

Terms of Reference

Consultant firm to assist the ICTA M&E unit to carry out field based Monitoring and evaluation activities

1. Background

Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA) is the main apex government institution, responsible for formulating policies and implementing projects towards achieving the vision of digital transformation of the country. The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) has recognized the critical role that digital technologies can play in fostering social integration, peace, growth, and poverty reduction. The Government intends to effectively use digital technologies to improve the reach and responsiveness of public services, reduce transaction costs to business, make government more transparent and accountable, and especially address the needs of the poor communities and citizens in geographically isolated regions. In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the technology based society which includes creating effective citizen and business centric digitally enabled government and facilitate for knowledge based digital economy, ICTA developed a comprehensive strategy for Digital Transformation for a Prosperous Sri Lanka.

As part of the program, ICTA is currently in the process of implementing a number of national level projects to improve government digital infrastructure, connectivity, promoting widespread ICT adoption and empowerment of citizens, creating enabling legal and policy environment, improve competitiveness of and jobs from the IT and BPM industry. In order to ensure achievement of expected outcomes, these projects are being implemented with multi stakeholder collaboration and partnerships.

ICTA M&E System: Having recognized the critical role of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in measuring the results of these development interventions, ICTA implements a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system across all the projects and programmes. The M&E system has been designed based on the principles of the *Cabinet Approved National Evaluation Policy* document.

The main objectives of the M&E system of ICTA are: i) measuring performances, ii) evaluating progress towards outcomes, iii) institutional learning; improving focus and results and performance orientation iv) understanding and negotiating stakeholder perspectives v) public accountability, vi) measuring impacts vii) building M&E related capacities of internal project teams and stakeholders. Based on the findings of the assessments M&E unit is responsible for making forward looking recommendations and corrective actions for improving project performances and results.

ICTA M&E process can be mainly categorized into two components; i) Ongoing M&E system, and ii) Periodic Evaluations.

i) Ongoing M&E System

This component focuses on collection and collating of data generated through project implementation (monitoring data) for the purpose of: a) measuring the progress against planned targets, b) monitoring the implementation progress and quality of outputs, c) understanding the levels of stakeholder engagements, d) measuring the usage levels of project services and outputs by beneficiaries.

Table 1.0 Responsibilities of data collection and analysis

Data type	Responsibilities of data Collection	Responsibilities of data analysis and presenting	Reporting arrangements
Procurement milestones/stages	Procurement team/ICTA PM	ICTA internal M&E team	Monthly and quarterly reporting formats
Project implementation progress	ICTA PMs	ICTA PMs/ICTA Internal M&E Team	Monthly and quarterly reporting formats
Stakeholder perspectives on quality of outputs, Level of stakeholder engagement	ICTA External M&E team	ICTA M&E team	Monthly Report Quarterly reports Special Evaluation Reports
System data on usage of ICTA services and products	ICTA External M&E team	ICTA External M&E team	Monthly reports
Final outcomes - cost reduction, time savings of citizens, employees, cost benefit assessments	ICTA internal M&E team	ICTA internal M&E team	Periodical evaluation through independent assessments. Reporting – once a year

It is necessary to utilize the potential of modern data analytics for monitoring of ongoing projects. Efficient use of data analytics would require the generation of data and periodic reports being built into the design of projects.

Data verifications and quality assurance purposes, regular discussions are required to carry out with the project implementation teams. Handling large amounts of data generated through the procurement processes and project implementation has become an extremely complex task for the internal M&E team.

In addition, to take required decisions on improving project performances, ICTA M&E team is required to carry out field M&E visits, in carefully designed manner, to meet the beneficiaries to understand their perspectives. The consultant firm in their technical proposal, is required to discuss about the appropriate cost-effective M&E techniques that can be applied in the regular field visits.

In the consolidated reports that the consultant firm is expected to produce based on the above mentioned field M&E activities appropriate corrective actions need to be proposed in consultation with the ICTA Director - M&E. In the bid these aspects need to be discussed in detail with proper justification and examples wherever required.

ii) Periodic Evaluations

To generate knowledge with regard to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, outcomes/impacts and sustainability of the projects, initial baseline studies and periodic outcome evaluations (summative as well as formative) are required to be carried out. These evaluations are carried out at component/program level to capture data against program level outcome indicators identified in the ICTA Result Framework. In order to ensure reliability, validity, rigorousness and objective nature of data, evaluations will be outsourced to competent external consultant firms/consultants through competitive bidding process. However, data collection process will be closely monitored by the internal M&E team.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

The main objective of the proposed consultancy is to provide monitoring and evaluation related technical inputs and support services in producing and timely submission of the regular performance monitoring and evaluation reports. These reports should be based on data /information gathered from project beneficiaries/stakeholders through regular field M&E visits and against outcome indicators identified in the ICTA results framework (but not limited to).

The specific objectives of the assignment are;

1. To produce regular M&E reports in agreed frequencies, templates & guidelines, based on the demand of key stakeholder organizations namely Presidential Secretariat, Parliament, Dept. of National Planning, Dept. of National Budget, Department of Project Management and Monitoring (DPMM) and Ministry of Technology. These reports are based on the data collected through ongoing projects. The consultant is responsible for developing required data collection instruments. Data collection approaches, methods and instruments need to be decided and developed in consultation with Director - M&E of ICTA.
2. To assess the outcomes at various levels (especially immediate and intermediate outcomes) of the projects implemented by ICTA and produce consolidated reports with evidence governed corrective actions. These assessments need to be carried out through implementing cost effective and systematic field level M&E activities.
3. To analyze ICTA system data on the usage of ICTA products and services so far developed. Based on the data analysis reports need to be produced at agreed frequencies.
4. To evaluate ICTA events and workshops by implementing state-of-the-art workshop evaluation techniques

3. Scope of Work and Key Tasks to be Carried Out

1. Meet the representatives of ICTA and gather details of the requirements of the consultancy assignment. The consultants must peruse all documentations necessary and conduct a document/literature review to develop an in-depth understanding of the projects implemented by ICTA and their present status. The documents to be reviewed include ICTA results framework, project log frames, project plans and proposals, M&E reports so far produced.
2. The consultant must develop good working relations with the ICTA internal M&E team, the project staff and key stakeholder organizations. To understand the project status, the consultants are expected to closely engage with client's staff to exchange and validate data/ information.
3. All the projects implemented by ICTA need to be monitored and evaluated (list of projects attached). Based on the ICTA results framework, M&E plan need to be developed in consultation with the ICTA Director of M&E. The consultant is responsible for implementing the M&E activities according to the agreed plan which can be revised periodically. The consultants in their bids shall provide, a detailed implementation approach and a plan outlining all the steps involved in planning and implementation of the assignment, including a time schedule, resource plan, data collection approaches, and data management plan and submit to ICTA in electronic form and as a hard copy. The consultant is responsible for producing regular reports by using the agreed reporting structures.

The consultants are required to gather and analysis the available system data (e.g., LGN usage data available at Lanka Government Infrastructure). The required guidelines to process the system data must be provided by the consultant in consultation with the Director -- M&E of ICTA.

4. The consultant is responsible for conducting field monitoring and evaluation visits to the beneficiary organizations/individuals/societies in collaboration with the ICTA internal M&E team and the relevant program managers. These field visits must be conducted objectively and systematically and in highly professional manner and should be done in consultation with the Director M&E of ICTA. The M&E field visits can be planned mainly based on the findings of analysis of system data on the usage of ICTA systems and applications. Based on the visits, the consultants are required to submit field monitoring and evaluation reports based on the observations made and data collected. To collect data M&E best practices and appropriate cost effective data collection methods need to be used in consultation with the Director M&E of ICTA. These approaches need to be discussed with proper justification in the bid. For this purpose, proposed experts must have required proven knowledge and expertise on M&E best practices.

For all the projects completing within the given timeframe of the ToR, the consultant is responsible for produce compiled project completion reports in

order to submit to the National Planning Department (NPD) in consultation with the Director M&E of ICTA.

5. ICTA organize various events, training programs, and change management events with the aim of improving capacities of the stakeholders and beneficiaries. Ensure effectiveness of these workshops is directly correlated to outcomes. To measure the quality and effectiveness of these events, workshops etc, appropriate evaluation techniques must be applied. These aspects need to be addressed in the bid and the proposed expert must possess proven knowledge expertise to design and carryout the evaluation activities. For each event a report need to be submitted with suggested quality improvements for the future events.
6. The consultant in his bid shall present the best practices of program evaluation and cost effective field level M&E methods and any additional quality control measures that are essential. The consultant in the bid must discuss as to how the proposed approach will support for achieving the objectives of the assignments.
7. To implement the above mentioned activities successfully, the consultant must have the proven expertise on M&E and the best practices that are required to be applied throughout the assignments. These must be properly considered and discussed in the bid document. The consultant must also be equipped with modern state of art data management and analysis techniques.
8. All reports need to be submitted in English. Whenever necessary Sinhala and Tamil translation for brief report will be required. M&E instrument need to be prepared in appropriate language (either Sinhala, Tamil or English)

4. Deliverables and payment Schedule

All reports and deliverables need to be prepared in English and submit to ICTA in electronic form (docx format and pdf) and 2 hard copies. ICTA will own all outputs and reports, and all related data/information in respect of this assignment. Additionally, ICTA will also have the right to reproduce and circulate the outputs and reports at its discretion.

Table 2.0: List of reports/documents to be submitted; Frequency

Report	Time frame	Content of the report	Payment Schedule
01. Inception Report	Contract date +3 weeks	Implementation plan Details of consultants, M&E methods and approaches, data quality assurance techniques	20%
02. 1st Quarter M&E progress Report	Contract date + 3 months	Consolidated M&E report based on the evaluation and data analytics carried out throughout the quarter	20%
03. 2nd Quarter M&E progress Report	Contract date + 6 months	Consolidated M&E report based on the evaluation and data analytics carried out throughout the quarter	20%

04. 3rd Quarter M&E Report	Contract date + 9 months	Consolidated M&E report based on the evaluation and data analytics carried out throughout the quarter	20%
05. 4th Quarter M&E Report and Final Evaluation Report	Contract date + 12 months	Consolidated M&E report based on the evaluation and data analytics carried out throughout the quarter, Consolidated report for all 4 quarters of the year, including lessons learned, suggestion for improvements, detail description of all the activities, evaluations implemented throughout the year	20%

All payments will be released for each milestone upon acceptance of the deliverables by the Committee appointed by ICTA.

5. Qualification of the Key staff

The Key experts shall have sufficient qualifications and experience in the field of monitoring and evaluation, related consultancy/research assignments preferably for the public sector development projects. Table 3.0 below shows the details of the positions required, respective qualifications and experience.

Utterly

Table 3.0: Qualifications and Experience of the key experts

Position	Preferable Academic Qualification	Preferable Experience
Team Leader and Monitoring and Evaluation Expert (1 position)	Minimum Master Degree qualifications in social science in agriculture, economics, evaluation or other relevant field.	A minimum seven years of work experience in the field of Monitoring and Evaluation and /or as an external evaluator/ consultant of managing independent evaluation assessments, surveys etc. Demonstrated experience in compiling monitoring and evaluation reports, survey reports on development projects especially in the field of ICT development. Experience in managing development Skills in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Experience in developing M&E tools. Skills in M&E capacity building projects/consultancy assignments. Proven skills in report writing in English language. Should have pleasant personality & ability to maintain good interpersonal relationships. Good analytic, writing and communication skills;
Monitoring & Evaluation Expert/Senior Consultant / (2 positions)	Minimum Master Degree qualifications in social science in agriculture, economics, evaluation or other relevant field.	A minimum three years experience in a similar field. . Experience in producing monitoring and evaluation reports, survey reports. . Proven experience in managing development projects/consultancy assignments. Strong skills in Microsoft Excel and statistical software such as SPSS. Experience in analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Experience in developing data collection instruments, best practices in evaluation, effectively using mixed methods and cost effective M&E techniques etc,

		experience in preparation of log frames, or goal oriented project planning documents (ZOPP/GOPP techniques),
Evaluation Manager (1 position)	Basic Degree in /economics/Agriculture technology and management or any other relevant social science	Minimum 3 years of experience in conducting evaluation, good understanding of the nature of the projects, proven experience in managing consultants in effective manner. Experience in managing evaluation teams and coordinating field evaluation activities, report preparation, preparation of M&E plans, log frames, .budget etc
Data analyst/ Statistician	Masters Degree in Statistics	Proven experience conducting analyses of quantitative and qualitative data using the most up-to-date analysis techniques and relevant analytic software packages and reporting on them in a clear, coherent and concise way for diverse audiences; Knowledge of at least of advanced data analytics and visualization tools, such as SAS, R, SPSS, Tableau, Power BI, etc. Advanced knowledge of MS Excel, SQL, MS Access, SharePoint is required. Demonstrated experience designing quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments (e.g. survey measures, performance measures, policy scoring, interview guides, and observation guides.
Monitoring and Evaluation Field Experts (2 positions)	A Minimum Basic Degree - preferably Economics, agriculture or any other social science	Minimum 3years of experience in collecting and managing qualitative data Proven knowledge and skills in conducting Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews, carry out systematic observations, and Key informant interviews etc) Excellent skills in interpersonal communication skills; skills in working with spread sheets, SPSS
Field Research Officers (3 positions)	A Minimum GCE A/L Qualifications	Minimum one year experience in working in a M&E project, coordinating and conducting Focus Group Discussions, Key informant interviews specially in ICT development projects, data entering skills, preparation of transcripts of FGDs/KIIs, at least one year experience in working in a field based development project preferably ICT development project, handling field level coordination activities Minimum two years of experience in data entering, analysis, and reports preparation. Experience in handling statistical software systems (SPSS, Excel) is an added qualification. Good analytic, writing and communication skills; Having experiences in community level ICT development projects specially of community development/promotional activities or data collection

6. Other Important Aspects related to the assignment

a) Duration of the Assignment

The Consultant Firm will provide the particular services to the M&E Unit of ICTA for a period of one year and based on the performance of the Service Provider and the requirements of the client, the contract will be further extended. The assignment is expected to start at the beginning of the Last quarter of 2021.

b) Reporting Focal Point of ICTA

The Consultant Firm will work in close collaboration with the ICTA M&E unit and will report to the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, ICTA.

c) Facilities and Services to be Provided by the Client

M&E Team, ICTA will provide required technical support and directions, available data, other supportive inputs and documents to the consultant for smooth implementation of the assignment.

ICTA will provide meetings rooms depend on the availability to conduct required meetings with ICTA project managers and outside stakeholders. To ensure smooth coordination with ICTA project management teams ICTA will provide 2 seating space for the consultant team.

Should any information be deemed as confidential, the consultants shall not disclose such information, to any person or group without written permission of the Chairman, CEO, ICTA.

d) Facilities to be Provided by the Consultant

The consultant shall be entirely responsible for having all other required facilities such as office, transport, logistics, necessary office furniture, equipment and maintaining necessary communication and coordination among the project personnel, individual consultants, and technical experts in order to make sure expected quality and the effectiveness of the assignment. Consultant must provide venue facilities for meetings.