**Call for Tenders (GIRL-H Evaluation Team/Firm)**

1. **Project background**

Mercy Corps is seeking to procure the services of an Independent Evaluation Team/Firm to conduct a baseline evaluation of Mercy Corps’ Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihood and Health (GIRL-H) program, which is aimed at improving the wellbeing and increase access to education, economic and civic engagement opportunities that contributes to individual resilience especially among girls, young women and boys. The program which commenced in October 2020, will run through September 2023 and it will be implemented in Kenya, Uganda (East Africa) and Haiti (Caribbeans) targeting 70,000 participants in 8 counties (Kenya 3, Uganda 3 and Haiti 2). The Independent Evaluation Team/Firm may also be engaged to conduct a midline and an end line evaluation of the program.

GIRL-H seeks to transform the future of over 70,000 adolescent girls, young women and boys who are aged between 10 and 24 years old by fulfilling their potential. The program is to be implemented by Mercy Corps directly in Haiti but with support of local partner organizations in Kenya and Uganda.

The Evaluation Team/Firm once engaged will provide an independent and rigorous baseline and research function, implementing a framework which will assess the available curricula and services for adolescent and young people. The team will also evaluate business and market opportunities for the same target group across the three countries. The overall aim is to have a baseline report that will inform implementation using rigorous quantitative and qualitative methods.

It is against this background that bidders (evaluation firms) are invited to submit a proposal to evaluate GIRL-H in accordance with the guidelines outlined below. The deadline for the submission of proposals is 6th of April 2021.

# 1.1 Recipient of the Service

The recipient of the service is Mercy Corps.

# Deliverables and Schedule

* 1. **Program deliverables:** The main evaluation deliverables for this program are as follows:
     1. **Inception report**: set out the design of the baseline evaluation strategy and plan and associated planning, logistics, quality assurance, child protection measures and risk management information including gender and market opportunity analysis
     2. **Detailed work plan and milestones:** provide a detailed work plan incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones from start to finish of the baseline evaluation study.
     3. **Sample size:** the evaluation firm will be responsible for coming up with a sample size using appreciate sampling calculations. The total target for the 3 countries is 70,000 with 70% being girls and young women and the other 30% boys and young men.
     4. **Baseline study report:** a baseline study and a report that describes the initial against which progress can be measured or comparisons made to show the effects and impact of the program in the final program evaluation report.

**Note:** all deliverables must be in English and French languages.

# Additional requirements

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be expected to identify an Evaluation (Project) Director or Manager for communication and reporting purposes. At the inception meeting the Evaluation Team/Firm’s Project Director or Manager will be expected to submit a list of all staff involved in the evaluation and this list is to include their contact information and possibly regions they will be covering.

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be expected to report to the Evaluation Steering Group and attend all meetings as agreed with Mercy Corps’ GIRL-H Program Director. The Team will be required to submit to the Director of Research bi-weekly progress reports (by email) during the baseline study periods summarizing activities/tasks completed to date (percent achieved), time spent, etc.

# Budget

The total budget for this evaluation should be in dollars (USD) and should reflect proposed costs that would be incurred in conducting the baseline across the three countries. The budget should be inclusive of all unit costs covering the bidders’ staff remuneration costs, travel, research costs and any other costs associated with the completion of the baseline evaluations. Bidders are required to organize and fund their own duty of care arrangements as required. Bidders are required to provide a proposal which reflects full costs in the form of a price schedule that, as a minimum, should include:

* Sub-total of fees for the delivery of any task or deliverable;
* Sub-total for number of days per partner organization (as applicable);
* Expenses and overheads broken down by the program cost categories; 1) fees/salaries 2) travel and accommodation, 3) training costs, 4) supplies, 5) equipment, 6) communication costs, 7) other direct costs 8) overhead and 9) by countries.
* Total costs before and after any taxes that are applicable. Bidders are required to provide a payment schedule on the basis of milestone payments for the successful delivery of each deliverable.

# Professional Skills and Qualifications

Organizational experience**:** bidders should provide evidence of previous program experience for the provision of similar evaluation services and the design and implementation of similar evaluation activities in East Africa and Caribbeans especially regarding:

* Information about your familiarity and experience administering market opportunities research
* A data management plan and advice on how data will be physically and electronically stored and disposed to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all program participants, while also providing safeguards for the integrity, reliability and cross- checking of all data. The GIRL-H Program Director has the right to request for and review the data collected from the field and it is essential that data integrity is maintained.
* Information on the number of individuals (staff, enumerators and field supervisors with proof of competence) that will be designated to evaluate GIRL-H and your firm’s ability to meet all baseline evaluation requirements during short windows of time. **It is preferable that all staff who shall be responsible for evaluation of the GIRL-H program reside full-time in the three countries – Kenya, Uganda and Haiti due to travel restrictions and covid-19. The Program Director or Manager can be based in any of the three countries. Staff that will be engaged in the evaluation for Haiti must be fluent in French and Creole.**
* Quality control approaches and processes for all stages of the evaluation process, anticipated challenges and a detailed mitigation plan.
* Share your firm’s experience working with an Evaluation Steering Committee as it may be required by this programme.

# Technical Application

The proposed Evaluation Team/Firm should include the technical expertise and practical experience required to deliver the scope of work and evaluation outcomes, in particular, with regards to:

Evaluation design: Design and plan the evaluation approaches and research methodologies, including quantitative and qualitative research methods – the team should include skills and expertise required to design, plan and conduct outcome evaluation, using experimental or quasi-experimental techniques;

Relevant subject matter knowledge and experience: Knowledge and experience required (e.g., education sector, adolescent girls, gender, sexual reproductive health and private sector education) to ensure that the evaluation design and research methods are as relevant and meaningful as possible given the aims and objectives of the program and the context in which it is being delivered.

# 3.1 Evaluation criteria and weighting

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **S/no** | **Thematic areas** | **Weighting** |
| 1 | Project plan of activities to be delivered | 40% |
| 2 | Project team and organizational experience | 15% |
| 3 | Project and resource plan | 15% |
| 4 | Quality assurance and risk plan | 10% |
| 5 | Budget | 20% |
|  | **Total** | **100%** |

1. **Submissions**

All proposals, detailed work plans covering the inception and final baseline report, detailed budget and supporting documents should be submitted by email to [**tenders@mercycorps.org**](mailto:tenders@mercycorps.org) no later than **5:00pm EAT on Tuesday, 6th of April 2021.**

**Clearly state tender number:” MCK-NBO-006-2021 - KENYA”, on the subject line of the email.**

Submissions after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

**GIRL-H Evaluation Team/Firm - Terms of Reference (ToR)**

1. **Background to the GIRL-H Program**

# Project Background:

Mercy Corps’ Girls Improving Resilience through Livestock and Health (GIRL-H) programme which is funded through an anonymous donor will run through to September 2023.

The program will help support girls to transition through key stages of education, training and employment in order to contribute to their individual and household resilience.

GIRL-H seeks to transform the future of over 70,000 adolescents and young girls and boys who are aged between 10 and 19 years old. The programme is to be implemented by national partners in Kenya and Uganda and direct implementation in Haiti.

# Rationale for the Baseline Evaluation

The overall aim of the baseline assessment findings from the evaluation will primarily be used:

* by the project management team, project partners and stakeholders to inform design and delivery of the project;
* by the project management team to leverage additional resources from existing and new partners and stakeholders in order to scale-up and sustain the activities

/benefits delivered by the project;

* by the project management team to support the on-going development and implementation of the project’s sustainability and succession strategies;
* by partners, stakeholders and the Government to learn lessons from the project for the purpose of replicating what works elsewhere and/or taking up approaches and activities that have proven to work in order to scale up the project.

# Overall Evaluation Approach

The overall evaluation approach requires the Evaluation Team/Firm to design, plan and conduct a mixed-methods evaluation that is longitudinal in nature. The Evaluation Team/Firm will need to consider the following:

* The program’s evaluation objectives and evaluation questions;
* The complexity and clarity of the program’s log frame, design, evaluation questions and the measurability of the intended outcomes and the effect this has on its long-term evaluation;
* Availability and quality of existing evidence and data sources; and
* Availability of opportunities for adolescents and young people
* Program evolution and design modification (tactical, strategic and conceptual modifications)

# Baseline Evaluation Objective

GIRL-H shall conduct a mixed-method, gender-sensitive evaluation that is inclusive of persons with disabilities and marginalized.

# Evaluation Questions

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to develop an evaluation approach that answers the following overarching questions as a minimum:

* + - Available – Where in the various value chains are the most available and viable economic opportunities for adolescent and young people – agd 10-14, 15-19 and 20-24?
    - What are the levers that allow girls to have access and control over the economic opportunities?
    - How has available curriculum (Sexual and reproductive health, life skills, business etc) used for adolescents and young people helped in improving their resilience?
    - Is there a correlation between girls’ empowerment and their household’s resilience?
    - Are there certain capacities that are responsible for higher levels of resilience among girls?
    - Are their certain protective factors within an enabling environment that contribute to girls’ individual resilience?
    - What are the most impactful and accessible transition pathways in terms of girls’ well-being?

# Program Evaluation Strategy

The Evaluation Team/Firm, in partnership with the GIRL-H implementation team will be required to revise and finalize on an evaluation approach that is complementary to the program’s implementation approach using a representative population household survey to capture the prevalence of different risk factors and market opportunities for young people at the baseline stage amongst the target population. The baseline should also help the implementation team understand the external environment and opportunities for young people.

# Project Sampling Framework

The Evaluation Team/Firm, working with the project implementation team, will be required to review and finalize the sampling frameworks for both qualitative and quantitative samples. These should be of a sufficient size and representativeness to allow:

* + - reasonable levels of certainty that the findings are representative for the target population;
    - reasonable ability to generalize the market opportunities are representative for different groups – boys and girls

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to manage and work within a sampling framework that allows individual-level measurement at the girl and boy level. The sampling framework will allow measurement of how much intervention is needed to support every girl and boy.

# Monitoring Strategy

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to support the Programme Management Team to design, establish and implement a comprehensive monitoring strategy, including a data collection strategy to support the implementation of the evaluation. Technical support should include guidance concerning the programme monitoring processes.

# Baseline Study

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to design and implement a gender sensitive mixed method baseline study as an integrated part of the overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy and plan for the project. **The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to conduct a household mapping survey** to identify sampled girls and boys, the team will be responsible for identifying representative samples for control groups (If Randomized Control Trial – RCT). Girls and boys in the treatment groups must have the same or very similar characteristics to those in control groups with the only difference being the intervention of the programme.

The baseline study should identify the number of beneficiaries with disabilities as well as the type and severity of their disability, following the UN Washington Group methodology5. Bidders should set out their approach to this for the baseline study.

# 3.7 Research Methods

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to conduct quantitative and qualitative research methodology which should seek to examine the theory of change and intervention logic of the programme as a means of understanding and confirming the processes measured through the quantitative research.

# Ethical Protocols

* + 1. **Child Protection**

The evaluation approach must consider the safety of participants and especially children at all stages of the evaluation. The Evaluation Team/Firm will need to demonstrate how they have considered the protection of children through the different assessment stages, including recruitment and training of research staff, data collection and data analysis and report writing.

# Research Ethics Plan

Bidders are required to set out their approach to ensuring complete compliance with international good practice with regards to research ethics and protocols particularly with regards to safeguarding children, vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities) and those in fragile and conflict affected states. Consideration should be given to:

* + - 1. Administrative, technical and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in research;
      2. Physical safeguards for those conducting research;
      3. Data protection and secure maintenance procedures for personal information;
      4. Parental consent concerning data collection from children or collation of data about children;
      5. Age- and ability-appropriate assent processes based on reasonable assumptions about comprehension for the ages of children and the disabilities they intend to involve in the research;
      6. Age-appropriate participation of children, including in the development of data collection tools.
      7. Where need be the Evaluation Team/Firm will need to seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals of the baseline evaluation design

# Risk and Risk Management

* + 1. **Risk Management Plan**

It is important that the successful bidder has taken all reasonable measures to mitigate any potential risk to the delivery of the required outputs for this evaluation. Therefore, bidders should submit a comprehensive risk management plan covering:

* + - 1. The assumptions underpinning the successful completion of the proposals submitted and the anticipated challenges that might be faced;
      2. Estimates of the level of risk for each risk identified;
      3. Proposed contingency plans that the bidder will put in place to mitigate against any occurrence of each risk identified;
      4. Specific child protection risks and mitigating strategies, including reference to the child protection policy and procedures that will be in place;
      5. Health and safety issues that may require significant duty of care precautions.

# Data Quality Assurance

* + 1. **Quality Assurance Plan**

Bidders are required to submit a quality assurance plan that sets out the systems and processes for quality assuring the evaluation and research process and deliverables from start to finish of the project. This plan should include the proposed approaches to:

* + - 1. Piloting of all research activities;
      2. Training of enumerators and researchers conducting the mixed-methods primary research, including training in research ethics;
      3. Logistical and management planning;
      4. Field work protocols and data verification including back-checking and quality control by supervisors; and
      5. Data cleaning and editing before any analysis.

# Existing Information Sources

The successful bidder would be required to review the following documentation specific to GIRL-H:

* Project logframe and;
* Project’s MEL framework.

# Professional Skills and Qualifications

* 1. **Qualifications**

Bidders are required to clearly identify and provide CVs for key staff proposed in the Evaluation Team/Firm, clearly stating their roles and responsibilities for this evaluation. Submit a clear organogram of the staff structure that will be operational for the programme in each country. All staff should be resident in the country of implementation, have requisite experience in research, fieldwork and report writing (evidence of this should be included in the application).

Additionally, bidders are expected to demonstrate experience in the use of effective data collection and storage devices with a strong backup system to prevent loss of data. A system that can undertake daily backup of data collection and weekly upload of reports is strongly preferred. Evidence of this should be included in the application.

The proposed Evaluation Team/Firm should include the technical expertise and practical experience required to deliver on the scope of work and evaluation outputs, in particular, with regards to:

* + 1. **Evaluation design**: the team should include skills and expertise required to design, plan and conduct a mixed-method impact evaluation, potentially using experimental or quasi-experimental techniques;
    2. **Skills in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis,** drawing findings from multiple sources and handling potential contradictions between data sets.
    3. **Relevant subject matter knowledge and experience:** knowledge and experience required on conducting research with children, disability and gender, market assessment to ensure that the evaluation design and research methods are as relevant and meaningful as possible given the aims and objectives of the project and the context in which it is being delivered;
    4. **Evaluation management:** manage a large-scale and complex evaluation and research process from conducting and reporting a baseline assessment report.
    5. **Primary research:** gender-sensitive design, management and implementation of primary quantitative and qualitative research in 3 countries, some of which may have potentially challenging project environments;
    6. **Country experience:** It is particularly important that the Evaluation Team/Firm is based in at least one of the countries of implementation and has the appropriate knowledge/experience of East Africa and Caribbeans to be a part of GIRL-H as well as the appropriate language proficiency required to conduct research in the different geographical areas.
    7. **Information management:** capacity to design and manage sex and disability disaggregated data and information systems capable of handling large datasets for MEL purposes. The successful Evaluation Team/Firm shall work with Mercy Corps to design and manage data and information systems capable of handling large datasets for M&E purposes;
    8. **Statistical analysis:** a range of statistical modelling and analysis of impact data; highly proficient user(s) of: SPSS or STATA (or any relevant data analytics and visualization packages); and qualitative data analysis techniques, including the use of software e.g. ATLAS.ti, NVivo or equivalent where needed;
    9. **Safety considerations:** Ensuring the whole evaluation process adheres to best practice for research with children including the implementation of child protection policy and procedures to ensure safety of participants. Note that all bidders are expected to be able to show that they have a child protection policy in place to safeguard children that the research team would come into contact with through the research activities.
    10. **Reporting Management**: The selected bidder shall work with Mercy Corps on the review of survey (Baseline) tools.

# Overview of the project’s budget and implementation timeframe

* 1. **Project deliverables**

The main deliverables for this project are as follows:

1. **Inception report:** The successful bidder shall work with the project team to set out the design of the evaluation strategy and plan and associated planning, logistics, quality assurance, child protection measures and risk management information including gender analysis.
2. **Baseline study report:** Design and conduct a baseline study and submit a report that describes the initial conditions (before the start of the program’s against which progress can be measured or comparisons made to show the effects and impact of the programme in the final programme evaluation report. A final report structure will be produced or provided at the inception meeting with the successful research firm. Mercy Corps will review and provide feedback on a draft evaluation report prior to finalization. **Report requirements:** all reports will be submitted in electronic form and should be submitted in English and French. The Evaluation Team/Firm will be required to provide virtual presentations as an integral part of the submission process. Face to face presentations will be prioritized if covid-19 permits.

The Evaluation Team/Firm will be expected to provide a fully ‘cleaned-up’ dataset in SPSS file format accompanied by the code used to carry out analysis and a variable codebook, with full cross-tabulations of the results.

1. **Detailed work plan:** All bidders are required to provide a detailed work plan incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones from start to finish of the baseline evaluation.
2. **Project milestones**: bidders are required to include in their detailed work plans using the milestones set out below.

# 7.1.1 Expected GIRL-H Evaluation Timeframe and Sequencing Typical Programme Milestones/Outputs Deadline

Invitation to tender is sent out 16th March 2021

Deadline for receipt of tenders 6th April 2021 Evaluation of tenders and shortlisting complete 12th April 2021 Pre Award assessment of shortlisted firm 16th April 2021

Evaluation Firm Appointed 23rd April 2021

# Inception Phase

On boarding meeting held 26th of April 2021

Design and review of data collection tools 29th of April 2021

Review of data collection tools by Mercy Corps 7th of May 2021

Draft inception report developed 17th of May 2021

Submission of final versions of data collection tools 21st of May 2021 Final inception report submitted 28th of May 2021

# Implementation Phase

Baseline

Software formatting (digital scripting of data collection tools) June 2021 Training of enumerators June 2021

Selection of control sites (If RCT) June 2021

Field work and data collection June/July 2021

Data cleaning and analysis July 2021

Topline report highlighting key evaluation findings July 2021 First draft of detailed report shared with Mercy Corps August 2021 Review of detailed report and feedback by Mercy Corps August 2021

Revision of detailed report and submission by Firm August 2021 Report presentation to project team by evaluation firm August 2021

# Evaluation Governance Arrangements

* 1. **Programme Evaluation Steering Group**

The evaluation process will be guided by a dedicated Evaluation Steering Group from the start to finish of the baseline assessment. The Evaluation Steering Group will play a critical role in the coordination between the independent Evaluation Team/Firm and the Programme Team, as well as in the process of implementation. The Group will:

* + 1. Regularly assess and assure the quality of the design, research and deliverables;
    2. Provide a source of validation for the findings emerging from the evaluation; and

The Evaluation Steering Group will meet regularly (timetable to be confirmed), particularly at stages in the evaluation process when deliverables are produced, including (at the very minimum):

1. Submission of an Inception Report;
2. Submission of a Baseline Study Report;

The steering group will include:

1. Program Director GIRL-H
2. Director of Research and Evaluation - Mercy Corps GIRL-H
3. Regional MEL Advisor Africa Mercy Corps
4. MEL representative from HQ
5. Representative from Haiti
6. Representative from Uganda
7. Representative from Kenya
8. Program Director or Manager of the evaluation firm