

Terms of Reference

for

Conducting a baseline survey for eSamurdhi and integrated Social Welfare Management Programs - ICTA/GOSL/CON/CQS/2016/87

1. Introduction

Sri Lanka has been providing social welfare to its citizens since the independence. The Sri Lankan government has implemented various welfare programs from time to time to alleviate poverty. The Samurdhi program became the main social welfare program since 1994. There are 1.4 million families who are directly benefitted from this program. Further, social welfare programs such as assistance for patients who have been identified under special financial assistance programs, elder allowance, financial and in-kind assistance on education, disaster relief, and allowance for disabled persons and allowances for religious school teachers are the other key social welfare programs.

Furthermore, the necessity of having social protection programs in order to assure a minimum standard of living for the vulnerable groups has been recognized by all consecutive governments since independence and still evolving through converging on the situation in a timely manner.

Annually, around Rs.200 billion spent to implement these schemes through line ministries as well as ministries under Provincial Councils using different payment mechanisms. Benefits are given mostly in terms of cash grants though there are few in-kind transfers as well. While most of these programs are financed through the Consolidated Fund some benefits are driven through foreign grants, such as World Food Program.

2. Background

As a national policy, government has identified that, key citizen welfare services to be integrated through integrated development projects under Digitization of government national program for fostering social integration, peace, growth, and poverty reduction.

In this context, ICTA intends to implement Integrated Social Welfare Management Program through establishing appropriate and integrated information System to -

1. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of targeted welfare service delivery programs implemented under the government of Sri Lanka.
2. Improve the reach and responsiveness of social welfare services, reduce transaction costs to the government
3. Make government more transparent and accountable, in addressing the urgent needs of low income communities and isolated regions in the country.
4. Minimize errors and promote adoption of the accurate process in beneficiary selection across the programs from divisional secretary level to the central government.

5. Improve the necessary ICT and human capacities required to ensure the best use of resources allocated for integrated social welfare management programs and enhance the monitoring and evaluation skills.

The Welfare Benefits Board and Ministry of Social Empowerment and Welfare are the main two stakeholders for all the Social Welfare Management Programs. In addition, Department of Divineguma Development also been identified as other stakeholder for this initiative.

All these schemes are implemented in a group specific manner; such as poor, old, disabled etc. and therefore, combinations of benefits given for one person is a frequent phenomenon. Absence of a unique process to implement these schemes and lack of coordination among the implementation agencies also cause to selecting real recipient to receive welfare benefits.

At present, selection of targeted beneficiary is always challenging due to:

- The absence of an integrated selection and targeting information system. There are incidences where the intended beneficiary has some time excluded from the scheme and ineligibles getting benefits.
- However, it should be noted that, benefits are provided to a different categories of people for a different purposes, application of common single selection criteria also impossible.
- The administration cost of some schemes is higher than that of benefits due to improper channeling, poor maintaining records and involvement of high number of official is also critical.
- Many line ministries/ provincial councils implement programs but maintaining data records is very poor.
- Lack of system to ensure where the grants provided are successfully utilized for the relevant purposes especially when benefits given to a third party to provide care and facilities.
- In consistency of the benefits for all the province need to be addressed. Discrepancy can be seen among the Grants given by the Provincial Council for the same purpose as they are determined individually
- Difficulties in obtaining benefits on time due to disability, remoteness, inefficiency or complexity of the systems have rendered most schemes ineffective and thereby achieving the ultimate objective is made more task-full.

Prior to establishing integrated information system, ICTA intends to conduct a comprehensive baseline study to assess the present situation of collection, storing and usage of beneficiary data across the organizations and overall readiness of the staff and organizations to adopt and effective use of the system.

3. Objectives of the Assignment

As an integral part of the monitoring and evaluation system, ICTA has planned to conduct a baseline study to identify necessary variables, gather relevant and appropriate data in relation to establish baseline understanding on existing social welfare programs implemented under the government of Sri Lanka. The findings of the proposed baseline study will be used in future

to identify and assess the results generated by the project and the contribution towards achieving the envisaged outcomes of the project.

The Specific Objectives of the baseline survey are to;

1. Identify the existing approaches and methods of data collection in relation to the potential beneficiaries, related operations, and level of the access and the availability of beneficiary data.
2. Identify the current process of beneficiary evaluation system including the entry and exit criteria to be qualified for beneficiary program.
3. Assess the existing management structure, communication and coordination mechanism of welfare benefit programs at the levels of Divisional secretariat, District secretariat and Provincial Councils etc.
4. Assess the ICT skills, knowledge and capacity of the management, operational staff of data custodians, providers, users in terms of adopting a systemized and ICT based workflow.
5. Identify the attitudes, expectations, level of readiness, willingness of the staff of the government stakeholders towards effective collaboration in adopting ICT based new system.
6. Identify the possible risks and challenges which can affect the project performance and suggest appropriate risk management or mitigation methods.

To fulfill the objectives of the study, ICTA intends to find a suitable consultant firm to conduct a comprehensive baseline study. The study will use a scientific sample representing all types of stakeholders across the government.

The selected consultant firm is required to

- a) Discuss and present in his bid, a suitable evaluation methodology, to conduct the study, develop an evaluation tools by identifying appropriate variables to meet the objectives of the study,
- b) Visit all selected sites and collect appropriate data based on the evaluation tools developed, and
- c) Produce a comprehensive analysis report on the findings and present to the ICTA and other partner institutions.

4. Scope of Work; and tasks to be carried out

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

- i. Meet with representatives of ICTA and the technical review committee and gather details on the requirements of the study, propose a suitable evaluation methodology for the study, identify and propose suitable variables to be used to achieve the objectives of the

study, define an evaluation tools/ instrument, and define time schedule for the baseline study.

- ii. Total number of institutions, beneficiaries and the relevant authorities to be surveyed and will be selected by the consultant as part of the sample design. The consultants are expected to propose in their bids a suitable sampling approach based on highly representative island wide sample considering the aspects of geographical differences in poverty, demographic, ethnic, urban, rural and estate, etc.
- iii. Preferred study methodology shall be both qualitative and quantitative and the consultants are expected to discuss with the technical review committee and justify the methods that they are proposing for the study.
- iv. The study instruments (survey/interview questionnaires, guidelines) should be able to capture data/information, to the extent possible, as indicated in the Objectives Section.
- v. Study instruments should also be able to capture necessary information through site surveys, interviews, and observations, discussions with the relevant staff, and other partners and beneficiaries
- vi. Consultant is required to recommend a list of variables for which data will be collected, show the connection with the study objectives and how the findings will be analyzed. Data analysis could include various quantitative data results (descriptive statistics, tests of means, cross-correlations) and qualitative data analysis techniques and so forth.
- vii. Consultant is required to develop 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 baseline 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. (As mentioned in the deliverables)

4.2 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. Consultant in his bid can discuss and present appropriate methods that they will propose for training of field staff and group/team leaders.
- 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.

4.3 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. Required to have clean data records and verify that the sample is reliable statistics. Provide a brief data entry report to ICTA in electronic form and as hard copy. Together with the report, deliver the database together with the software 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 findings.
- 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, realization, and results should be given. The report must be submitted in electronic form and as a hardcopy.
- iv. Conduct a presentation workshop at ICTA to technical review committee to present and discuss Final Report findings, when specified by ICTA.

5. Qualifications of Consultants and Organization

5.1 Key Staff

- i. The key functional areas to be carried out by consultants include but not limited to (1) design evaluation research with the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, (2) identify relevant variables that can be used to design the evaluation instrument, (3) design evaluation instruments, (4) conduct field operations, (5) analyze collected data from qualitative and quantitative techniques, 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	Advanced degree qualifications from a recognized university in the field of social sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Demonstrated experience of at least 10 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. – Competency in writing similar evaluation reports – Experience as team leader at least 2 baseline surveys – Excellent oral and written language skills (Sinhala /Tamil and English) 	5 Similar assignments specially in the areas of poverty reduction/ social welfare/ community development
Evaluation/ Baseline Study Expert	Advanced Degree from a recognized university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minimum 10 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	Bachelor's 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

Evaluation field staff/ Enumerators/group teal leaders	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 – Excellent language skills in Sinhala/Tamil. 	Not Applicable
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5.2 Nature of the Organization

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

6. Outputs and Deliverables

- i. All reports and deliverables are to be prepared in English and submitted to ICTA in electronic form (DOC and PDF formats) and three hard copies.
- ii. Evaluation tools/survey questionnaires/interview questionnaires are to be prepared in English and then translated into Sinhala and Tamil.
- iii. Upon completion of the project, 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.
- iv. The duration for this project has been set for a total of 8 weeks. The following preliminary work schedule is suggested as follows.

Phase/ Reports	Task	Deliverable	Deadline	Payment schedule
Inception Report	Finalize work plan, survey sites schedule, survey sample, enumerator training and survey questionnaires	Report on the survey approach, sampling frame and the survey sample survey questionnaires Detailed work plan Report on field staff training	Contract date + Week 1	15%
Interim Report I	completion 50 % of the survey	Field Monitoring Report 1 (Details of survey implementation, monitoring and quality assurance activities conducted)	Contract date + Week 6	25%
Interim Report II	completion 100 % of the survey	Field Monitoring Report 2 (Details of survey implementation, monitoring and quality assurance activities conducted)	Contract date + Week 9	20%
Survey Draft Report	Completion of Survey, Completion of data entering and cleaning Completing data analysis Presentation of findings of the draft survey report	Draft Survey Report	Contract date + Week 10	25%
Survey Final Report	Incorporating comments on the draft report. Submission of final report Presentation of the findings	Final Survey Report Completed questionnaires Completed data base	Contract date+ Week 12	15%

7. Client's Inputs

- i. The Client will provide a list of organizations (study population)
- 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.

8. Procedures for Review of Outputs

- i. A review committee will be appointed by ICTA
- 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 study report (By the consultant): 1 week from the date of submission of comments