

Request for Proposals:

Teleuse at the Bottom of the Pyramid 4: Teleuse@BOP4

Letter of invitation
13 June 2011



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Teleuse at the Bottom of the Pyramid 4 Letter of Invitation

LIRNEasia is a regional, non-profit ICT [information and communication technology] policy and regulation think tank. Its mission is *“to improve the lives of the people of the emerging Asia-Pacific by facilitating their use of ICTs and related infrastructures; by catalyzing the reform of laws, policies and regulations to enable those uses through the conduct of policy-relevant research, training and advocacy with emphasis on building in-situ expertise.”*

This Request for Proposal (RFP) invites technical and financial proposals from short-listed research organizations to undertake the work described herein. A detailed description of the project is provided in the RFP to assist the Bidders in obtaining an understanding of the objectives of the project and to facilitate responsive proposals.

Proposals for the project must be *received* by LIRNEasia by **0900 hrs Sri Lanka time on Friday 1 July 2011** preferably electronically. Proposals may be sent to ayesha@lirneasia.net.

Short-listed bidders will be notified by 11 July 2011. Short-listed bidders will be expected to participate at a workshop¹ in Colombo on 18-19 July 2011, prior to making a presentation to LIRNEasia on their finalized proposal.

Proposals received by LIRNEasia after the deadline shall be rejected. LIRNEasia reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. LIRNEasia will evaluate the proposals, and this evaluation shall be final and will not be subject to any form of appeal.



¹ See Section 1.4.2 for details.

1.0 INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Definition of Terms

Unless otherwise specified, the following terms used in this document have the following meanings:

- *Bidder* means the primary entity that files an application in response to this RFP; this entity will be the single point of contact with LIRNEasia
- *Collaborating entity* means the collaborating entities that the Bidder enters into a partnership with for the purpose of conducting the current study
- *Client* means LIRNEasia
- *Proposal* means a set of a technical proposal and associated financial proposal submitted in response to this RFP
- *Consultant* means the successful Bidder through the RFP process
- *RFP* means a Request for Proposals
- *Qualitative Study* means the qualitative component of the fourth Teleuse at the Bottom of the Pyramid study (Teleuse@BOP4), and the subject of this RFP.

1.1.2 Scope of Work

The Client has issued this RFP to invite Proposals from research organizations to conduct a multi-country qualitative study on the use of ICT services by low-income telecom users more fully described in Section 3.0 of this RFP.

1.1.3 Cost of Preparation of Bids and Liability

The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with preparation, submission and presentation of the Proposal to the Client as specified in this RFP. The Client will, in no case, be responsible or liable for such costs, or have any other liability to any Bidder, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the proposal evaluation. The Client shall have no obligation to any Bidder to reimburse any costs incurred in preparing the proposals, whatever the result. Submission of a proposal in response to this RFP by a bidder will be interpreted by the Client as the Bidder's acceptance of this condition.

1.2 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

1.2.1 Contents

The RFP consists of the following sections:

Section 1	Instructions to Bidders
Section 2	Project description
Section 3	Scope of work
Annex 1	Cost quotation template
Annex 2	Evaluation mark scheme
Annex 3	Sample contract
Annex 4	Draft agenda for Teleuse@BOP4 quantitative data analysis workshop

1.2.2 Clarifications

Requests for clarifications of specific items of this RFP shall be directed by e-mail to ayesha@lirneasia.net. The Client will respond to all such requests by e-mail. Both the clarification/questions and responses will be circulated (with Bidder details suppressed) by e-mail to all bidders, and kept for records.

At any time prior to the deadline for the submission of the application, the Client may amend the RFP for any reason. All Bidders will be notified in writing (i.e., via e-mail) of the amendments and all Bidders will be bound by the amendments. Bidders are required to acknowledge receipt of any amendment within two business days of

such receipt by e-mail. The Client will assume that the information contained in any amendment is taken into account in the Bidder Proposal.

1.3 PREPARATION OF THE PROPOSAL

1.3.1 General

Bidders are advised to examine all terms and instructions included in the RFP while preparing their Proposals. Failure to provide all requested information will be at the Bidder's own risk and may result in the rejection of its Proposal.

1.3.2 Technical Proposal

The Bidder's Technical Proposal shall comprise, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) Approach and methodology proposed by the Bidder for conducting the study. This section should include discussions, but not limited to, the following:
 - i) Proposed general study design;
 - ii) Proposed sample design and justification for same, for each country based on the objectives of the study contained in Section 2.0;
 - iii) How the study will specifically capture the use of ICTs for productive purposes among, particularly, the micro-enterprise segment, with justification for the same (see Section 3.1 for more details); and
 - iv) All relevant quality control procedures.
- b) Specific work-plan describing the following:
 - i) Identification of key team members (these *key* team members, ideally by country, may not be changed during the course of the entire effort without written consent of the Client; any changes);
 - ii) Proposed country teams and task description of each key team member;
 - iii) In the case of the Bidder not having a physical presence in Colombo, how the Bidder will plan, coordinate and work with the Client as per the requirements of the study set out in Section 3.0;
 - iv) In the case where the Bidder is bringing a Collaborating Entity, the following information should be provided:
 - (1) The strength of the collaboration and any previous successful collaborations
 - (2) Country presence or ability to work in study countries
 - (3) Plan for coordination between the Bidder and its Collaborating Entity
 - (4) Details of the tasks to be performed by the Bidder vis-à-vis the Collaborating Entity
 - (5) How the Bidder intends to ensure quality standards by the Collaborating Entity
 - v) In the case where fieldwork is to be conducted by contracted (third party) companies, the Bidder should clearly:
 - (1) Identify such companies, and indicate any previous work that the Bidder has carried out using such contracted companies
 - (2) State the quality control procedures it plans to implement to ensure high quality data collection by such company;
 - vi) Fieldwork plan and justification;
 - vii) Proposed schedule illustrated via Gant chart;
- c) Technical capability of Bidder and its Collaborating Entity, including:
 - i) half-page descriptions (each) of similar work undertaken in the last three years
 - ii) one(1)-page Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the proposed Team Leader(s) who is (are) permanent employee(s) of Bidder
 - iii) profile of the Bidder (company profile) of no more than three (3) pages.

Any assumptions made by the Bidder in the formulation of its Technical Proposal should be clearly stated.

1.3.3 Financial Proposal

The Bidder's Financial Proposal shall be provided in a modular form, as per Annex 1. All costs should be provided in Canadian Dollars (CAD) and shall include all taxes, duties, fees and other impositions as may be levied under the

prevalent laws of the respective countries. Payments shall be made in CAD and the Client shall not be responsible for any currency fluctuations in the Consultant's foreign currency denominated costs during the study. The Financial Proposal shall consist of the following documents:

- a) A covering letter signed and sealed by the Bidder, clearly indicating the validity of the Proposal;
- b) A breakdown of summary price. *See Annex 1 for template.* Note, the cost per interview, discussion group or any other research 'unit' should be clearly specified in each country. If on a declining scale, that information should also be provided.

Bidders are encouraged to provide up to two cost options for alternative scenarios that may be considered.

The Client reserves the right not to entertain any price revisions during evaluation.

1.3.4 Format and Signing of Proposal

In the case of electronic submission of the proposal, bidders shall provide a PDF [portable document format] copy of both the Technical and Financial Proposals, **and** an edit-enabled version (e.g. in Microsoft Word). In the event of any discrepancy between the PDFs and the editable version, the PDFs shall govern.

1.3.5 Validity of Proposal

The Proposals must be valid for a minimum period of 30 days from the date of submission of the proposal. The Client will make its best effort to complete negotiations within this period.

1.3.6 Confidentiality of Proposal

If a Bidder believes that any portion of the Proposal is to be treated in confidence, it shall identify such information clearly in the Proposal. The Client will make every effort to treat such documents in confidence to the extent possible and necessary, consistent with an open and transparent evaluation process.

1.4 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1.4.1 Selection Criteria

The Client will evaluate the proposals based on the criteria set out in Annex 2, as well as the overall reasonableness of cost of the study.

1.4.2 Selection of Winning Bid

Selection will be based on the Client's assessment of both the Technical and Financial Proposals. The Bidder's approach to cost-effective completion of the study to meet the desired objectives within the timeframe envisaged by the Client along with the ability, experience and successful track-record of the Bidder, will all contribute to the selection. Note that the lowest cost proposal will NOT be automatically selected and the Client's decision will not be subject to appeal. The evaluation mark scheme is provided in Annex 2.

Short-listed bidders will be notified by 11 July 2011. Short-listed bidders will be expected to participate at a workshop in Colombo on 18-19 July 2011, prior to making a presentation to LIRNEasia on their finalized proposal. The workshop will be where the survey (quantitative) findings of the Teleuse@BOP4 study will be presented and discussed, and the areas to be targeted in the Qualitative Study will be decided on. It is expected that observing this workshop will enable the short-listed bidders to fine-tune their proposals, but also to provide better context for the study, should the short-listed bidder be selected. A draft agenda is contained in Annex 4. Short-listed bidder presentations will be scheduled for immediately after the workshop. Bidders are advised to make tentative flight and accommodation bookings in this regard as early as possible; the Client can assist in making bookings at the conference location if the short-listed Bidders wish.

1.5 NEGOTIATIONS

Prior to the expiration period of Proposal validity, the Client will invite the selected Bidder for final negotiations. The aim of the negotiation shall be to reach agreement on all points, and initialize a draft contract to be finalized

by the conclusion of negotiations. Changes agreed upon will then be reflected in the financial proposal, using proposed unit rates. If a successful negotiation is not possible with the selected Bidder, the next evaluated Bidder will be invited for negotiation, and so on.

1.6 AWARD OF CONTRACT

On the basis of the Financial Proposal and subsequent negotiations, the final contract will be agreed upon as a lump sum contract with intermediate payments tied to the Client's acceptance of specific deliverables.

The sample contract which will be modified for this study is contained in Annex 3. The final contract will be between CONNECTasia Forum Pte. Ltd and the selected Bidder. CONNECTasia Forum Pte. Ltd. is an ICT policy and regulatory consultancy and research management company that specifically handles LIRNEasia's multi-country project management responsibilities.

The selected Bidder is expected to commence the study within a week upon signing the contract.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Background

Emerging markets are leading global mobile growth. These markets contain the largest numbers of poor people. As such, growth necessarily involves many at the bottom of the pyramid (BOP). Innovations are required, not just in technology and business models, but in policy also, in order to serve the BOP efficiently; crucial to this is deep insight into the growing demand for telecom services at the BOP.

Mobile communication is spreading in emerging markets so rapidly that industry experts are predicting that many in the developing world will experience, or have experienced the Internet for the first time on a mobile rather than a PC. Mobiles are now (and will increasingly become) payment devices that can also send/process/receive voice, text, images; in the next few years they will also be capable of information-retrieval and publishing functions normally associated with the Internet.

One of the Client's key research interests is demand-side ICT research, specifically telecom services at the "bottom of the pyramid" or BOP (<http://www.lirneasia.net/projects/completed-projects/bop-teleuse/>). The objective of this research area is to provide insight into the "teleuse" experience among the lower socio-economic strata in emerging Asia. The Client conducted three demand-side surveys on telecom use at the BOP in 2005, 2006 and 2008-09. Teleuse@BOP1² (2005) serving as a pilot, surveyed 3,200 respondents among teleusers at the BOP in seven districts in India and four in Sri Lanka. It looked at the overall usage of telecom services by the BOP, paying particular interest to the strategies used at the BOP to minimize communication costs (e.g., shared phone use, taking advantage of off-peak call rates, use of missed call-type tactics, etc). Teleuse@BOP2³ (2006) was based on a 6,269 representative-sample survey, representative of teleusers at the BOP in Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Thailand, with additional focused group discussions in each country.⁴ The focus of this study was on the "next billion" connections, looking at the potential for new growth in BOP markets, although there were several key themes that were also explored. The key findings uncovered a phone-owning potential for 115 million then current non-owner users at the BOP getting connected to mobiles within two years of the study in the five countries studied.

The most recent, conducted between 2008 and 2009 sought to explore these issues, through quantitative as well as qualitative research. A representative sample of 9,540 BOP users in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand was surveyed. Further 1,550 migrant workers were also surveyed (through a booster sample to explore the possibilities for mobile remittances) in the six countries. Additionally, in-depth interviews, mini ethnographies and home visits were also conducted with approximately 200 respondents in the six countries.⁵ The findings showed a great deal of progress in mobile access and ownership across countries. The current awareness, affordability and usage of more-than-voice services was seen to be low; those who use the services, use them in small amounts or in conjunction with a PC (particularly in the Philippines and Thailand), however aggregated demand for such services ("long tail markets") could be significant. Though the prerequisites are already in place, some barriers exist, including affordability and policy according to the study findings.⁶

Teleuse@BOP4, similar to previous studies, aims to explore issues on the rise and provide insight into these areas of interest to better equip policymakers to develop appropriate policies; for industry to craft appropriate products and services; and for more people at the BOP to participate in the knowledge based economy (KBE). It is expected to offer significant insight into the nature of demand for telecom services at the BOP in emerging Asia. In addition,

2 <http://www.lirneasia.net/projects/completed-projects/strategies-of-the-poor-telephone-usage/>

3 <http://www.lirneasia.net/projects/completed-projects/bop-teleuse/>

4 With a further 2,420 sampled in the higher socio-economic groups, or "middle and top" of the pyramid

5 See full qualitative report at <http://lirneasia.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/qualitativereport.pdf>

6 For a summary of findings see <http://lirneasia.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/TaBOP3-profiling-the-BOP-LAa5-v1.pdf>. Full-length papers as well as presentation slides containing findings of Teleuse@BOP3 can be downloaded from the Teleuse@BOP3 project page at <http://lirneasia.net/projects/2008-2010/bop-teleuse-3/>.

the study will focus on the use of mobiles for value-generation at the BOP, against the backdrop of an emerging KBE and will specifically consider innovative uses of ICT for productive purposes especially in agriculture. Teleuse@BOP4 is expected to pick up on the learnings of its preceding studies and proceed into more advanced analyses and projections.

Teleuse@BOP4 is being conducted in six countries: India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia (Java only). Teleuse@BOP4 comprises two components: a quantitative component and a qualitative component. The quantitative component is currently underway and consists of (i) a representative survey of ICT use among BOP telecom users⁷ in all six countries; and (ii) additional (non-representative) surveys being conducted in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Bangladesh among micro-enterprises in the agriculture sector – among farmers as well as non-growers. The qualitative component (Qualitative Study) is the subject of this RFP.

2.2 Objectives of the Qualitative Study

The general objectives of the (overall) Teleuse@BOP4 study are to explore the following at the BOP:

- How telecom services are accessed and the process of adoption (purchasing own phone)
- The use of ICTs (particularly mobile phones) for productive purposes, especially in micro-enterprises within the agriculture sector (farmers as well as non-growers)
- What other benefits (social, etc) they derive from use; direct as well as indirect
- The adoption process and use of more-than-voice (or value added services, including mobile Internet) services, potential for use, and barriers to same
- Affordability and willingness to pay for services
- Socio-demographic comparisons (including gendered use)

The objectives of the Qualitative Study are to (i) provide deeper insight into the quantitative component (survey) findings which will be presented at the July 18-19 workshop; and (ii) complement the findings of the quantitative component.

It is expected that at the July 18-19 workshop, the priority areas of focus for the Qualitative Study will be decided on, based the survey findings and discussions.

It is expected that the Qualitative Study be conducted in a maximum of the following countries, subject to budgetary constraints and research priorities (as decided at the workshop):

1. India
2. Sri Lanka⁸
3. Thailand
4. Bangladesh
5. Pakistan
6. Indonesia (Java only)

Bidders should therefore provide cost options for all of the above countries.

⁷ Defined as those who have used a phone in the three months preceding the survey)

⁸ Including the Northern and Eastern provinces

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 APPROACH

The primary task of the Consultant is to undertake a Qualitative Study in six countries as specified in Section 2.2.

The target populations of the study are as follows:

1. Individual telecom users (those who have used a phone, either their own or someone else's, in the preceding three months) at the BOP, aged 15-60, male and female, urban and rural in the said countries; the "BOP" is defined as those belonging to Socio-economic groups (SEC) D and E.
2. Owners or managers of urban and rural micro-enterprises in the agriculture sector, which grow consumable crops⁹ in the said countries, urban and rural, male and female; this should include farmer micro-enterprises (with total land operated being less than 5 acres, who sell *some* proportion of their crop) as well as non-grower micro-enterprises (which employ less than 10 persons and whose owners belong to SEC groups C, D or E). The non-grower micro-enterprise group includes the players in the agricultural value chain from collectors to retailers, however it doesn't include support services such as transport, logistics, extension, etc. (this essentially limits the non-grower respondents to being a collector, trader/ commission agent or retailer).

The samples should ensure coverage of the target population in both urban and rural areas, with sufficient inclusion of both genders in the study countries.

Data collection should be undertaken through appropriate qualitative methods, to be recommended and justified by the Bidder.

The study will be conducted in the respective local language(s) in each country; this includes the translation of all research instruments into the respective languages by the Bidders. The full list of languages which the study will be conducted in should be provided in the proposal. LIRNEasia has researchers who are capable of checking the translated versions (at least in one of the local languages) to ensure that the meaning of the questions have been accurately conveyed through the translation; however, it is expected that the Consultant will also make these same efforts.

3.2 TASKS

3.2.1 Study and Sample Design

- a) The Consultant shall provide a proposed overall study design with justification, given the objectives specified in Section 2.0, based on its expertise and experience. This will include country sample designs and number of research "units" (e.g., focused group discussions, etc) per country, along with justifications.]
- b) The Consultant shall provide a finalized fieldwork schedule along with location details to the Client as early as possible, to enable Client researchers to travel to the research locations and observe some of the fieldwork. As such, the Consultant should coordinate the data collection such that LIRNEasia's researchers may visit countries one after another to observe the data collection (i.e., the start of data collection in each country should be lagged by a day at the least) preferably at the start, so learnings can be carried forward. The Consultant will be expected to facilitate this, including logistical support^Q and coordination, provision of additional interpreters to enable Client researchers to provide input on the spot. The additional costs of this should be separately billed at cost to the Client. Details could be worked out when fieldwork schedules are being finalized.
- c) The Consultant shall provide a comprehensive list of activities that will be undertaken to collect the data and also to achieve maximum quality of collected data.

⁹ i.e., crops that we eat; this may be in addition to other crops.

3.2.2 Research Instrument Finalization

- a) The Consultant shall develop all research instruments (field guides, recruitment questionnaires, discussion guides, etc) in consultation with the Client, also taking into account the input and detailed discussions from the July 19-20 workshop.
- b) The Consultant shall translate the research instruments into local languages and dialects where appropriate; the Consultant shall ensure that the translated versions are checked for consistency and to ensure that the meanings have been correctly translated; to the best of its capabilities, the Client will have local language translations checked in parallel for consistency.
- c) The Consultant will forward the finalized, formatted English language versions of the Research Instruments, as well as the local language versions to the Client and obtain approval prior to engaging in fieldwork.
- d) The Research Instruments shall be pilot-tested in all study countries among a reasonable number of respondents per country (of similar profiles to the study target group), at an appropriate point in time to be determined by the Consultant. Feedback on the research instruments is to be communicated to the Client and revisions to the research instruments are to be made where appropriate.

3.2.3 Data Collection, Extraction and Consolidation

- a) The Consultant will screen and recruit qualified respondents and administer the research instruments in local languages in the respective countries.
- b) Where necessary, interviewers and other field staff will be briefed and trained in conducting the research.
- c) Suitable incentives will be provided by the Consultant to respondents if relevant and appropriate.
- d) The Consultant will ensure consistency in implementation and quality control across countries, including cases where fieldwork is to be conducted by contracted (third party) companies.
- e) The Consultant shall extract and consolidate the data collected from the field work, in an appropriate manner to ensure maximum reliability.
- f) The Consultant will capture a sample of the fieldwork process in two-three locations per country via photographs in each country which can be used to support the study findings in later presentations by the Client; the Consultant will ensure all necessary permissions have been obtained to capture and use photographs in this manner.

3.2.4 Analysis and Reporting

- a) The Consultant should utilize appropriate analysis techniques to provide an analysis of the data. The Consultant is expected to use the most novel and useful techniques (in terms of linking the findings with the quantitative component findings).
- b) The Consultant will present the above findings to the Client in the form of a comprehensive report covering topics decided upon at the July 18-19 workshop and any subsequent discussions with the Client. This report should be provided no later than 30 October 2011. It is expected that the Consultant will assist the Client with queries and clarifications on the Report as well as the methodology after the handing over of the final report.
- c) The final Report should contain a section describing the methodology undertaken (including any problems in implementation and what remedial actions were taken), sample sizes and composition, as well as a list of areas (towns/districts) where respondents were interviewed, with some indication on a map of the same.
- d) Client will of course be open to co-authorship of articles based on the Qualitative Study with Consultant staff if they are interested in publishing in the academic sphere; this can be discussed at a later point.

3.2.5 General Management and Coordination

- a) The Consultant shall coordinate the data collection and entry with its respective country offices or delegated fieldwork partners, and liaise with them to ensure consistency in all aspects of the study so as to ensure full comparability of data between countries, and to ensure quality control at all times. The Consultant will be the single point of contact for the Client.
- b) The Consultant will work with the respective country offices and/or designated fieldwork partners to immediately resolve any problems that arise.
- c) The Consultant will keep the Client informed of the general progress on country implementation.

3.3 DELIVERABLES

The following formal deliverables shall be made as part of the contract:

- 1) Complete study and sample design
- 2) Research Instruments (finalized English and local language versions of screener(s), discussion guides, etc)
- 3) Pilot testing of Research Instruments and feedback (to be piloted among a reasonable number of respondents in each country, matching the profiles of the respective target groups)
- 4) Data collection, extraction and consolidation
- 5) Final report of findings
- 6) Assistance with queries on data and methodology

3.4 TIMELINE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

It is expected that the selected bidder will be notified by 30 July 2011; thereafter a contract can be signed, and the work should commence immediately. The Consultant is free to set its own timeline as necessary, keeping in mind (a) the fieldwork should be timed in such a way to enable Client researchers to make field visits; and (b) the final report delivery date of 30 October 2011.

The following is the payment schedule based on approved deliverables:

Phase	Deliverables/milestone	<u>Estimated</u> completion date	Payment amount (% of contract value)
Phase 1:	1. Complete study and sample design 2. Research Instruments (Finalized English and local language versions of screener(s), discussion guides, etc) 3. Pilot testing of Research Instruments and feedback		40%
Phase 2:	4. Data collection, extraction and consolidation		40%
Phase 3:	5. Final report of findings		20%
Phase 4:	6. Assistance with queries on data and methodology	Although all final payments will have been made to the Consultant by this point, it is expected that the Consultant continues to work with the Client by responding to queries if any thereafter.	

These payments are subject to the deliverables being approved for quality and content, and maybe thus altered, or withheld accordingly.

ANNEXES:

Annex 1	Cost quotation template
Annex 2	Evaluation mark scheme
Annex 3	Sample contract
Annex 4	Draft agenda for Teleuse@BOP4 quantitative data analysis workshop