by Verité.**

## **Evaluation Criteria**

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

- At least four (4) years of experience conducting research on labor and human rights issues within agricultural supply chains in Latin America, with a preference for experience in conflict-affected areas in Colombia and/or in coffee supply chains.
- Experience conducting interviews with a variety of stakeholders in agricultural supply chains, including vulnerable workers. Experience in the coffee sector will be an asset.
- Experience developing tools and materials for stakeholder engagement in agricultural supply chains.
- Professional or native-level fluency in Spanish is required.

The research contractor must also include in their proposal their availability to conduct fieldwork in Colombia while following safety protocols.

Contractors will be evaluated based on their cost proposal, relevant background on labor issues in agricultural supply chains and the coffee 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 2025.

Please see the schedule of all four deliverables as follows:

#	Deliverable	Due Date
1	Research plan, tools, and security assessment	January 31, 2025
2	Five-page summary report on the number of worker, producer, and expert interviews carried out and key findings	March 2025
3	Draft research report containing findings from field research	April 2025
4	Final research report, incorporating changes based on feedback from Verité	May 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 Esteban Gonzalez Jimenez, Latin America Program Manager, at [egonzalez@verite.org](mailto:egonzalez@verite.org) by 11:59 p.m. Colombian Time on January 8, 2024:

- Detailed proposal for the research approach, including methodology and timeline.
- Summary of organization's required qualifications, experience, and expertise
- Cost proposal, including rate per day and/or any additional expenses, and estimated number of days needed for this work. Travel expenses should be detailed
- Sample research report illustrating similar work completed.