

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR (RFP) TO ASSESS THE FRESHWATER FISH VALUE CHAIN FOR AMPPLIFY'S FOOD FOR PROGRESS (FFPR) PROJECT IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Review of data collected from Population-based Survey(s): You have mentioned that you'll share descriptive report, along with the questionnaires and data analysis plan. What will the format of this descriptive report be? Will it be synthesized/analyzed versions of the findings or more like transcripts of each interview? If these are going to be transcripts only, can you tell us how many survey participants are we talking about? Were these qualitative or quantitative discussions? What was the length of these discussions i.e., number of questions and duration of each interview? Will it be all in English or French as well?

Response; The baseline evaluator will share questionnaires, Data Analysis Plan, and a written descriptive report so that the consultant can utilize this data for the VCA. AMPPLIFY will also share methodology, interview guide and transcripts from these interviews and the consultant will oversee reviewing the methodology and using qualitative data analysis (QDA) software to develop theme reports for key topic areas. Interviews should be audio recorded, translated into English, and transcribed. The population-based surveys have been administered for several performance indicators and discussions will be both qualitative and quantitative.

Sampling plan: o B2B focus group discussions ▪ Because you're closer to the AMMPLIFY reports, are you able to share perspectives on the ideal minimum number of FGDs that should be conducted and number of participants in each group? ▪ Is there a preference to have a good mix of certain types of audience in each group? -- Will each FGD be a mix of multiple respondent types such as influencers, fish producers, wholesalers, retail consumers etc.? Or will it be one type of respondent per FGD, i.e., one FGD with only producers, another FGD with only wholesalers / distributors? ▪ Will household consumers also be a part of each FGD, or only B2B respondents? ▪ Since the external contractor has already conducted KIIs with industry participants, will we be introduced to the same set of people (if they are relevant) or are we expected to carry out respondent recruitment on our own? ▪ Will ASA / AMPPLIFY be okay to give us an authorization letter that we can use while recruiting respondents?

Response; The Consultant will be expected to organize and facilitate focus group sessions in the provinces targeted by the program. The Consultant will be responsible for developing a Focus Group Guide that includes semi-structured questions that will provide facilitators with sufficient opportunities to answer the research questions. It is expected that each focus group includes value chain actors. The Consultant will be encouraged to collect additional quantitative data about consumer preferences, purchasing behaviors, and knowledge about the freshwater fish value chain in Côte d'Ivoire. The Consultant will submit a draft of their implementation plan on or before June 20th, 2024. This document should include the VCA approach, methods for primary data collection (i.e., focus groups and Consumer Preference Survey), overview about data processing and analysis, list of team members' roles and responsibilities, and planned schedule of activities.

Consumer preference surveys ▪ Are you in a position to define the demographics of consumers to be surveyed? Should they majorly be from the mid-to-high income group? Also, we understand it would be critical to interview the purchase decision maker of the household. ▪ In terms of sampling mix of restaurants, you suggested that we conduct at least equal number of interviews with all restaurant types. We believe it will be ideal to conduct more interviews with smaller restaurants vs. medium or larger restaurants. The rationale for this is there are probably higher number of small restaurants in Ivory Coast and their behavior may be completely different from one another.

Response; The Consultant will be expected to organize and facilitate focus group sessions in the provinces targeted by the program. While designing the study and creating the methodology for focus groups, the Consultant should consider AMPPLIFY’s ongoing Baseline Study and utilize primary data collected for that activity to inform the questions and develop the implementation plan for collecting this data. The Consultant will also be expected to conduct secondary data analysis on data collected during the Baseline Study and extract relevant information about the freshwater fish value chain in Côte d’Ivoire

The document brief mentions SPS perception and activities of value chain actors – could you clarify what SPS means? • Basis the scope document, our understanding is that the external evaluator has prepared a theme report for one of the sections (program implementation). We (the consultant) then have to use that as a guide and create theme reports for the other two sections (Aquaculture Industry and Relationship Building) as well as for the insights we get from FGDs we conduct. Is this understanding correct? a. If yes, do you have a sample output of the theme report for us to understand the format, depth, etc.? If no sample output is available, it will help if you can describe what contents are to be covered and to what extent? • There is slight confusion with regards to the timeline. We are expected to submit our full proposal by 31st May and then submit a Draft Analysis Plan post that, by 6th June. However, the document also mentions that AMPPLIFY will share key deliverables with us before the end of May. It will help if you can offer clarity on sequence and timelines.

Response; SPS refers to Sanitary-phytosanitary. The external evaluator will be developing theme reports for the Program Implementation portion of the interviews, but this is only one of the three sections included in the interviews. The Consultant will review these theme reports and use them to guide the process of analyzing data for the Aquaculture Industry and Relationship Building portions of the KIIs.

The candidate shall submit a full proposal to ASA/WISHH via an electronic submission to wishh@soy.org no later than May 31st. The work plan should include a timeline of deliverables that resembles the following:

Timeline for Value Chain Analysis	
Item	Deadline
First draft of Data Analysis Plan (i.e., description of how secondary data analysis will be conducted)	Thursday, June 6th, 2024
First draft of Implementation Plan and Focus Group Guide	Thursday, June 20th, 2024
Final draft of Implementation Plan with schedule of activities, description of instruments, and policies and procedures for data collection	Thursday, June 27th, 2024
Complete secondary data analysis on Baseline Study data (i.e., population-based survey and KIIs)	Tuesday, July 2nd, 2024
Final drafts of Data Analysis Plan, Focus Group Guide, demographics survey, and Consumer Preference Survey	Thursday, July 11th, 2024

Data Collection Phase (i.e., conduct focus groups and administer Consumer Preference Survey)	Tuesday, July 16th, 2024 – Thursday, August 8th, 2024
Submit theme reports and descriptive report for Consumer Preference Survey	Thursday, August 29th, 2024
First draft of VCA Report	Thursday, September 12th, 2024
Final VCA Report	Thursday, September 19th, 2024

Could you clarify whether the consultant will also be required to produce theme reports using qualitative data from the baseline study? How many theme reports should the consultant submit? What are the themes?

Response; The Consultant will be responsible for analyzing some of the qualitative data collected during the Baseline Study’s KIIs. The external evaluator will be developing theme reports for the Program Implementation portion of these interviews. The Consultant will review these theme reports and use them to guide the process of analyzing data for the Aquaculture Industry and Relationship Building portions of the KIIs. Additionally, the Consultant will be required to develop theme reports for the focus groups to be conducted during the VCA.

The RFP states, "The Consultant will be expected to utilize available documents applicable to AMPPLIFY (e.g., Project-level Results Framework, Plan of Operations & Activities, Strategic Analysis)." Can ASA/WISHH please provide the Project-level Results Framework, Plan of Operations & Activities, and Strategic Analysis? Are preliminary results available from the ongoing baseline study? If so, can those be shared with offerors? Regarding the proposed timeline, the proposal due date is May 31st, and the first deliverable is expected by June 6th. This timeline seems quite tight, as it typically takes longer to sign contracts and commence work. Could you please clarify the feasibility of the current timeline?

Response; The Consultant will find it useful to reference a broad range of background documents related to the aquaculture sector in Côte d’Ivoire apart from project documents provided by AMPPLIFY to the Consultant. The Consultant be able to will review the methodology, interview guide and transcripts from these interviews and use qualitative data analysis (QDA) software to develop theme reports for key topic areas (i.e., Aquaculture Industry and Relationship Building). The candidate shall submit a full proposal to ASA/WISHH no later than May 31st with the following and will submit a draft Data Analysis Plan by June 6th, 2024 that clearly describes the methodology to be used when analyzing data from the Baseline Study (e.g., population-based survey(s) and KIIs).

The RFP states: "AMPPLIFY’s top-line goals over the life of the project include: Annual sales by mango and aquaculture producers will reach \$104 million." Could you please clarify what percentage of this \$104 million is expected to come from aquaculture? Further the KPI target is “Directly reach 10,000 individuals and over 35,000 indirectly” what is the allocation of this to the aquaculture value chain. In addition to QDA software, which often has functions to run mixed method research (meaning has capabilities to do basic

quantitative analysis), can we recommend using more advanced quantitative data analysis and visualization software?

Response; We are able to state that AMPPLIFY’s top-line goals over the life of the project include: ● Annual sales by mango and aquaculture producers will reach \$104 million. ● Average aquaculture yields will increase by 67% and total volumes will reach 19,000 MTs/year, representing a 50% reduction in current import volumes. Directly reach 10,000 individuals and over 35,000 indirectly.

The VCA should include a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods and tools appropriate to the research questions. The Consultant will review the methodology, interview guide and transcripts from these interviews and use qualitative data analysis (QDA) software to develop theme reports for key topic areas (i.e., Aquaculture Industry and Relationship Building).

If AMPLIFY has a preference for a given QDA software, can they please share it with us? The RFP Language States: “The Consultant will review and complete the following: 1. Population-based survey tools and descriptive and final report(s) from Baseline Study and develop a plan for further assessing the value chain using this data. 2. Baseline Study KII methodology and interviewer script and analyze qualitative data about the Aquaculture Industry (e.g., commercialization, traceability, quality control) and Relationship Building (i.e., communication and trust between market actors). 3. Baseline Study KII theme reports describing barriers and facilitators to program implementation and incorporate these lessons learned into a Focus Group Guide.” To clarify, can WISHH please confirm that by the time this VCA starts the points 1,2 and 3 above will be completed with no further work to be done and the VCA (the core subject of the RFP) can rely on the information in these studies?

Response; The external evaluator hired for the Baseline Study, under contract to AMPPLIFY, has developed and is administering population-based surveys for several performance indicators. These surveys will have been administered to beneficiaries in each of the project’s intervention provinces and a select number of control provinces. AMPPLIFY will share these data sets and other associated documentation (e.g., questionnaires, Data Analysis Plan, descriptive report) with the Consultant so that they can utilize this data for the VCA.

In the RFP, there are two references to “Quality Control”. The first one is under section 3.3. and it was in reference to quality control along the aquaculture value chain, and the second one at the very end of the RFP in Table 3 “Quality Control Methods”. We want to make sure that by “Quality Control Methods” you refer to methods used to ensure reliability and accuracy of the VCA process in terms of data collection, processing, etc. If not, can you please clarify for us what do you mean? The RFP states, “The awardee Consultant/firm will be expected to discuss and agree on the value chain systems and species to be targeted by the study.” Is this intended to be in the proposal phase or post-contracting with the Project Team?

Response; Section 3.3; The Consultant will review and complete, along with the other 2 requirements; Baseline Study KII methodology and interviewer script and analyze qualitative data about the Aquaculture Industry (e.g., commercialization, traceability, quality control) and Relationship Building (i.e., communication and trust between market actors). Table 3 highlights Quality control methods that the VCA would implement.

RFP Page 7: “The VCA must also provide reliable background information and analysis related to the current conditions and realities in the aquaculture value chains and overall aquaculture situation in Côte d’Ivoire, with a specific focus on high value market systems, including HORECA demand sources and existing and/or immediately operational export-oriented enterprises.” a. We observe some incongruencies here: According to the RFP Top Line Goals: Average aquaculture yields will increase by 67% and total volumes will reach 19,000 MTs/year, representing a 50% reduction in current import volumes. i. Why the focus on the High Value HORECA which will also be using high value imported fish for wealthy Ivorians/Visitors to put on Menus. Our understanding is that customers will not likely buy Cage/Pond or RAS grown Tilapia as a first-choice protein. 1. We typically see the greatest volumes of local fish production going through Modern Grocery Retail and wholesale/wet markets and HORECA uses high value frozen imports. 2. Could you please provide greater detail on the role of exportoriented enterprises? Is there an export promotion component? We understand that AMPPLIFY has as its main aim to facilitate a resilient and growing trade of mango and fish (aquaculture). At the same time, there is a goal to achieve a 50% reduction in current import volumes. We have prior aquaculture experiences where local Nile perch production ended up being exported when cheap Chinese Tilapia entered the market. Clarifications on promoting growing trade versus reducing current import volumes will be helpful in our approaches.

Response; The five-year Addressing Mango Production and Post harvest Loss and Increasing Fish Yields (AMPPLIFY) project is an \$18 million project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Food for Progress Program (FFPr) whose main aim is to facilitate a resilient and growing trade of mango and fish (aquaculture), sustained by profitable farmers making ongoing productivity and climate-smart investments to maintain the health and performance of their farms. Using a facilitative and proven market-based approach that leverages private sector resources to drive incentives and behavior change throughout the market system, the project will achieve improved productivity, trade, and food security through the provision of high-quality, accessible goods and services for farmers and other value chain (VC) participants. WISHH implements the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-funded Commercialization of Aquaculture for Sustainable Trade (CAST) project in Cambodia that provides technical training in farm management, fish health, and feed management while developing climate-smart technologies, providing business solutions, and creating a long-term supply of aquaculture professionals. WISHH also works extensively with local governments and public universities to establish regulatory support for the industry and certification of quality programs.

RFP page 9: With respect to Qualitative Data Collection and recorded FGDs, are there venues that can be used such as the TNS offices and/or known field locations which can be used to keep down costs. Further details on these elements can greatly help with budgeting. Date Mismatches a. RFP page 10: Data Analysis Plan: “AMPPLIFY will share key deliverables developed during the Baseline Study (e.g., questionnaire(s), analysis plan, data dictionary) with the Consultant before the end of May. b. RFP page 10: “Data Analysis Plan” The Consultant will submit a draft Data Analysis Plan by June 6th, 2024” c. Noting that proposal is due on the 31st of May, this provides 6 days for evaluation, selection and contracting. Can this be assumed as being able to be shifted? Noting that there are specific dates required in the RFP, we suggest leaving them in with a mention of (TBC).

Response; As part of the proposal, the candidate shall submit a line-item budget including staff, travel, equipment, supplies, and professional services, if applicable. The candidate shall submit a full proposal to ASA/WISHH no later than May 31st with the work plan that includes a timeline of deliverables that resembles Table 2 of the RFP.

Clarifications on how to interface with the ongoing/current Baseline Assessment. For example: 5. Page 9, 3.3 Approach and Methodology: The RFP Language States: “The Consultant will review and complete the following: 1. Population-based survey tools and descriptive and final report(s) from Baseline Study and develop a plan for further assessing the value chain using this data. 2. Baseline Study KII methodology and interviewer script and analyze qualitative data about the Aquaculture Industry (e.g., commercialization, traceability, quality control) and Relationship Building (i.e., communication and trust between market actors) 3. Baseline Study KII theme reports describing barriers and facilitators to program implementation and incorporate these lessons learned into a Focus Group Guide “The language of “Review and Complete” leaves room for interpretation of what exactly is meant. To clarify, can WISHH please confirm that by the time this VCA starts the points 1,2 and 3 above will be completed with no further work to be done and the VCA (subject of the RF), can rely on the information in these studies?

Response; The external evaluator hired for the Baseline Study, under contract to AMPPLIFY, has developed and is administering population-based surveys for several performance indicators. These surveys will have been administered to beneficiaries in each of the project’s intervention provinces and a select number of control provinces. AMPPLIFY will share these data sets and other associated documentation (e.g., questionnaires, Data Analysis Plan, descriptive report) with the Consultant so that they can utilize this data for the VCA.

The RFP Requirement is:”A technical proposal not to exceed 10 pages (not including annexes) that includes a clear description of the assessment plan demonstrating a good understanding of the scope of work, the methodology, and a plan for data collection and analysis.” Please confirm that the following are not in the page limit: • Cover Page, Introduction of the consultant and Tables are not Counted. • A line item budget • A detailed workplan. Is budgeting for project staff subject to General Schedule (GS) Payscale with GS15 step 10 as a maximum? Can the budget be included as a separate Excel attachment, or should it be included tables pasted into an annex in the PDF proposal volume?

Response; The candidate shall submit a full proposal to ASA/WISHH with the following: • Curriculum Vitae(s) of the lead consultant and assistants • References of similar work conducted by the applicant and recommendations if available. • “A technical proposal not to exceed 10 pages (not including annexes) that includes a clear description of the assessment plan demonstrating a good understanding of the scope of work, the methodology, and a plan for data collection and analysis”. o The methodology should include a detailed data collection plan, describing the data collection technique(s) to be used, related data collection sources, and a rationale for reasons the data collection was chosen. • A line-item budget including staff, travel, equipment, supplies, and professional services, if applicable • A detailed work plan showing the resources needed, the time anticipated, and the outcomes/deliverables to be reached.