**Request for Proposals (RFP):**

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HOUSEHOLDS AND THE WORKFORCE IN INDIA**

16 December 2020



12 Balcombe Place, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

+ 94 (11) 267 1160

[www.lirneasia.net](http://www.lirneasia.net)

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HOUSEHOLDS AND THE WORKFORCE IN INDIA**

LIRNE*asia* is a regional, non-profit digital policy and regulation think tank. Its mission is “Catalyzing policy change through research to improve people’s lives in the emerging Asia Pacific by facilitating their use of hard and soft infrastructures through the use of knowledge, information and technology.”

This Request for Proposal (RFP) invites technical and financial proposals from 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 LIRNE*asia* by **1200 hrs** **Sri Lanka time on 4th January 2021**. Proposals (including technical and financial proposals) must be emailed to [**procurement@lirneasia.net**](mailto:procurement@lirneasia.net) with the subject header “**<FIRM NAME> - PROPOSAL FOR COVID IMPACT STUDY 2020 INDIA**” in PDF **and** an edit-enabled version (e.g. in Microsoft Word) version. In the event of any discrepancy between the PDFs and the editable version, the PDFs shall govern.

Short-listed bidders will be notified by **15th of January 2021.**

Proposals received by LIRNE*asia* after the deadline may be rejected. LIRNE*asia* reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. LIRNE*asia* will evaluate the proposals, and our decision shall be final and will not be subject to any form of appeal.

This RFP contains the following sections and annexes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 1** | Instructions to Bidders |
| **Section 2** | Project Description |
| **Section 3** | Scope of Work |
| **Annex 1** | Technical Proposal Template |
| **Annex 2** | Financial Proposal Template |
| **Annex 3** | Contract Template |
| **Annex 4** | Study sample locations |

**1.0 INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS**

* 1. **INTRODUCTION**

**1.1.1 Definition of Terms**

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

* *Authorized Entity* or *Consultant* means the firm that is signatory to the contract in case of successfully winning the evaluation process. The Client will entertain invoices from and make payments to the Authorized Entity. In case of multiple organizations joining together to bid for the RFP, one firm should be clearly designated as the Authorized Entity. The Authorized Entity or Consultant will be the primary point of contact for the Client.
* *Bidder* means the firm that files an application in response to this RFP; this Entity will be the single point of contact with the Client for the RFP process and handle subsequent negotiations leading to contracting should the bid be successful. In the case of multiple organizations combining to submit an application in response to this RFP, the single point of contact with LIRNE*asia* for the RFP process, and to handle subsequent negotiating leading to contracting should the bid be successful, will be the Authorized Entity.
* *Client* means LIRNE*asia* or another party contracted by LIRNE*asia* to manage the Study.
* *Collaborating Entity* means the collaborating firm(s) that the Bidder enters into a partnership with for the purpose of conducting the study.
* *Proposal* means a set of a technical proposal and associated financial proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
* *RFP* means Request for Proposals.
* *The Study/Current Study* refers to the study which is the subject of this RFP: *Impact of COVID-19 on households and the workforce in India.*

**1.1.2 Scope of Work**

The Clienthas issued this RFP to invite Proposals from potential Bidders to conduct a nationwide study of *Impact of COVID-19 on households and the workforce in India* as 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 and submission of the bid as specified in this RFP, 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.

## 1.1.4 Clarifications

Requests for clarifications of specific items of this RFP shall be directed by e-mail to [**procurement@lirneasia.net**](mailto:procurement@lirneasia.net), with the subject header “**<FIRM NAME> - CLARIFICATION - COVID IMPACT STUDY 2020 INDIA**.” The Client will respond to all such requests by email. Both the clarification/questions and responses will be sent by email 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 email) of the amendments and all Bidders will be bound by the amendments. Bidders are required to acknowledge receipt of any amendment within one business day of such receipt by email. The Client will assume that the information contained in any amendment is taken into account in the Bidder Proposal.

# 1.2 PREPARATION OF THE PROPOSAL

**1.2.1 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.

Each Proposal shall consist of 2 components: 1) the Technical proposal; and 2) the Financial Proposal.

**1.2.2 Technical Proposal**

The Bidder’s Technical Proposal shall be submitted in the Technical Proposal Template provided with this RFP (Annex 1). Page limits indicated in the template must be strictly adhered to, as the evaluation committee will be instructed to stop reading below the indicated page or paragraph limit.

As part of the Technical Proposal Template, the Bidder must submit a scanned copy of the current (valid) Business Registration Certificate of the Authorized Entity in India as well as that of the Collaborating Entity/entities (as applicable).

Also, as a part of the Technical Proposal, Bidders should include any suggested revisions to the template of the Contract that the Client will issue to the winning Bidder, provided in Annex 3. Bidders should carefully review it and clearly mark any sections which it does not agree with and/or suggested changes (i.e., exact language). All these should be provided as tracked changes in an MS Word format version of the Contract and sent as an Annex to the Technical Proposal. Non-submission of comments or suggested edits will be interpreted as the Bidder accepting the terms of the sample contract, which will form the basis of the Consultant’s contract with the Client.

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

**1.2.3 Financial Proposal**

The Financial Proposal shall consist of the following documents:

1. A covering letter signed by the Bidder, clearly indicating the validity of the Proposal for a minimum of 8 weeks from submission; and
2. Costs for the Study as per the Financial Proposal Template provided in Annex 2. All costs should be provided in United States Dollars (USD) and shall be inclusive of all taxes, duties, fees and other impositions as may be levied under the prevalent laws of the respective country where the Authorized Entity is registered. Payments shall be made in USD and the Client shall not be responsible for any currency fluctuations in the Consultant’s foreign currency denominated costs during the study. Any assumptions made by the Bidder in the formulation of its Financial Proposal should be clearly stated.

The Client will strictly not entertain any price revisions during evaluation.

**1.2.4** **Format and Submission of Proposal**

Bidders should prepare their bids in the format provided in this RFP. Bidders should electronically submit the proposal including both the Technical and Financial Proposals in PDF [portable document format] **and** an edit-enabled version (e.g. in Microsoft Word) version. In the event of any discrepancy between the PDFs and the editable version, the PDFs shall govern. Proposed changes to the template Contract shall be submitted as tracked changes in MS Word Format version of the Contract and sent as an Annex to the Technical Proposal.

**1.2.5 Validity of Proposal**

The Proposal (both Technical and Financial) must be valid for a minimum period of 8 weeks from the date of submission of the proposal. The Client will make every effort to complete negotiations within this period.

**1.2.6 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.

# 1.3 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Evaluation of proposals and selection of the winning proposal will be based on the Client’s assessment of both the submitted Technical and Financial Proposals.

The following table provides an indicative marking scheme for the evaluation of the Bidder’s proposals.

**Table 1. Indicative marking scheme**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Single bid marking scheme** |
| 1. Bidder and Collaborating Entity (if applicable) profiles | 5 |
| 1. Relevant experience of the Bidder and Collaborating Entity (if applicable) in previously having carried out survey work that targeted the same populations (as specified in Section 3) | 10 |
| 1. Demonstrated ability of proposed team to carry out the work (including demonstrated understanding of the Client Methodology and or pros/cons; recommended revisions/improvements (if any)) | 5 |
| 1. Proposed project team with weighting toward Team Leader’s competencies, followed by the Field Manager’s experience and competencies | 10 |
| 1. Field strength of the Bidder (or the Collaborating Entity if the latter is to undertake the fieldwork) and field strategy (e.g., training plan, supervision of field staff, etc) | 5 |
| 1. Health and safety measures put in place to conduct fieldwork safely (for both enumerators and respondents) during COVID-19 pandemic | 5 |
| 1. Quality control measures that will be employed by the Consultant to ensure highest quality data are obtained, including measures in place to deal with data loss risks (e.g., power/device/system failures) on and off-field | 10 |
| 1. Contingency plans (Methodology B) for sudden disruptions to fieldwork | 5 |
| 1. Ability to complete final deliverables within ideal timeframe provided | 5 |
| 1. Quoted cost (taking into account ability to conduct both household and individual segment for a given cost) | 40 |
| Total | 100 |

Relevant experience counts as:

* Nationally representative survey research in India
* Surveys targeting households and individuals, particularly of varying socioeconomic backgrounds
* Research where segmenting of Grama Niladhari divisions using hand drawn, Google or other maps
* Research where listing of households or other subjects has been conducted on the field with random sampling from the compiled list in a pre-defined sample locations
* Research dealing with mobile and internet use among a variety of populations
* Research dealing with employment and the workforce in India
* Experience in conducting surveys to access the impacts of disasters among a variety of populations
* Experience in conducting surveys to access the impacts of disasters/crises and/or during lockdown periods and/or during the pandemic among among a variety of populations
* Ability to quickly adapt to changing ground conditions and ensure project objectives are met
* Sufficient experience in conducting CAPI and CATI-based surveys on a large scale

The Client’s decision will not be subject to appeal.

**1.4 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.

# 1.5 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 in United States Dollars (USD) with intermediate payments tied to the Client’s acceptance of specific deliverables.

As already stated, the Contract template that the Client will issue to the Consultant is provided in Annex 3. Bidders should carefully review it and clearly mark any sections that it does not agree with suggested changes (exact language) provided as tracked changes in MS Word Format as an Annex to the Technical Proposal.

**The selected Bidder is expected to commence the Study within a week of signing the Contract. Therefore providing input on the Contract at this stage is essential.**

**2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**2.1 BACKGROUND**

The Client is a regional, non-profit digital policy and regulation think tank. Over the past fifteen years it has conducted several demand-side studies of information, knowledge and communication technology needs and habits of households, individuals and businesses in South and Southeast Asia.[[1]](#footnote-1) This includes the AfterAccess nationally representative surveys of ICT access and use in six Asian countries (including India in 2019).[[2]](#footnote-2)

This research has allowed the Client to gain deep insight into these markets and make positive contributions to the policy processes affecting ICT connectivity in many of the countries studied.[[3]](#footnote-3)

The Client has commenced research on the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on ICT access and use, with specific focus on how the Pandemic affected marginalization among households as well as the economically active population (“The Study”).

The Study involves the collection of survey data from **households** and **individuals** in selected PSUs in India. The sampling method that will be used for the Study is capable of delivering nationally representative ICT indicators for households and individuals and other target groups simultaneously in a cost-effective way. This RFP relates to this collection of Survey data in India (“the Study”).

**2.2 THE NEED**

The Global South is undergoing rapid social and economic change as a result of the confluence of mobile and broadband technologies on the continent. There is mounting evidence that broadband directly contributes to job creation and stimulates economic growth. The improvements in the flows of information and the reduction in transaction costs not only improve the efficiency of business but also enhance the wellbeing of those who are connected to the Internet. But, there is also evidence of an increasing divide between not only those with access to such services and those without access, but between those who are connected with the means and skills to utilize the Internet optimally and those who are not. From a policy perspective this requires extending interventions to address inequality from those focused purely on supply-side investment and operator-based strategies to those focusing on demand side challenges, still of affordability, but also a range of others enabling or enhance digital inclusion – educations, income, e-skills of various kinds at various levels, content and language.

The COVID-19 related lockdowns, mandating citizens to ‘stay at home’ brought about a host of challenges, from restricted mobility, to large scale job and income loss to disruptions in the provisions of essential services as well as education. To an extent, especially in urban areas, digital technology-driven solutions have been able to bridge the last mile of service delivery and help minimise the disruptions, for example through app-driven delivery services, online schooling, etc.

However, the disparities in access to technology that already existed have become even more apparent in this new context, leading to the potential for further marginalization of the already digitally marginalized. Similarly for workers, new forms of marginalization may have been experienced, with those in jobs where parts (if not in all) can be continued seamlessly from home through digital modes, versus those whose lack of access, connectivity and/or skills may not have been in a position to continue work seamlessly from home.

Given the new ‘normal’ that will be, going forward, it is imperative to understand firstly how these groups continued (or not) operations and/or work in the lockdown period, and what new forms of marginalization (or worsening of previously existing ones) were resulted in. This will give insights to design appropriate mechanisms to be used in the future.

**2.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The specific objectives of The Study (i.e., this consultancy) is to collect the following regionally comparable data in India:

1. Nationally representative household level data on ICT access and use to enable estimates to be made within a 95% confidence interval with +/-2.8% margin of error
2. Nationally representative household level data on last mile delivery of food, medicine and other essential services during COVID-19 to enable estimates to be made within a 95% confidence interval with +/-2.8% margin of error
3. Nationally representative individual-level data on ICT access and use to enable estimates to be made within a 95% confidence interval with +/-2.8% margin of error
4. Nationally representative individual-level data on the impact of COVID-19 on labour force to enable estimates to be made within a 95% confidence interval with +/-4.0% margin of error

This data will be collected by means of face-to-face surveys conducted using CAPI and according to the methodology elaborated in this RFP. While separate survey instruments will be used for the different target groups listed in Section 3.1, fieldwork will be completed in parallel, after the completion of a household listing exercise in the selected PSUs.

The detailed methodology is presented in Section 3.2.

The data collected will be used to:

* Inform policy based on robust quantitative evidence
* build and understand use patterns and the associated demographics;
* understand how the delivery of food, medicine and other essential services to the households was happened with what are the gaps, positives and ways to improve using ICT;
* understand the evolution of mobile use, internet use and the use of other ICTs; and
* understand the constraints/issues faced by the workforce of the country, how their work life has changed.

**3.0 SCOPE OF WORK**

This section details the scope of work to be conducted by the Consultant, including the proposed methodology that the Bidder should consider in its Proposal.

* 1. **TARGET POPULATION AND DEFINITIONS**

The target populations of the Study are:

1. Households
2. Population aged 15 and above

**Table 2. Definitions for certain terms used in this RFP**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Definition** |
| Household | A household may be (i) a one – person household or (ii) multi-person household. A one-person household is one where a person lives by himself and makes separate provision for the food. A multi-person household is one in which a group of two or more persons live together and have common arrangements for provision of food. Households include not only members of the family such as husband, wife and children but also others such as relatives, boarders, domestic helpers/staff etc. who live with the family and share the same common arrangements of cooking and partaking of food with them. Lodgers of a household, who have their own separate arrangements for meals are considered as a separate household. |
| Household member | As defined by national census definitions. |
| Head of Household or suitable alternative | A head of a household is a person who economically supports or manages the household or, for reasons of age or respect, is considered as head by members of the household, or declares himself as head of a household. The head of a household could be male or female. In the absence of the Household Head, a suitable alternative household respondent could be a household member who is knowledgeable on household characteristics, income, consumption, members etc. |
| Eligible individual | Any household member aged more than 15 (inclusive) that will sleep the night at the house and also any visitor aged 15 years and above that is going to spend the night at the house. |

* 1. **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

The method proposed for the project (Client Methodology) is capable of delivering nationally representative indicators for households, individuals simultaneously.

* + 1. **Sampling**

The method has been developed using data on household numbers in the wards and villages of India available in the **National Primary Census Abstract Data**. Random sampling will be performed in five steps for households and individuals.

* Step 1: A sample of District will be randomly selected from the total 640 districts of India using PPS sampling methodology
* Step 2: A sample of sub-Districts will be randomly selected from selected districts using PPS sampling methodology
* Step 3: The sub-Districts will be split into urban (wards) and rural (villages) strata and a required number of wards and villages will be selected from the selected sub-Districts using PPS.
  + The Client has already completed Steps 1,2 and 3, selecting approximately 250 and 375 sample points[[4]](#footnote-4) using PPS random sampling. The list of villages and wards is provided in Annex 5; these locations must be strictly adhered to.
  + In the sample villages and wards, where the total number of households is less than or equal to 250 the Consultant may continue straight to the listing exercise (Step 3).
  + If the number of households exceeds 250, Consultant should proceed to Step 3.
* Step 3: Villages and wards with more than 250 households will be geographically segmented and one segment will be randomly selected for following steps (listing and survey)
  + Consultant will have to divide the village or ward into homogeneous geographic segments of approximately 250 households, from which simple random sampling of one of these homogeneous segments will be conducted by the Consultant to select one where the listing will be conducted (Step 4). All aspects of the segmentation and selection process will be documented in a systematic way, including using maps to demarcate roughly where households are placed – these may be official maps or hand drawn sketch maps drawn with the help of key informants at the local level.)
    - Bidders should discuss possible methods for segmenting large villages and wards in this regard.
      * Bidders should discuss possible methods for blocking large villages/wards in this regard. One possibility is to sub-divide large villages/wards in line with the official EA/CEB divisions, if the list of EAs/CEBs in sample villages/wards can be obtained at the state statistical office level (prior to fieldwork) or compiled at the local level. The Client understands that the census EA/CEB maps are available for purchase at some the state level statistical office level for a nominal fee; if this is the case for all states, EAs/CEBs can be randomly selected within a ward/village. However it should be noted that being able to identify the geographic boundaries of the selected EA/CEB (as per official demarcations) is key if this approach is to be taken. It should also be noted that depending on the format in which the maps are provided (hard copy or shape-file), a different conversion process is required to digitize (if hard copies) or saved as .kml files with the correct projection (if shape files) to ensure they can be correctly over-laid on Google Maps or Google Earth. The Client has a set of guidelines as to both processes.
      * It should also be noted that depending on the format in which the maps are provided (hard copy or shape-file), a different conversion process is required to digitize (if hard copies) or saved as .kml files with the correct projection (if shape files) to ensure they can be correctly overlaid on Google Maps or Google Earth. The Client has a set of guidelines as to both processes.
* Step 4: Listing of all households will be compiled for each village/ward/segment.
  + Within the selected sample locations (the village or ward if 250 households or less, or the randomly selected segment of a village or ward if >250 households, a complete listing of households – typically taking place on the first day of fieldwork in that location. The listings serve as sample frames for the selection of households. Systematic sampling will then be used to select a target number of households (approximately 25 households to achieve a sample of 20 per PSU.
  + This household list does not require detailed information about the households but, a minimum amount of information to identify the household for the main survey. The Client expects the Consultant to conduct the listing and random selection of the households using CAPI devices to save time and cost.
* Step 5: Selection of households
  + (a) In a selected household,
    - The household head (or suitable alternative) will be interviewed on household characteristics and members, in order to identify eligible individuals. The questions on last mile delivery of food, medicine and other essential services during COVID-19 to the household will also be asked from the household head.
    - One eligible member will be randomly selected to be interviewed on individual mobile and internet access and use, as well as impacts of COVID-19 on the workforce will be also administered on the same selected individual.

In their proposals, Bidders shall raise any specific concerns about the Client Methodology detailed above, assess the pros and cons of the same in the current country] context, and if absolutely necessary justify any suggested deviations.

* + 1. **Sample Size**

The sample size of **5,000 and 7,500** households and individuals has been chosen for the Study. The Client will decide which sample size to choose from based on the cost and timelines.

* + 1. **Weighting**

For the Client Methodology, the weights will be calculated in the following way; in the case of any variation in the sampling method, the calculation of weights will have to be specified. Two weights will be constructed, one each for households, and one for individuals. The weights will be based on the inverse selection probabilities. The weights gross up the data to national level.

Household weight:

Individual weight:

District Selection Probability:

Sub-District Selection Probability:

Village/Ward Selection Probability:

Segment selection Probability:

Household Selection Probability:

Individual selection Probability:

When **HHVILL/WARD** <= 250, **HHVILL/WARD** = **HHEA**. Thus, **PEA**=1. (i.e., If a village or a ward has less than 250 households, it will be treated as an EA)

**HHCOUNTRY** = number of households in the country;

**HHDIST** = number of households in a district;

**HHDIST-UR** = number of households in a district at urban rural level;

**HHSUB-DIST-UR**=number of households in strata (Sub districts at urban, rural level);

**DW** = design weight compensation for over-sampling of urban PSUs and under-sampling of rural PSUs;

**HHVILL/WARD**= number of households in selected village or ward based on information of last census or updated listing by field team;

**HHm15+**=number of household members or visitors 15 years or older;

d = target number of districts;

d = target number of districts;

sd = target number of sub-districts;

m = target number of Villages/Wards for each strata, (urban, rural);

e = target number of segments in a Village/Ward;

n = target number of households in a Village/Ward/Segment;

q = target number of businesses in an a Village/Ward/Segment;

The target number of households in each a Village/Ward/Segment will be 20.

The target number of households in each Village/Ward will be 20.

* + 1. **Contingency plan / alternative method of conducting the fieldwork in the case of unexpected disruptions to fieldwork due to potential further lock-downs and resurgence of COVID-19 cases.**

The Bidder must discuss the contingency plans for unexpected disruptions to fieldwork or other situations preventing fieldwork (i.e., face-to-face data collection) from being conducted after fieldwork has already commenced. This includes the possibility of further government-imposed lockdowns, significant surges in the spread of COVID-19 or other restrictions where the Client and Consultant mutually agree to stop/pause field work. The Bidder should discuss how the remaining sample can be achieved whilst maintaining the best level of representativeness and precision of the survey. The Bidder must discuss how the study objective will be achieved in terms of representativeness and the precision. The Bidder must also discuss the implications on timelines, questionnaire content and the cost of this methodology in the proposal as well. This, along with other relevant factors should be discussed as “Methodology B” in the relevant section in the technical proposal document.

* + 1. **Alternative methodology for conducting the study**

The Client understands the challenges in conducting a face-to-face nationwide survey during a global pandemic situation. Hence, the Bidder can also suggest a different methodology to conduct the survey while achieving the study objectives, maintaining or improving precision levels simultaneously adhering to health and safety guidelines. This is not mandatory, but if the Bidder chooses to this should be discussed as “Methodology C” in the relevant section in the technical proposal document.

* 1. **TASKS**

This section details the tasks that would be expected of the Consultant selected for the Study.

* + 1. **Study and sample design and method**
  1. Consultant shall work closely with the Client to apply the sampling methodology that has been outlined in Section 3.2. The sample methodology is selected to ensure that high-level ICT access indicators collected are comparable with LIRNEasia’s 2019 AfterAccess survey findings.
     1. Technical Proposals shall include a discussion of any concerns about applying the Client Methodology, assess the pros and cons of the same in the current country context, and if absolutely necessary justify any suggested deviations. Bidders should note that the Client’s main priority is a nationally representative sample adhering to random selection at every stage of sampling, with derivable selection probabilities. Included in this requirement is that the final sample should have sufficient bases to extrapolate to the working-age population that is economically active.
     2. Consultant shall also be responsible for the subdividing of villages and wards with more than 250 households and obtaining and verifying all relevant local maps in order to complete the sampling, as well as systematically documenting the process.
     3. Bidders should also indicate possible methods for blocking (subdividing) villages and wards with more than 250 households, discussing the option outlined in Section 3.2.1.
     4. In the event that the sample must be re-drawn (e.g., if the sample size were to be altered or the methodology were to be changed), the Client will re-draw the sample.
  2. The Consultant shall supply all necessary raw field data (number of households per selected Village/ward/segment) to calculate sampling weights as per Section 3.2.3, although the Consultant shall calculate the weight variables and include the same in the final datasets.
  3. The Consultant shall provide a finalized fieldwork schedule along with location details to the Client as early as possible.
     1. **Research Instrument Finalization**

1. Separate “Research Instruments” (survey questionnaire/s, screener, consent forms, etc.) are being prepared by the Client for the household and individual survey:
   * 1. The household section of the questionnaire contains a short section on household characteristics and last mile delivery of food, medicine and other essential services to households during COVID-19 (to be answered by a household head or suitable alternate)
     2. The individual section (to be filled in by a randomly selected member of the household) will contain questions on individual ICT access and use, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their work and livelihood, among others.
2. The Consultant shall work with the Client to localize, finalize and format the Research Instruments using its expertise and experience. The Consultant will complete the final scripting of the Research Instruments and convert them into CAPI/field-ready format. Once finalized, 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. The Consultant shall inform the Client in advance of the specific languages that will be used (if more than the national language) to allow the latter to identify appropriate researchers from its network for translation checking.
3. The translated Research Instruments shall each be pilot-tested among a total of 20 respondents in both urban and rural locations and among target groups (specified in Section 3.1), ensuring a range of income/socioeconomic groups are also covered. The Consultant must conduct a segmentation and a partial listing exercise (list around 50 households) in the same location where the research instrument being tested. The pilot testing shall be conducted at an appropriate point in time to be determined by the Consultant. Based on the pilot tests, the Consultant will prepare a short report on how the Research Instruments are working and indicating what changes are required (“**Report of Pilot Tests**”). If relevant, the Consultant will propose changes in the Research Instruments and will facilitate the raw pilot data to the Client, who may reserve the right to include any change in the Research Instruments. 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.
   * 1. **Collection, Entry and Processing of Data**
   1. The Consultant will recruit qualified respondents and administer the Research Instruments in local languages and dialects.
   2. Data collection should be undertaken through face-to-face interviews with the relevant respondent in the respective local language/s and dialects in each geographical area as appropriate.
   3. The capture of data shall be done by electronic (CAPI) means. The Bidder should clearly indicate previous experience with the same, and what electronic survey platform is used. The Bidder is required to enable the Client access to monitor the data collection process ideally through an observer account on the survey platform in use; if not feasible, the Consultant must provide the Client with daily reports on fieldwork completion by location, including GIS locations indicated on a map. The ability to monitor the data collection by location process in real time is important, and the inability to do so will be a distinct disadvantage to the Bidder in the evaluation of their proposal.
   4. The Bidder shall also clearly detail what strategies are in place to avoid data loss in the event of power loss, device failure/loss, and any other foreseeable risks that may affect data quality.
   5. The Consultant shall be expected to obtain all necessary local permissions and authorizations to conduct field work in selected areas. The Client will assist through the provision of written request letters/letters of support for the Study if necessary, but the Consultant shall hold primary responsibility for obtaining necessary permissions. In this regard, the expected time taken for this process should be incorporated into the timeline that the Consultant provides. Any concerns on this or anticipated problems should be clearly stated by Bidders in their proposals.
   6. The fieldwork shall be conducted by field personnel who have undergone training in Basic Code of conduct of Field Personnel, health and safety guidelines on how to conduct a survey safely during a pandemic and CAPI System, specific to the Research Instruments being used in this Study. The Client may participate in the local training session.
   7. The total interview time is expected to last approximately 40 minutes.
   8. The Consultant holds the responsibility in adhering to the privacy requirements in the ethics of survey research, taking and sharing photographs, and handling respondent identification and contact information.
   9. Prior to the commencement of an interview, the respondent shall be informed of the items listed under Condition 6 in the General Contract (See Annex 3 for template contract), with written consent obtained from the respondent to (1) proceed with the interview; (2) be photographed [if applicable]; and (3) be contacted again for further research. If the respondent is unable to physically sign the consent form for any reason, alternative methods of obtaining proof of consent may be discussed and used as long as the Client approves. This informed consent will be recorded and included as three/four (as appropriate) separate variables in the respective datasets resulting from the surveys. Respondents who refuse to be photographed may still be interviewed, provided consent to conduct the interview is given (but no photographs may be taken).
   10. After obtaining consent to re-contact has been obtained as specified in 3.3.3.(i), Respondents’ primary contact information will be recorded, along with sufficient alternative which may be used in the event that the respondent cannot be reached through the primary contact information. Contact information shall be treated as strictly confidential by the Consultant, and provided to the Client in a separate database/spreadsheet along with the respective respondent ID numbers, “Respondent Contact Information Database”). Upon completion of the final deliverables of the Contract, the Consultant shall not retain in their database (electronic or paper-based) any personally identifiable information of any respondent. Furthermore, this contact data is to be treated as highly confidential, and is not to be shared with any third party or non-project Consultant staff at any point in time, other than designated Client staff. The Client may choose to enact a non-disclosure agreement to this effect.
   11. The Consultant will ensure a response rate according to the parameters set out in Section 3.3.5.
   12. If the enumerator fails to reach the relevant respondent on a first visit, the enumerator shall consult with other members of the household/staff or neighbors about the time availability of the target respondent. A minimum of three (3) attempts must be made (at different times of day, or based on an appointment) to reach the target respondent before the household/business can be replaced with a random selection from the list of houses (applying the predetermined sampling interval).
   13. In the event that a selected village/ward cannot be enumerated (for example due to inaccessibility or security concerns), a random replacement village/wardwill be provided by the Client. The reason for village/ward replacement should be clearly indicated in writing to the Client. **The Consultant may not replace a village/ward** **at its own discretion.**
   14. The Consultant will capture a sample of the fieldwork process (five photographs per sampling location) via high quality digital photographs sufficient to communicate visually an understanding of the research subjects, and his/her surroundings/ context by the Client (“Field Photographs”). The Field Photographs must be clearly labeled to enable identification of the survey location, if possible, with GPS tags included. Written consent to take photographs must be obtained from respondents before they are photographed.
   15. During all stages of data collection, the Consultant shall keep the Client informed about progress and discuss any problems that are being encountered. **No deviations from the agreed sampling methodologies or other elements of the research design will be accepted unless the Client has authorized them in writing**. Such deviations must be documented (with justifications) in the final Methodology Note (See Section 3.3.7).
   16. The Client may accompany the Consultant’s fieldwork team/s at any given moment at a location to be decided by the Client, with no more than 24 hour’s notice, in order to conduct, monitor and supervise the data collection processes. The Consultant will be expected to:
       1. Provide logistical support and coordination to enable this. Where additional costs are incurred, the Consultant will be reimbursed by the Client upon provision of original invoices.
   17. The Consultant shall enter and clean the datasets in SPSS format, with all variable names, labels and codes given in English, with the relevant question numbers clearly indicated.
   18. In addition to the Contact Databases, the Consultant shall provide the Client with a single cleaned database for the household and individual segment (“National Dataset”).
       * 1. Additional data captured through electronic means should also be provided in the final datasets, including but not limited to: start time, end time, date, GPS coordinates, interviewer ID.
   19. The Consultant shall provide a cleaned database for the listing of households in SPSS format (“Listing Dataset”).
   20. After the Consultant hands over the Contact Database and the National Dataset the Consultant will assist the Client with queries on the data and methodological details; the Consultant shall remedy any problems that subsequently arise with regard to the datasets as soon as possible.
   21. Consultant shall provide the scanned or hard copies of the maps used in the segmenting (“Field Maps”). The Field Maps should clearly indicate from which province, district and village names they are, and also include the numbering of the segments and should indicate clearly which segment was selected for fieldwork.
       1. **Coordination**
   22. The Consultant core project team proposed in the Consultant proposal should remain the same for the duration of the project. In the event that changes to the Consultant project team become necessary, the Client will inform the Consultant of any changes to the Consultant team in writing with justification before any such changes are made. The Consultant will take sufficient actions to ensure continuity in the project and avoid interruptions or delays in the delivery of the Services.
   23. The Consultant’s project leader assigned to the Study shall be a permanent employee of the firm leading the bid and handling contracting (i.e. of the Authorized Entity) and shall not be replaced or removed from this role for the entire duration of the Study without explicit authorization of the Client. This employee shall be the Client’s primary contact person for the full duration of the Study.
   24. In the case where data collection is to be carried out by the Collaborating Entity, the Consultant shall coordinate the data collection and entry with its Collaborating Entity, and liaise with them to ensure consistency in all aspects of the study and adherence to all applicable quality control measures at all times. The Consultant shall be the **single** point of contact for the Client.
   25. The Consultant will work with the Collaborating Entity to quickly resolve any problems that arise.

* 1. The Consultant should keep the Client informed of the general progress on survey implementation at a minimum of weekly updates, daily during the fieldwork period.
     1. **Quality and Penalty Clause**

1. The Consultant will ensure consistency in implementation and quality control across the country, including where fieldwork is to be conducted by a Collaborating Entity or any other contracted (third party) staff. The Consultant will be expected to deploy its own quality control mechanisms beyond those stipulated by the Client; such mechanisms should be elaborated in the Bidder’s Technical Proposal in the relevant space provided.
2. Unless specific allowance from the Client, the Consultancy will not be considered to be complete if the percentage of target sample achieved (Response Rate) is below 95%. Penalties for final survey response rates below 95% as per Table 3. If the Bidder has concerns about the Response Rate, they should indicate in their bids, indicating a feasible response rate that they can commit to. The Consultant is expected to share the raw data used for calculating the response rate in the Methodology Note (See Section 3.3.7).

1. Interviews will be discarded in case there are fatal errors in the fieldwork. These fatal errors primarily include not following the instructions in the questionnaire and screener, or not following random sampling procedures. The Consultant is expected to provide replacement interview/s as directed by the Client, for the discarded ones. The number of discarded and replacement interviews shall be provided to the Client in the Methodology Note (See Section 3.3.7).
2. While it is expected that the Consultant performs a sufficient number of back-checks of interviews, the Client will also perform a number of random back-checks of its own, as such the Consultant is required to comply with this and provide the necessary information for this as specified in Section 3.3.3 (the Respondent Contact Information Database). The Consultant is therefore expected to provide the first 50% of the Respondent Contact Information Database at the 50% data collection point and the balance at 100% data collection in a timely manner, The Consultant shall ensure relevant consent for data collection and use is obtained and recorded from respondents upon interview, as specified in Section 3.3.3.(i). Access to the selected respondent’s data shall be made available to the Client for verification.
3. There will be penalties attached to the contract between the Consultant and the Client that will be applied in the event of any of the occurrences given in Table 3. Penalties shall be applied where the relevant lapse in quality has occurred, and the penalty shall be calculated based on the Cost as per the Contract between the Consultant and the Client.

The Client will conduct checks to observe whether the Consultant’s field team is adhering to health and safety guidelines agreed upon in the Contract between the Consultant and the Client. non-compliance will constitute grounds for penalties to be applied as specified in Table 3.

**Table 3: Penalties for lapses in quality**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Trigger** | **Penalty**  **(% of Cost as per Contract)** |
| Delayed delivery of any percentage of total Datasets in excess of 10 business days from agreed deadline | 1 % per day delayed |
| Any unjustified non-compliance of data quality protocols is discovered (e.g. failure to conduct double data entry [where applicable], visit less than three times un-contacted households, lack of rigorous behavior of the enumerators in the data collection process especially with regard to random selection procedures, lack of adherence to replacement procedures, etc.) | 30 |
| Missing values exceeding 5% | 20 |
| Falsification of data | 30 |
| Response rate\* (number of completed interviews/total selected households) between 97-99% | 2.5 |
| Response rate\* (number of completed interviews/total selected households) between 95-97% | 5 |
| Any evidence of failing to adhere to health and safety guidelines set out in the Contract between the Consultant and the Client | Immediate contract termination |

* + 1. **Initial Data Analysis and Top-line Presentation**
  1. The Consultant shall, perform an initial data analysis constituting descriptive statistics and cross tabulations. The main objective of this analysis will be to identify the main trends in the data and to ensure the quality of the data collected; to achieve the latter objectives, survey data should be cross-validated against any of the latest national official and supply-side data that is available.
  2. The Consultant will be expected to make a top-line presentation (“Top-line Presentation”) based on this initial data analysis to the Client, to take place within 14 days of the completion of data cleaning and processing. The Top-line Presentation need not be comprehensive, but shall be compiled based on weighted data. The contents of the Top-line Presentation will be worked out in advance, in consultation with the Client.
  3. Once the Datasets (listing, household and individual) has been handed over to the Client, and the Top-line Presentation has been done and related slide set (in editable format) has been handed over to the Client, the Consultant’s role in the rest of the analysis will be limited to responding to queries that the Client has on the data, as well as methodology.
     1. **Methodology Note**
  4. After the completion of fieldwork, a detailed write-up of the research methodology that was implemented shall be provided by the Consultant (“Methodology Note”). All primary data (e.g. population and demographic data at different stratifications) should be provided here. A section on the health and safety measures taken due to COVID-19 pandemic should also be available on the methodology note.
  5. The Methodology Note shall describe any problems encountered in the implementation of the study and what remedial actions were taken. The Methodology Note shall describe any deviations in the methodology that was undertaken, the justifications for the same and implications on the data.

1. The Methodology Note shall contain details on the quality metrics for the Household and the Individual segments, *including but not limited to* the following:
   1. Survey response rates (with raw data),
   2. missing values rates,
   3. number of replacement interviews due to fatal errors (along with state-wise and urban vs rural distribution of same),
   4. number of replacement interviews due to non-contactability of respondent (along with state-wise and urban vs rural distribution of same),
   5. Number of back-checked interviews.
   6. The Methodology Note will also provide a detailed list of locations where respondents were surveyed as well as the number of respondents sampled in that particular location. Where possible, the locations should be indicated on a map. In addition, the Client may require GPS coordinates of respondents. This can be done using commonly available GPS-capable phones or other technologies chosen by the Consultant.
   7. **Health and safety precautions and procedures**

Since this survey will take place while COVID-19 health risks still exist, it is imperative that the Consultant follow all health and safety guidelines issued by the government and local authorities (at a minimum) **throughout the project duration, i.e., through all activities.** Proposals by the Bidders should contain detailed information about all the health and safety precautions being deployed for the protection of employees, field staff, respondents as well as any other relevant groups. These will be considered during the proposal evaluation by the Client, with specific weightage given to this criteria (see Table 1) and non-compliance will constitute grounds for penalties to be applied (see Table 3).

* 1. **DELIVERABLES**

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

1. Report of Pilot Tests
2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (English and local language versions)
3. Data collection (household/individual as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning.
4. Respondent Contact Information Database – Household/individual
5. Finalized, cleaned Listing Dataset (see Section 3.3.3(s)
6. Top-line Presentation
7. Finalized, cleaned National Dataset (including consent variables (see Section 3.3.3(r))
8. Methodology note (including section on quality metrics and health and safety measures taken (see Section 3.3.7))
9. Field Photographs (5 per sampling location)
10. Field Maps (see Section 3.3.3(u))
11. Assistance with queries on data and methodology
    1. **TIMELINE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Bidders shall provide an estimated timeline for the Study with estimated completion dates, given in weeks from signing of the contract. Any special considerations (e.g., local festive periods which might affect consumption patterns, or the research process itself) should be clearly indicated.

The ideal completion date for the Study (and all associated tasks and deliverables 1-10) shall be by 7th December 2020, however given the possibility that the country context can change rapidly, timelines will be mutually adjusted accordingly.

The following is the payment schedule for the Study.

**Table 4. Payment schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase** | **Deliverables/milestone** | **Ideal completion date based on current knowledge** | **Payment amount (% of contract value)** |
|  | Signing of contract | 29th January 2021 | 40% |
| Phase 1: | 1. Report of Pilot Tests 2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (English and local language versions) 3. Data collection (household and individual as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning. 4. Respondent Contact Information Database – Household/individual segment 5. Listing Dataset (see Section 3.3.3(s)) 6. Top-line Presentation | 8th February 2021 | 20% |
| Phase 2: | 1. Finalized, cleaned National Dataset (including consent variables (see Section 3.3.3(r)) | 19th April 2021 | 10% |
| Phase 3: | 1. Methodology note (including section on quality metrics and health and safety measures taken (see Section 3.3.7)) 2. Field Photographs (5 per sampling location) (see Section 3.3.3(n)) 3. Field Maps (see Section 3.3.3(u)) | 3rd May 2021 | 30% |
| Phase 4: | 1. 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. | |

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

The Client shall make payments no later than 14 days of receiving invoice from Client. The Client shall raise invoice only upon the Client approving a given deliverable(s).

1. See also [www.lirneasia.net](http://www.lirneasia.net) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://lirneasia.net/after-access> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See for example: <http://lirneasia.net/2007/10/lirneasias-policy-influence-on-mobile-tax-issue-in-sri-lanka/> , <https://lirneasia.net/2018/01/lirneasia-research-contributes-broadband-included-within-usf-definition-myanmar/> , <https://lirneasia.net/2012/08/bangladesh-basic-argument-against-proposed-vas-licensing-rules-appears-to-have-been-accepted/> ,

   <https://lirneasia.net/2020/05/lirneasia-data-frames-the-dialogue-on-distance-education/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For the two sample options, see Section 3.2.2 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)