

Terms of Reference

Baseline Study on 27 Local Authorities: e-Local Government Rollout Project

1. Background

Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA) has already invested in developing a solution for local government authorities. Primary objectives of this initiative is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness in local governance, streamline the public service delivery and management functions, ensure social accountability and transparency, ensure social inclusiveness, and strengthen the revenue base of local authorities. To fulfill the objectives of this initiative, e-Local Government (e-LG) solution was developed and successfully implemented at a few selected local authorities. ICTA is now intends to rollout e-LG solution at all local authorities - Municipal Councils (MCs), Urban Councils (UCs), and Pradeshiya Sabhas (PSs) - across the country over three years.

Prior to rolling out the e-LG solution, ICTA intends to conduct a baseline study to assess the overall readiness of the local authority and their citizens. The objectives of the baseline study are to (1) identify the number and type of local government services available under different local government institutions through conducting a comprehensive desk review/ document review, (2) understand the perceptions of citizens and local government officials on the status of present service delivery method, (3) understand citizens' and public officials' expectations on the future service delivery method using ICT, (4) understand the willingness and attitudes of the local authority staff towards new technology adoption, and (5) assess the available hardware infrastructure of local authority. Such a study would help ICTA to understand the present status of the local authority and the expectations of the key stakeholders.

To fulfill the objectives of the study, ICTA intends to find a suitable consultancy firm to conduct a comprehensive baseline study on 27 local authority sites over a period of 14 weeks. The selected consultant is required to identify a suitable evaluation/research methodology to conduct the study, develop a research instrument by identifying appropriate variables to meet the objectives of the study, visit all sites (27) and collect appropriate data based on the research instrument developed, and generate a comprehensive analysis report on the findings and present to the ICTA.

2. Aim and Objectives of the Baseline Study

- i. Primary aim of the consultancy assignment is to ‘assess the overall readiness of 27 local authorities prior to the implementation of the e-Local Government Solution’
- ii. High level Objectives of the Baseline Study are to understand,
 - a. Identify the number and type of local government services available under different local government institutions
 - b. Citizens’ perceptions on effectiveness of the present service delivery method
 - c. Citizens’ perceptions on the effectiveness of the future service delivery method using ICT
 - d. Public officials’ assessment on the effectiveness of the current service delivery method
 - e. Public officials’ assessment on the effectiveness of the future service delivery method using ICT
 - f. Current service levels based on user perspectives
 - g. Knowledge, skills, attitudes and practice of the public officials towards technology adoption
 - h. Available hardware infrastructure of the local authority
- iii. Some of the key questions to be asked should include, but not be limited to, the following
 - a. How do citizens feel about the present service delivery method of the local authority?
 - b. How does local authority staff feel about the present service delivery method?
 - c. What are citizens’ expectations of ICT based service delivery?
 - d. What are the local authority staff ‘s expectations of ICT based service delivery?
 - e. What is the overall performance of the present service delivery method?
 - f. What are the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the local authority staff?
 - g. What is status of the hardware infrastructure of the local authority?

3. Tasks to be Carried Out

3.1 Task 1: Study Methodology, Sample Frame and Research Instrument

- i. Meet with representatives of ICTA and gather details on the requirements of the study, propose a suitable research methodology for the study, identify and propose suitable variables to be used to achieve the objectives of the study, define a study instrument, and define time schedule for the project.
- ii. Total number of organizations to be assessed will be 27 Local Government sites (entire study population- 27 sites should be evaluated). A tentative list (Annex 1) of sites is attached with

the ToR. For selecting respondents in each organization (site) in a representative manner, the consultants are expected to propose in their bid, a suitable sampling approach.

- iii. Preferred study methodology shall be mixed methods of evaluation and the consultants are expected to discuss and justify the methods that they propose in their bid.
- iv. The evaluation instruments (survey/interview questionnaires, guidelines) should be able to capture information, to the extent possible, as indicated in the Aims and Objectives Section of the ToR.
- v. Evaluation instruments should also be able to capture necessary information through site surveys, interviews, and observations, discussions with the citizens/local authority staff, potential beneficiaries etc.
- vi. Consultant is required to define a list of variables against which data will be collected, show the connection with the study objectives and how the results will be analysed. Data analysis could include various quantitative data results (descriptive statistics, tests of means, cross-correlations) and qualitative data analysis techniques such as thematic analysis, content analysis and so forth.
- vii. Development of relevant training materials and written instructions for all persons involved in fieldwork.
- viii. The consultant should be responsible to implement all possible quality control measures in the research to ensure the quality, reliability and validity of data collected and analyzed.
- ix. Provide, in English, a detailed study implementation plan outlining all the steps involved in the design and implementation of the study, including a project time schedule and resource plan, data collection instruments (in all three languages), and outlines of the instruction manuals to be developed. Submit to ICTA the plan in electronic form and as a hard copy.

3.2 Task 2: Pre testing and Implementation

- i. Develop data collection instruments, including support documentation, instruction manuals for interviewers/surveys/observations, instructions for data entry, and a manual of operations and field procedures. Provide all instruments and documentation to ICTA in electronic form and as hard copies.
- ii. Train enumerators/interviewers, supervisors of interviewers, supervisors of teams, and data entry personnel. The consultant is expected to discuss appropriate approaches for conducting results oriented training.
- iii. Pre-test the survey/interview questionnaire and re-estimate the sample size. After the pre-test, if necessary, revise the questionnaire and documentation, and translate the questionnaire into Sinhala and Tamil. If necessary, adopt the sample size to ensure that final results will be of statistical validity and representative. A test of data entry (data entry program and procedures) must also be included in the testing procedures. Provide ICTA with a summary of test results and relevant comments and suggestions.
- iv. Prepare a basic description of the survey/interviews. This should include the confirmed sample frame and sample size, methodology, data collection plan, and a description of the fieldwork techniques to be used. Developed questionnaires (in all three languages) and related documentation should be included as appendixes. Provide electronic versions and hard copies of all these documents to ICTA.

- v. After approval by ICTA, conduct field operations and collect data in accordance with the plans and proposals developed earlier.

3.3 Task 3: Data Entry, Processing, Analysis and Reporting

- i. Enter collected data via database software. The software must be able to verify ranges and consistency of the data and generate reports indicating missing data, data outside of the accepted ranges, and inconsistent answers. Clean data records and verify that the sample is still sufficient for reliable statistics. Provide a brief data entry report to ICTA in electronic form and as hard copy. Together with the report, deliver the database in MS Excel format containing all entered data records.
- ii. Conduct data analysis. The Consultant will conduct quantitative (e.g. frequencies, percentage tabulations, and cross tabulations) and qualitative data analyses (content analysis, thematic analysis). Where necessary, statistical significance levels are to be calculated to enable proper interpretation of results.
- iii. Final study findings shall be in English. The report must contain descriptive statistics of all variables of the survey, cross tables, and graphs, as well as qualitative interpretations and presentations. Selected variables should be presented by graphs and/or correlation measures, on thematic maps. A critical review of the methodology, realisation, and results should be given, together with recommendations for improvement. The report must be submitted in electronic form and as a hardcopy.
- iv. Conduct a presentation workshop at ICTA to present and discuss Final Report findings, when specified by ICTA.

4. Qualification of Consultants and Organization

4.1 Key Staff

- i. The key functional areas to be carried out by staff includes but not limited to (1) design evaluation research with the use of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods evaluation approaches, (2) identify relevant variables that can be used to design the evaluation instrument, (3) design evaluation instruments, (4) conduct field operations, (5) analyse collected data from qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research, and (6) effective interpretation of data and writing reports.
- ii. Consultant is free to propose the number and structure of experts appropriate to his implementation approach, provided that the team properly covers the above mentioned functions.
- iii. Adequate number of experts, who can, within the limited timeframe, facilitate and conduct the evaluation as well as analyze and report on research data, must be proposed by the Consultant.
- iv. Personnel proposed to cover the key functions (Key Experts) must be included in the proposal with their full CVs in accordance with the format provided.
- v. Positions to cover other project functions must also be presented in the bid, including the number of staff, their input in terms of staff days, and their work schedule. Particular persons must not be nominated and their CVs not included in the proposal but in the case of survey supervisors and enumerators, they must fulfil the basic qualifications and experience and it should be confirmed in

the proposal. A description of an appropriate team structure, team collaboration arrangements and project management functions must be included in the proposal.

vi. The suggested minimum number of staff for this assignment is presented in the table below.

Key Staff	Minimum Academic Qualification	Minimum Experience	Minimum Number of Similar Assignments Conducted
Team Leader	Bachelor's Degree or higher degree qualifications from a recognized university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Demonstrated experience of at least 5 years in designing baseline study/ impact/outcome evaluation study. – Ability to develop monitoring and evaluation tools, analyze and interpret quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods data. – Ability to write similar evaluation reports – Knowledge of best practices in baseline study/outcome/impacts evaluation activities – Excellent oral and written language skills (Sinhala /Tamil and English) 	5 Similar assignments specially in the areas of ICT for development/and e-government
Evaluation Manager (managing field operations)	Degree from a recognized university	Minimum 3 years demonstrated experience in managing research projects/ outcome/impact evaluation	At least 5 similar assignments
Evaluation/ Baseline Study Expert	Master Degree/ Postgraduate Diploma or higher qualifications from a recognized university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minimum 5 years of demonstrated experience in baseline study/ evaluation study – Extensive experience in qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research designing and implementation – Demonstrated experience in designing research, developing surveys and qualitative questionnaires, collecting data through surveys and interviews/focus groups, analyzing data, interpreting data. – Excellent report writing skills 	5 Similar assignments
Statistician and Qualitative data analyzer	Higher Degree preferably a Masters degree on statistics/qualitative data from a recognized university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minimum 5 years demonstrated experience in handling statistical analysis/qualitative data analysis and implementing national level research/project evaluations (Preferably for the public sector) 	5 Similar assignments

Other staff

Enumerators	Bachelor's Degree or higher degree qualifications from a recognized university	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Demonstrated experience in conducting face-to-face interviews and surveys (five surveys)– Excellent language skills in Sinhala and Tamil to manage the Tamil and Sinhala speaking respondents effectively	Participated in at least 5 similar assignments
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4.2 Nature of the Organization

The organisation should be specialized and have relevant experience in designing and implementing similar projects. The organisation should be able to provide a strong enumerator network to facilitate information gathering.

5. Outputs, Deliverables and Payment Schedule

- i. Consultant is required to provide a brief baseline study report on individual sites as soon as the site evaluation is completed for enabling the project team to go ahead with the LG product implementation. A comprehensive final report shall be compiled based on the completion of the evaluation in all local government sites
- ii. All reports and deliverables are to be prepared in English and submitted to ICTA in electronic form (DOC and PDF formats) and one hard copies.
- iii. Evaluation tools/survey questionnaires/interview questionnaires are to be prepared in English and then translated into Sinhala and Tamil.
- iv. Upon completion of the baseline study, ICTA will own all evaluation tools, reports, and all related data/information in respect of this assignment. Additionally, ICTA will also have the right to reproduce and circulate the evaluation tools and report at its discretion.
- v. The duration for this project has been set for a total of 14 weeks. The following preliminary work schedule is suggested as follows.

Phase/ Reports	Task	Deliverable	Deadline	Payment Schedule
Inception Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Finalize work plan – Evaluation/Study sites schedule – Study framework including variables – Questionnaire (survey and interview) – Survey questionnaires in all three languages, Enumerator training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Report on the research approach including study framework and variables – Sampling frame and the survey sample – Evaluation Tools/Survey and Interview questionnaires – Detailed work plan – Report on field staff training 	Contract date + Week 3	20%
Interim Report I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Completion of 50 % of the site visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Field Monitoring Report 1 (Details of study implementation, monitoring and quality assurance activities conducted) including individual site evaluation reports 	Contract date + Week 4	20%
Interim Report II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Completion of 100 % of the site visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Field Monitoring Report 2 (Details of survey implementation, monitoring and quality assurance activities conducted) including site evaluation studies 	Contract date + Week 11	25%
Draft Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Completion of Study – Completion of data entering and cleaning – Completing data analysis – Presentation of draft study report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Draft Study Report 	Contract date + Week 13	20%
Survey Final Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Incorporating comments on the draft report – Submission of final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Final findings in a report format – Completed questionnaires – Completed database 	Contract date + Week 14	15%

6. Client's Inputs

- i. The Client will provide a list of organisations
- ii. The Client will provide letters of introduction for conducting the baseline study in the selected local authorities.
- iii. The Client will provide background information of ICTA projects relevant for the implementation of the baseline study.
- iv. The Client will provide venue facilities to hold workshops to present key findings of the report.

7. Procedures for Review of Outputs

- i. Review committee will comprise the following members from ICTA:

A review committee will be appointed by ICTA to review the deliverable

- ii. Review and comment on the draft report (By the client): 1 week from the date of final presentation
- iii. Incorporate comments and submit final audit report (By the consultant): 1 week from the date of submission of comments

Annex 1: Tentative Site List

Province	District	Local Authority Name
Western	Colombo	Kolonnawa UC
Western	Gampaha	Ja-ela UC
Western	Kalutara	Beruwala UC
Sabaragamuwa	Rathnapura	Balangoda UC
Sabaragamuwa	Kegalle	Kegalla UC
North-Western	Kurunegala	Wariyapola PS
North-Western	Puttalam	Naththandiya PS
Southern	Galle	Balapitiya PS
Southern	Matara	Akuressa PS
Southern	Hambanthota	Beliatta PS
North-Central	Anuradhapura	Rambawa PS
North-Central	Polonnaruwa	Thamankaduwa PS
Central	Matale	Matale PS
Central	Kandy	Pujapitiya PS
Central	Nuwaraeliya	Nuwaraeliya PS
Uva	Badulla	Badulla MC
Uva	Monaragala	Butthala PS
Northern	Vavuniya	Vavuniya UC
Northern	Mannar	Mannar UC
Northern	Kilinochchi	Karachchi PS (Kilinochchi)
Northern	Mullativu	Puthukuddirupu PS
Northern	Jaffna	Valikamam South PS
Eastern	Trincomalee	Trincomalee UC
Eastern	Batticaloa	Kanthakudi UC
Eastern	Ampara	Samanthure PS
Uva	Badulla	Bandarawela MC
Western	Kalutara	Horana UC