# Request for proposals

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| --- | --- |
| **Project:** | **Lebanon Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) – Wave 2** |
| **Funder:** | USAID |
| **Contract type:** | Firm Fixed Price |
| **RFP Release Date:** | June 25, 2020 |
| **Deadline for Questions:** | July 2, 2020 17.00 EDT |
| **Answers to Questions:** | July 7, 2020 17.00 EDT |
| **Deadline for Proposals:** | July 14, 2020 17.00 EDT |
| **Anticipated Award Date:** | July 22, 2020 |
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| **Annexes** | Annex A (Required Budget Template) |

## Background & Purpose

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) commissioned Social Impact, Inc. (SI) to design and implement a Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) in 2019. The primary purpose of the CPS was to validate the results of three recently completed assessments: a political economy assessment, a gender assessment, and an economic growth assessment. The CPS carried out in 2019 was successfully completed, having provided USAID with insights used to inform their new Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

USAID and SI are now planning a second wave (wave 2) of the CPS. There have been significant political, economic, and health events since wave 1. It is not well known what the impact has been of these critical changes to the Lebanese context. The purpose of wave 2 is to gather information needed for possible adaptive management of USAID’s existing projects and activities to respond to critical context changes.

SI is responsible for the design and overall technical oversight of the CPS wave 2 and intends to subcontract the data collection for the CPS to a local Lebanese firm. The objective of this request for proposals (RPF) is to solicit technical and cost proposals for this data collection.

*Please note that in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, we expect wave 2 will be conducted by phone. As such, wave 2 will make use of a heavily abbreviated version of the wave 1 questionnaire, with a new brief module to gather perceptions regarding COVID-19.*

The sections that follow further detail the scope of work and technical requirements for this assignment, as well as guidelines for proposal submission. Note that the parameters outlined in this scope of work represent the scope of work currently anticipated but is subject to adjustment. SI may request updated cost proposals from top offerors based on final details of the scope and sample size following initial review of technical and cost proposals.

## Scope of Work

Social Impact is seeking to subcontract a Lebanese firm that is highly experienced in carrying out large-scale household surveys to implement data collection for the CPS between July and August 2020. Offerors must submit proposals which demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment, address all aspects of the scope of work detailed in the following sections, and clearly demonstrate their ability to complete the work without sacrificing quality, explicitly discussing any relevant trade-offs to be considered as part of the technical approach.

Technical proposals should be organized into three sections: Technical Approach, Personnel, and Past Performance. Requirements for each section are described below.

### TECHNICAL APPROACH

The CPS Wave 2 will be designed to measure citizen perceptions across a range of indicators across topics related to political economy and citizen perceptions as well as COVID-19. The objective of CPS Wave 2 is to understand critical context changes since Wave 1 while also collecting information about perceptions of recent pandemic response efforts. There are a range of approaches that could be employed for Wave 2. Ideally, we would resurvey households interviewed as part of wave 1. However, the extent of non-response cannot be known ahead of time and must be assessed. This assessment will be part of this contract. The Contractor will conduct a small pilot exercise with attempts made by phone to interview 10% of the wave 1 sample with a valid phone number. Following the pilot, SI will assess non-response and possible bias. If SI finds that non-response is sufficiently low and random during this pilot exercise, SI will instruct the contracted firm to continue interviewing wave 1 households.

If non-response is found to be extensive or systematic during that pilot, an alternative approach for wave 2 will be pursued. Acceptable alternative approaches may include but are not limited to drawing a new cross-sectional sample (e.g. random digit dialing) or administering the survey among an existing representative sample drawn for other purposes. These are not the only possible alternative approaches; SI is not expressing preference for any specific alternative approaches over others in this RFP. As part of their technical proposals, Offerors must provide up to two (2) viable alternative approaches for drawing or constructing a governorate-representative sample of the population. A summary of the anticipated contract work-flow as described above and pilot sample size are below in Figure 1 and Table 1, respectively.

Figure . Work-flow of contract including pilot of wave 2 panel approach

Table . Illustrative Sample Size for the Panel Survey Pilot, by Governorate

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Governorate** | **Wave 1** | **Valid**  **Phone (%)** | **Valid**  **Phone (#)** | **Pilot** |
| **Akkar** | 573 | 88% | 505 | 51 |
| **Baalbek-Hermel.** | 605 | 62% | 378 | 38 |
| **Beirut** | 754 | 88% | 662 | 67 |
| **Beqaa** | 552 | 79% | 434 | 44 |
| **Keserwan-Jbeil** | 485 | 84% | 405 | 41 |
| **Mount Lebanon** | 2,397 | 89% | 2,130 | 213 |
| **Nabatieh** | 611 | 47% | 289 | 29 |
| **North** | 1,171 | 91% | 1,062 | 107 |
| **South** | 943 | 81% | 762 | 77 |
| *Total* | *8,091* | *82%* | *6,627* | *667* |

Given that the wave 2 survey will be conducted by phone given the risks involved with in-person data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey will involve an interview lasting no longer than 15 minutes. Electronic data capture is required for this exercise. SI has a strong preference for proposals that will allow for SI to program the electronic questionnaire and maintain control over the data collection server, to allow for maximum consistency between CPS wave 1 and 2. Offerors’ technical proposals must be structured into the following sections, addressing all required points described below.

**1. Technical Approach**

**Fieldwork Preparations**

Prior to the start of data collection, the Contractor will be required to complete the following tasks. Technical proposals must briefly describe the Offerors’ approach to each, as well as any practical or logistical challenges or risks that would be encountered with proposed mitigation strategies.

* Review and comment on the content of the questionnaire
* Provide translation and back-translation from/to Arabic. Back-translations must be completed by a third party, who was not involved in the forward translations.
* Bug-test the electronic survey program and report issues to SI
* Pre-test the questionnaire in a sample of 20 households not part of wave 1 CPS sample
* Develop interviewer and supervisor manuals for the wave 2 questionnaire
* Conduct phone interviewer training. Proposals must specify the recommended duration, location, and content of field staff training as part of the technical approach. This includes the approach to assessing interviewers’ readiness to conduct data collection. Representatives of SI will attend the training virtually to the extent feasible. It is recommended that more interviewers be trained than will be required for this data collection activity, so that top-performers are selected, as well as to maintain a pool of back-up interviewers.
* Provide interviewers with opportunity to practice administration of the tool in a sample of 2+ households each not included in the wave 1 CPS sample. Report any issues with questionnaire wording, flow, and programming to SI immediately following this.
* Assess interviewer performance and select the final team.
* Translate and back-translate final version of the questionnaire following any revisions as a results of pre-test and pilot.

**Wave 2 Pilot Survey (Panel)**

The wave 2 panel pilot survey will be conducted in order to assess the degree and nature of non-response among original respondents of the CPS wave 1. It will be conducted among a random sample of 10% of wave 1 households with valid phone numbers. Valid phone numbers must be attempted at least five (5) times (or more, as feasible) before being considered a non-response. There is a growing amount of survey research literature documenting response rates increasing with additional phone calls beyond the traditional “three good-faith attempt” approach. Therefore, we strongly prefer proposed approaches that maximize the number of attempts made to reach respondents – e.g. varying the day or time of day that attempts are made. To maximize the chances of reaching the intended respondent, calls on different days or times of day are recommended. Firms should describe additional measures they propose to take in order to maximize response rates by phone. The intended respondent is the original individual who responded to the CPS wave 1 survey. In cases where that person is not available, call-backs will be made. If that person is permanently not available or not available after a certain number of attempts (at least 3), then another person in the household can be interviewed. As part of the technical proposal, Offerors must describe how respondents would be compensated (method (e.g. phone credit, or other), amount, and justification).

Factors that SI will assess following the Pilot Survey include (but may not be limited to) overall response rates, rate of invalid phone numbers, availability of original respondent, and systematic differences in wave 1 characteristics between responders and non-responders.

**Wave 2 Panel Approach**

If the panel approach is selected for wave 2 of the CPS, based on results of the wave 2 pilot, the firm’s interview team will be instructed to continue calling the remainder of the CPS wave 1 households, following the same procedures that were used as part of the Pilot.

**Alternative Approaches (up to 2)**

Offerors must describe at least 1, but no more than 2, alternative approaches to conducting a citizen perception survey using phone-based interview approach, representative at the governorate level. For each alternative approach, Offerors must include the following:

* Discuss relevant technical pros/cons and relevant trade-offs of employing the approach
* Describe in detail each step of the sampling approach, including a description of the sampling frame, how it is constructed, when it was last updated, and any known or suspected issues regarding coverage limitations in the sampling frame
* Specify the sample size, clearly and transparently describe the equations, calculations, and assumptions used to calculate sample size[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Specify, if applicable, what are the primary and/or secondary sampling units
* Specify if and how sampling units can be classified as urban or rural
* Specify the average population (households or individuals) of the sampling units
* How representativeness will be achieved and verified
* How respondents will be contacted
* How respondents will be compensated (method, amount, and justification)
* Describe how the firm has successfully applied this approach in the past
* If the approach cannot be conducted using an electronic data collection tool programmed by SI, firms must describe how data would be captured instead and justify the proposed approach

**Data Quality and Monitoring**

Offerors should describe in depth as part of the technical proposal their procedures for ensuring quality and monitoring interviewer performance throughout data collection. Required aspects of quality control include daily team debriefs, supervisor direct observation (or listening), and backchecks documented according to a tool or form developed by SI and the firm collaboratively.

As relevant, specify any particular measures that will be employed as applicable to the wave 2 panel pilot, wave 2 panel, and each of the alternative approaches. At minimum, this section must address measures taken to ensure that interviewers are properly trained and have adequate comprehension of the procedures and survey tool before starting data collection; measures to monitor, supervise, and course-correct the performance of interviewers during data collection; and corrective measures that will be taken in the event of any discrepancies or performance issues during data collection. Note that SI may at its discretion request replacement of enumerators deemed to be performing inadequately in training or in the field.

SI will be conducting its own independent quality assurance for the duration of this activity, including high-frequency checks. Subcontractors will be required to respond in a timely manner to SI questions regarding data quality control and other measures of data quality assurance.

**Confidentiality & Data Security**

Offerors must also describe in their technical proposals how they will ensure adequate protection of respondent’s confidential and private information during data collection and data security. This includes physical safeguarding of devices and data; or any password-protected, permission-restricted, encrypted, or other methods of protecting data. All field staff will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement signifying their understanding of ethical behavior in the field and proper handling of respondents’ confidential and private information, including personally identifiable information (PII).

**Challenges / Risks**

Describe any other potential challenges anticipated in successfully implementing the survey not otherwise included above, as well as proposed ways to mitigate these challenges. This could include challenges, risks, or limitations related to seasonality, holidays or observances, difficulties in identifying intended respondents, known limitations in the offerors’ proposed sampling approaches, or others.

**2. Personnel and Staffing**

Offerors must describe the qualifications of their proposed key personnel against the requirements listed below and must provide CVs for key personnel as part of the technical proposal. The key personnel for this assignment include a Team Leader and Field Manager.

Team Lead: Required qualifications include 8+ years of relevant experience managing large-scale data collection exercises in Lebanon. Advanced degree in social science or related field. Experience conducting surveys in topics related to CPS preferred. Experience with donors or multi-lateral clients also preferred. Fluency in English required.

Field Manager: Required at least 5 years of relevant experience managing large-scale data collection exercises in Lebanon, including conducting quality control and managing survey teams for complex and large-scale surveys. Master’s degree in social science or related field. Experience with US Government donors (USAID; MCC; Dept. of State), UN agencies (e.g. UNICEF), World Bank, and/or MICS and DHS surveys is highly preferred. Fluency in English and Arabic is required.

Offerors must also describe their approach to ensure that well-qualified supervisors and interviewers are hired. Interviewers should have relevant interviewing experience in household interviewing, and electronic survey administration. Offerors must specify the total number of enumerators and supervisors that will conduct the activity along with the proposed supervisor to enumerator ratio. Offerors should state what their minimum qualifications are for enumerators, supervisors, and other field staff, and must also state what proportion of the interviewers and supervisors would be repeat hires with previous experience with the firm. Describe contingencies for staff replacement, should the need arise, during data collection.

Any other positions deemed essential for the successful implementation of the activity should be listed here as well along with required qualifications, approach to recruiting qualified individuals to fill the position(s), and their proposed responsibilities as part of the CPS wave 2.

**3. Past Performance**

Offerors must submit exactly three (3) past performance reports describing relevant experience to the CPS. Each past performance report must include at minimum an overall description of the scope of work, period of performance, the results of the activity, the budget of the activity, and contact information for a reference from that assignment. This experience should reflect institutional capacity, not just that of individual team members. Of particular importance is relevant work in the management and implementation of phone-based or other remote types of survey data collection, with methodologies and with populations/locations as those in this scope of work. SI reserves the right to contact references provided in these past performance reports.

### REPORTING AND DELIVERABLES

Subcontractors will be required to submit the following reports. Social Impact will provide report templates as guidance to the Subcontractor following execution of a subcontract.

* Inception Report: 1 week after contract signing
* Pre-test Report: 2 business days after completion of questionnaire pre-test
* CPS Wave 2 Panel Pilot Report: following completion of Pilot Survey
* Final Data Collection Report: following completion of data collection for final approach chosen

### DELIVERABLES & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Subcontractor will submit invoices according to the payments listed below. Weeks are estimated, and relative to contract signing. Submission dates for each deliverable invoiced and SI approval dates should be specified on the invoice. Invoices will not be processed prior to SI accepting deliverables/milestones in writing.

Table . Deliverables and Payment Schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Payment | Deliverables / Milestones | Week | % |
| 1 | Inception Report  Comments on Questionnaire | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | Translations & Back-Translations  Pre-Test Report  Fieldwork Manuals | 2 | 10 |
| 3 | Enumerator Training Completed  All Remaining Fieldwork Preparations Completed | 3 | 15 |
| 4 | Wave 2 Pilot Completed | 4 | 20 |
| 5 | Final Data Collection Completed | 6 | 25 |
| 6 | Final Data Collection Completion Report  Reconciliation of all Data Quality Checks | 8 | 25 |
| Total | -- | -- | 100% |

## Scoring Criteria

The award will be made to a responsible Offeror whose offer follows the RFP instructions, meets all the specifications, and is judged to be the most advantageous. Social Impact will weigh the following factors to score proposals.

**Technical Proposals will be scored based on:**

* Adequacy and clarity of technical approach for Pilot Survey and Alternative Approach(es)
  + Firms will not be penalized for proposing only 1 alternative approach, nor gain extra points for proposing 2 alternative approaches. Each approach will be judged on its own accord.
* Approach to minimizing refusals & non-response
* Overall approach to fieldwork preparations & enumerator training
* Approach to quality control before, during, and after data collection
* Clear capability for on-time delivery
* Mitigation strategies for any anticipated challenges, risks, limitations
* Qualifications and experience of key personnel
* Quality of overall team composition (e.g. total staff, team size, clarity of roles/responsibilities)
* Past experience working on similar large-scale surveys
* Past experience conducting electronic data collection

**Cost Proposals will be scored based on:**

* Overall competitiveness of rates and unit costs
* Cost realism, reasonableness, and completeness of cost inputs
* Transparency of calculations
* Completeness of budgets

In order to ensure fairness and comparability between Offerors’ bids, budget and budget narratives as part of the cost proposals must specify the ***cost per completed survey*** for each approach (panel pilot, panel, and each of the two alternative approaches), in order to ensure fair comparison. The per-survey cost calculation must be clearly explained & transparent.

The Offeror must furnish adequate and specific information in its proposal. A proposal may be eliminated from further consideration before a detailed evaluation is performed if the proposal is considered obviously deficient as to be totally unacceptable on its face or which prices are inordinately high or unrealistically low. In conducting its evaluation of proposals, Social Impact may seek information from any course it deems appropriate to obtain or validate information regarding an Offeror’s proposal.

Offerors are reminded that Social Impact is not obligated to award a contract on the basis of lowest proposed cost or highest technical evaluation score. Although for this procurement technical proposal and past experience and personnel are weighted more important than cost relative to deciding who might best perform the work, cost factors and Social Impact’s prime recipient budget must also be considered. Therefore, after the final evaluation of proposals, Social Impact will make the award to the Offeror whose proposal offers the best value to Social Impact, and the US Government.

## Questions

Please use subject line “Lebanon CPS Wave 2 RFP Questions" and send to all email addresses in the “Contact” field on page 1 by the deadline for questions. Late submission of questions will not be accepted. Answers to questions and any amendment to the RFP made as a result of this process will be sent to all offerors without reference to the name of any specific offeror that asked the question.

## Proposal Submission

### TECHNICAL PROPOSALS

Offerors must submit technical proposals, that comply with the following requirements:

Table . Technical Proposal Page Limitations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Technical Proposal Component | Page limitation |
| 1. TECHNICAL APPROACH | 5 pages |
| 1. PERSONNEL | 2 pages personnel, plus  6 pages CVs |
| 1. PAST PERFORMANCE | 3 pages (1 page each) |
| TOTAL (including CVs) | **16 pages total** |

Offerors may not use annexes or appendices to circumvent page limitations. Material that exceeds the page limitations will not be reviewed or scored by SI. SI may disqualify bids that are non-compliant with the page limit requirements. Technical proposals must not include any cost or financial information.SI may disqualify bids that include financial information in the technical proposal.

### COST PROPOSALS

Budget: Cost proposals shall consist of a budget in Excel with traceable, transparent formulas and must include notes/assumptions related to budget inputs. Offerors are required to use the budget template provided in Annex A. The pilot and each of the 2 alternatives must be separately budgeted in the required Budget Template; the template must not be substantively altered.

Budget Narrative: Offerors are also required to submit a Budget Narrative (Word or PDF, 3-page maximum) summarizing key assumptions and inputs in the budget. The Offeror must propose costs that it believes are realistic and reasonable for the work in accordance with the Offeror’s technical approach. All cost and financial data should be fully supported, complete in detail, and organized in a manner that facilitates review and permits cost analysis. Budget narrative should include the cost per completed survey for each approach (panel pilot, panel, and each of the two alternative approaches), in order to ensure fair comparison.

### SUBMISSION

Please send technical and cost quotations in a single email as attachments. Use subject line “Lebanon CPS Wave 2 Proposal Submission" and send to all email addresses in the “Contact” field on page 1 by the deadline for proposals. Late submissions will not be accepted.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This is an RFP only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate Social Impact or the US Government to award a subcontract, nor does it commit Social Impact or the US Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal.

1. The anticipated type of contract to be awarded under this solicitation is a Firm Fixed Price (FFP) Contract. For the purposes of cost analysis, Offerors must propose a cost in accordance with technical specifications.
2. Any proposal received in response to this solicitation will be reviewed strictly as submitted and in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified above in Section 3.
3. The person signing the Offeror’s proposal must have the authority to commit the Offeror to all the provisions of the Offeror’s proposal.
4. The Offeror should submit its best proposal initially as Social Impact intends to evaluate proposals and make an award without discussions. However, Social Impact reserves the right to conduct discussions should Social Impact deem it necessary.
5. Quotes must include taxes and any other applicable fees. Offers must remain valid for at least sixty (60) calendar days after submission

Annex A – Budget Template



1. Note that sample size is not pre-specified because it will depend on the sampling design; in order to ensure fairness and comparability between Offerors’ bids, budget narratives as part of the cost proposals must specify the ***cost per completed survey*** for each approach (panel pilot, panel, and each of the two alternative approaches), in order to ensure fair comparison. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)