

Request for Proposals (RFP):

Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter

15th May 2024



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Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter: an experimental approach leading to new knowledge creation

LIRNEasia 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 this 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 **17.00 hrs Sri Lanka time on 29th May 2024**. Proposals (including technical and financial proposals) must be emailed to info@lirneasia.net with the subject header “<**FIRM NAME**> - **PROPOSAL FOR Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter:**” 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 **7th June 2024**.

Proposals received by LIRNEasia after the deadline may 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 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

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:

- *Authorized Entity* or *Consultant* means the firm that is signatory to the contract in event 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 LIRNEasia for the RFP process, and to handle subsequent negotiating leading to contracting should the bid be successful, will be the Authorized Entity.
- *Client* means LIRNEasia or another party contracted by LIRNEasia 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: *Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter*.

1.1.2 Scope of Work

The Client has issued this RFP to invite Proposals from potential Bidders to conduct a study on '*Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter*'. There are two tasks included in this RFP.

Task A: Nationally representative survey

Task B: Experimental study (includes both quantitative and qualitative modules)

These are described in detail 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 info@lirneasia.net, with the subject header "<FIRM NAME> - CLARIFICATION – *Human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter*", on or before 17.00 hrs on 20th May, 2024. 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 the 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 Sri Lanka or any other country of registration, 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.

The Technical Proposal must be valid for a period no less than 8 weeks.

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. Cost for the Study as per the Financial Proposal Template provided in Annex 2.
 - o The cost need to be provided for Task A and Task B separately (as detailed in this RFP document)
 - o The cost breakdown to be provided based on the following headings
 - For Task A: Scripting of the questionnaire, Fieldwork, Data processing and analysing, Project management
 - For Task B(1): Scripting of the questionnaire, Fieldwork (excluding out of pocket expenditure for CLT such as venues, transport for respondents, incentives to respondents etc.), Out of pocket expenditure for CLTs, Data processing and analysing, Project management
 - For Task B(2): Total cost for FGDs, total cost for IDIs, total cost for KIIs
 - o All costs should be provided in US 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 Sri Lankan Rupees (LKR), according to the Sri Lanka Rupee-US dollar (LKR-USD) exchange rate on the date of the Client's approval of the invoice submitted by the Consultant (Applicable rate will be the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, middle rate published on this date).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

The RFP is a fixed budget RFP. Thus, the Client will specify the minimum expectation (under Scope of work) and the budget for both tasks separately.

Evaluation of proposals and selection of the winning proposal will be based on the Client's assessment of the submitted Technical Proposal. The bidder's ability to meet the minimum expectations at the given budget and what the bidder can provide additionally will be considered in the evaluation.

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

Table 1. Indicative marking scheme

	Marking scheme
1. Profiles of Bidder and Collaborating Entities (if applicable) - <i>Submission of documents to show that the organisations have been legally incorporated in Sri Lanka or any other country and have been operating in Sri Lanka for at least three years</i>	5
2. Relevant experience of the Bidder and Collaborating Entities (if applicable) in previously having carried out the type of work described in Section 3, targeting the same populations in Sri Lanka. See below for details*	15
3. Demonstrated understanding of the Client Methodology and or pros/cons; recommended revisions/improvements (if any)	20
4. Qualifications of the proposed project team with weighting toward Team Leader's competencies, followed by the Field Manager's, qualitative groups and IDI moderators', qualitative and quantitative data analysts and quantitative questionnaire scripter's experience and competencies – <i>Client expects the Bidder to provide (at a minimum) the names and the profiles of the persons who will be fulfilling the stated roles.</i>	15
5. Field strength of the Bidder (and the Collaborating Entities if the latter is to undertake the fieldwork) and field strategy (e.g., training plan, supervision of field staff, etc)	10
6. Quality control measures that will be employed by the Bidder 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
7. Contingency plans (Methodology B) for sudden disruptions to fieldwork	5
8. Ability to complete final deliverables within ideal timeframe provided	5
9. Risk mitigation and attention to research ethics in data collection	5
10. Quality of value additions the bidder can provide (in addition to the minimum expectations the Client has stated in this RFP)	10
Total	100

*Relevant experience counts as:

- Nationally representative survey research in Sri Lanka
- Surveys targeting households and individuals, particularly of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, social media users vs. non users etc.
- 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
- Large scale experimental studies with more than 1 level of evaluation (i.e.; baseline vs. endline evaluation of the same respondent)
- Large scale Central Location Tests (CLT) where respondents are brought to a venue and interviewed
- Qualitative research targeting individuals, particularly of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, social media users vs. non users etc.
- Ability to quickly adapt to changing ground conditions and ensure project objectives are met
- Sufficient experience in conducting CAPI-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 Technical Proposal and the Financial Proposal. The Client will consider all reasonable requests. However if significant variations to the standard contract are requested by a Bidder, the Client reserves the right to consider the Bidders proposal non-compliant to the RFP. 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

As stated earlier, this RFP includes two main tasks (Task A and Task B). The client reserves the right to award both tasks to one Bidder, or the two tasks to two different Bidders.

On the basis of the Financial Proposal and subsequent negotiations, the final contract will be agreed upon as a lump sum contract in US 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 Client will consider all reasonable requests. However if significant variations to the standard contract are requested by a Bidder, the Client reserves the right to consider the Bidders proposal non-compliant to the RFP.

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. Changes to wording of the Contract will not be entertained at a later stage.

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 This includes the AfterAccess nationally representative surveys of ICT access and use in six Asian countries (including Sri Lanka in 2019)², surveys to assess the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 in Sri Lanka and India in 2021³ and Social Safety Nets and State of Poverty in Sri Lanka⁴. This research has allowed the Client to gain deep insight into these markets and make positive contributions to the policy processes and discourse. Further, the Client has conducted several qualitative studies on marginalized communities, social safety nets, inclusive agriculture, digital rights and information disorder⁵. Over the past 4 years, the client has studied in detail the social, technological and political context that lead to the information disorder (a catch all term that includes misinformation, disinformation, mal information, fake news and hate speech) and possible counter measures employed by various stakeholders across Asia. Some of the findings point to the fact that there are few or no studies that point to individual characteristics that make certain individuals more susceptible to the information disorder and that very few stakeholders understand the effectiveness of the counter measures they are engaged in (such as digital literacy capacity building or fact checking activities). Building on its existing work, the Client is undertaking a study to understand the human factors in the information disorder and finding measures to counter. (“The Study”).

The Study involves carrying out a nation-wide nationally representative face-to-face survey among the 18+ population to identify factors that influence tendency to believe (or not believe) misinformation, and carrying out an experimental study to identify whether selected media literacy interventions influence participant’s ability to detect misinformation.

2.2 THE NEED

Media, both traditional (press, TV, radio) and new (digital including social media) play a key role in democratic process - by providing a platform for free expression of ideas/opinions and in holding power to account. The problem of misinformation disseminated through media is as old as the media itself. Codes of ethics, press complaints commissions, provisions under various media licensing regimes, limitations over media ownership/concentration are some of the ways in which content, accountability and plurality of traditional print, TV, radio media was enforced. But the expansion of digital technology has enabled the production and broadcasting of information and opinion by individuals, groups and organizations well beyond the traditional media sources. The speed at which information, as well as misinformation, is created has increased drastically.

The spread of disinformation, whether intentional or not, transcends national borders (i.e. global north and south), and languages, and gains cultural significance as it passes through different communities⁶. To fully grasp the impact of problematic information, it is necessary to understand the social and political contexts of different communities.

Understanding the human factors and how they contribute to the information disorder in context is essential to a meaningful response to the phenomenon. This includes the need to systematically understand the individual and group characteristics of those who are more (or less) susceptible to mis/dis/mal information, and what measures (such as the disseminating results of fact checking, media literacy programs, etc.) are most effective (or not) to which audiences are key parts of countering the phenomena.

¹ See also www.lirneasia.net

² <https://lirneasia.net/after-access>

³ <https://lirneasia.net/covid>

⁴ <https://lirneasia.net/ssnresources>

⁵ <https://lirneasia.net/2021/10/misinformation-in-bangladesh-a-brief-primer/>

<https://lirneasia.net/2021/07/a-corpus-and-machine-learning-models-for-fake-news-classification-in-sinhala/>

<https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/handle/10625/60954>

⁶ https://misinforeview.hks.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/nguyen-_diasporic_communities_research_beyond_anglocentrism_20220324.pdf

2.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study (i.e. this consultancy) are as follows:

1. To understand the factors impacting an individual's likelihood of being susceptible to manipulated information (i.e.; What are the demographic, socioeconomic, ethnic, contextual and psychological factors that impact people's likelihood to believe or ability to be skeptical about information they encounter via various media sources and formats)
2. To measure the effectiveness of different digital literacy capacity building programs and fact checking methods in countering the information disorder and how can these be improved to have more impact.

The detailed methodology is presented on Section 3.1 and 3.2.

The data collected will be used to:

- Work with partners and other stakeholders to design methods of scaling up effective counter measures such as media literacy programmes and fact checking methods.
- Inform policy and practice based on robust quantitative evidence

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

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

As stated earlier, the work can be categorized into 2 main tasks:

Task A: Nationally representative survey

Task B: Experimental study (includes both quantitative and qualitative modules)

3.1 TASK A: NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY

A nationally representative, face-to-face survey will be conducted among the 18+ population to assess the level of ability to identify misinformation and to understand the factors impacting an individual's likelihood of being susceptible to manipulated information (I.e.; What are the demographic, socioeconomic, ethnic, contextual factors that impact people's likelihood to believe or ability to be skeptical about information they encounter via various media sources and formats).

The survey questionnaire will be provided by client and will have three key parts;

Part 1: Respondent selection (listing of household members and selecting a member randomly to be interviewed)

Part 2: Collection of demographic, socioeconomic and relevant contextual information

Part 3: The respondents will be shown a series of cue cards (news / information content /stimuli) on the CAPI device (tab) in various formats. The cue cards will cover a range of topics and will constitute a mix of true and false news information. They will be presented as they would appear on the most commonly used media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Online news website, printed media etc. The respondents will be asked to categorise the cards as true, mostly true, mostly false or false.

Note:

1. The cue cards will be provided by Client in both Sinhala and Tamil languages.

2. It is compulsory to use tabs or devices which has a screen size of at least 7" as the cue cards needs to be displayed in the device itself. The bidder is required to give assurance of its ability to use tabs or devices with screen size of at least 7" in their Technical proposals.

3.1.1. TARGET POPULATION AND DEFINITIONS

The target populations of the Study are the 18+ individuals in Sri Lanka.

3.1.2 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The method proposed for the project (Client Methodology) is capable of delivering nationally representative indicators for the 18+ population of Sri Lanka.

3.1.2.1 Sampling

The method has been developed using data on number of individuals in the Grama Niladhari (GN) divisions in Sri Lanka. Random sampling will be performed in four steps for households.

Step 1: Sri Lanka will be grouped into 5 province groups; Western, Northern, Eastern, Southern and Rest of Sri Lanka. The National Census Data Tables will be split into urban, rural and estate GNs within each province group.

Step 2: The GNs will be sampled for each stratum using probability proportional to size (PPS). This will be done at district level.

- The Client has already completed Steps 1 and 2, selecting approximately 220 sample points using PPS random sampling. The list of GNs will be provided to the Consultant at the time the study is awarded; these locations must be strictly adhered to.
- In the sample GNs, 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, the Client has outlined three options. Consultant shall proceed the fieldwork with either Step 4a, 4b or 4c. The exact method will be decided during the contract negotiation stage.

Step 3: Listing of all households will be compiled for each GN/segment

- Within the selected sample locations (in this case number of households in the GN will be less than 250 households) a complete listing of households (of the entire GN) will be conducted. This will typically be 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 20 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 4a: GNs with more than 250 households will be geographically segmented and one segment will be randomly selected, and households will be listed as mentioned below.

- Consultant will have to divide the GN 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 3). 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 GNs in this regard
 - One possibility is by using GIS shape files (which has the administrative boundaries) for selected 220 GN divisions. The Consultant shall use the shape files to make maps by overlaying the shape file on top of Google maps (satellite). The Consultant needs to identify and validate the correct boundaries of the selected GNs at the local level with the help of key informant(s) before conducting the fieldwork of a GN. The Consultant shall use the maps to divide the GN division into homogeneous geographic segments containing approximately 250 households. Natural boundaries inside the GN should be used to divide the segments.
 - 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.
- Within the selected sample locations (the randomly selected segment of a GN if number of households >250) a complete listing of households to be conducted – 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 20 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 4b: Listing of 250 households in a GN using a random starting point provided by the Client

- A random starting point (in the form of GPS co-ordinate) within the selected sample locations (in this case number of households in the GN will be greater than 250 households) will be provided by the Client. The Consultant shall start the listing of approximately 250 households, starting with the closest household to the starting GPS point. The Consultant shall use the right-hand rule to list the households. This will typically be 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 20 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 4c: Listing of 250 households while enumerating every 10th household in a GN using a random starting point provided by the Client.

- A random starting point (in the form of GPS co-ordinate) within the selected sample locations (in this case number of households in the GN will be greater than 250 households) will be provided by the Client. The Consultant shall start the listing of approximately 250 households, starting with the closest household to the

starting GPS point. The Consultant shall use the right-hand rule to list the households. The Consultant shall conduct the household interview (main survey interview) with every 10th household while conducting the listing.

Step 5: Selection of individuals

- In a selected household, the eligible members (members who are 18+) will be listed and one member will be selected to be interviewed using simple random sampling. Only one member will be selected from one household.

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.

3.1.2.2 Sample size

The Bidders are requested to share quotations for 2 sample options as follows:

Option 01: N=4,400 individuals

Option 02: N=3,800 individuals

Table 2. Sample options – Task A

Level	Option 01: N=4,400		Option 01: N=3,800	
	Sample size	Margin of error	Sample size	Margin of error
Sri Lanka	4,400	+/- 2.1%	3,800	+/- 2.2%
Western Province	1,000	+/- 4.4%	800	+/- 4.9%
Northern Province	800	+/- 4.9%	700	+/- 5.2%
Eastern Province	800	+/- 4.9%	700	+/- 5.2%
Southern Province	800	+/- 4.9%	700	+/- 5.2%
Rest of Sri Lanka	1,000	+/- 4.4%	900	+/- 4.6%

3.1.2.3 Weighting

For the Client Methodology, the weights will be calculated based on the inverse selection probabilities. The Client will allocate the weights.

In the case of any variation in the sampling method (proposed by the bidder in the proposal), the calculation of weights will have to be specified in the proposal.

3.2 TASK B: EXPERIMENTAL STUDY (INCLUDES BOTH QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MODULES)

An experimental study will be carried out to test the effectiveness of different digital literacy capacity building programs and fact checking methods in countering the information disorder. The study will try to measure the respondents' ability to identify misinformation prior to and post exposure to the intervention.

Five different interventions are under consideration.

1. An in-person digital literacy training programme carried out by a reputed organisation
2. A short training video on media literacy
3. A game on media literacy
4. Membership in a news verification WhatsApp group
5. Exposure to a website on an online newspaper-based fact-checking articles

The client will provide the details of each intervention once the study is awarded. The bidders are not expected to cost for any of the interventions in their proposals.

The study will consist of a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase.

3.2.1. TARGET GROUP

The target group for the experimental study is individuals aged 18-45 years, from Western, Northern, Eastern and Southern provinces of Sri Lanka.

Rationale for selection of the four provinces:

- Western Province: the most populous province with the highest internet usage, has been chosen due to its large and diverse population, making it an ideal location to gather a wide range of data.
- Northern Province: has the highest percentage of Tamil population, the largest ethnic minority in Sri Lanka, and has been severely affected by the country's civil war. This province provides a unique opportunity to study the effects of conflict on a marginalized community.
- Eastern Province: has the highest percentage of Muslim population, the third-largest ethnic minority, and has also been affected by the war. More-recently anti-Muslim campaigns as well as the Easter Sunday 2019 Islamist terror attacks have highlighted the importance of ethno-religious tensions in the country. By conducting the research here, we aim to understand the impact of these factors.
- Southern Province: with a high percentage of Sinhala population, the largest ethnic majority in Sri Lanka, has been selected to provide a comparison point to the other provinces. It also has equally large Tamil and Muslim populations.

The client requires the study to cover at least two districts in each province, with the following districts being a must – Colombo district in Western province, Jaffna district in Northern province, Batticaloa district in Eastern province and Galle district in Southern province. The Bidder is requested to name one other district in each province giving reasons for selection.

3.2.2 TASK B (1): EXPERIMENTAL STUDY - QUANTITATIVE MODULE

The quantitative module of the experimental study will aim at assessing the effectiveness of the above-mentioned interventions.

3.2.2.1 Study design

The quantitative module of the experimental study will consist of the following; pre-recruitment of respondents, baseline evaluation, exposure to intervention, immediate post evaluation (post evaluation 1) and a post evaluation after 2 weeks of exposure to the intervention (post evaluation 2). (refer figure 1)

Figure 1. Study design – Task B(1)



The respondents will be pre-recruited and brought to a Central Location (venue). At the venue, the respondents will be first administered the baseline evaluation. Then, the respondents will be grouped to 6 groups and assigned an intervention as follows:

- Group 1 (Test group 1): An in-person digital literacy training programme carried out by a reputed organisation
- Group 2 (Test group 2): A short training video on media literacy
- Group 3 (Test group 3): A game on media literacy
- Group 4 (Test group 4): Membership in a news verification WhatsApp group
- Group 5 (Test group 5): Exposure to a website on an online newspaper-based fact-checking articles
- Group 6 (Control group): No intervention will be assigned

The respondents in the test groups will be exposed to the respective interventions while the respondents in the control group will not be exposed to any intervention. Post the exposure to the intervention, the respondents will be administered the post evaluation 1 at the venue itself.

After 2 weeks of the exposure to the intervention, the respondents will be re-visited at their households, and the post evaluation 2 will be administered.

In all three evaluations (baseline, post evaluation 1 and post evaluation 2), the respondents will be shown a series of cue cards (news / information content /stimuli) on the CAPI device (tab) in various formats. The cue cards will cover a range of topics and will constitute a mix of true and false news information. They will be presented as they would appear on the most commonly used media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Online news website, printed media etc. The respondents will be asked to categorise the cards as true, mostly true, mostly false or false. In the post evaluation 2, apart from classification of cue cards, the respondent will also be questioned on some of their media habits and other relevant contextual information.

Note:

1. The cue cards will be provided by Client in both Sinhala and Tamil languages.
2. It is compulsory to use tabs or devices which has a screen size of at least 7” as the cue cards needs to be displayed in the device itself. The bidder is required to give assurance of its ability to use tabs or devices with screen size of at least 7”in their Technical proposals.

There is a possibility that the number of interventions may be reduced from 5 to 4, in which case there would be four test groups and one control group. When submitting proposals, bidders are required to indicate in the financial proposal, cost if a) Five interventions are undertaken b) four interventions are undertaken

Analysis of baseline scores across population sub-groups (based on demographics, media literacy types) will yield insight into determinants of susceptibility to misinformation. Analysis of scores across interventions will yield insight into the relationship between formats and susceptibility. Analysis of baseline versus first and second post evaluation scores between treatment and control groups will reveal the efficacy of the intervention, and the sustainability of that efficacy; analysis across sub-groups and interventions will provide further insights which can inform the recommendations to improve the media literacy content for scaling.

3.2.2.2 Sampling

The respondents will be selected purposively, using quotas, ensuring coverage of a spectrum of individual characteristics (demographics, socio-economics), digital exposure (internet users and non-users), and others as informed by the findings of the nationally representative survey. (Task A).

3.2.2.3 Sample size

The Bidders are requested to share quotations for 2 sample options as follows:

Option 01: Evaluation of 5 interventions (6 panels in total, including control panel)

Option 02: Evaluation of 4 interventions (5 panels in total, including control panel)

Table 3. Sample options – Task B(1)

Province	Option 01: Evaluation of 5 interventions		Option 02: Evaluation of 4 interventions	
	Sample size per panel	Total sample	Sample size per panel	Total sample
Western Province	70	420	70	350
Northern Province	56	336	56	280
Eastern Province	56	336	56	280
Southern Province	56	336	56	280
Total	238	1,428	238	1,190

3.2.2.4 Requirements when conducting fieldwork for the experimental study

1. The central location tests will need to be conducted simultaneously in all 4 provinces. However, Day 1 of the CLT should only be in Colombo and it is essential that the key field staff who will be managing the fieldwork in the other three provinces (ex.: Field managers, centre supervisors etc.) be present in Colombo to observe fieldwork on Day 1. After Day 1 of fieldwork, it may be required to take a one day break before rolling out the experiment study simultaneously.

2. Exposure/ Engagement with the interventions:

- An in-person digital literacy training programme carried out by a reputed organisation – *In this intervention, a resource person (from a third party organisation) will conduct the training at the CLT venue. It is expected that the training may take around 45 minutes. Hence, maximum of 2 sessions (both in one day) can be arranged per district.*
 - A short training video on media literacy – *In this intervention, the respondents will be exposed to a short video (developed by a third party organisation) at the CLT venue. It is expected that the video will be a maximum of 15 minutes duration. The video will be pre-loaded to a Client provided tab and the tab will be given to the respondent. (maximum of 3 tabs with pre-loaded video will be provided per centre, i.e.; total of 12 tabs). The bidder is required to provide earphones.*
 - A game on media literacy – *In this intervention, the respondents will be exposed to a short game (developed by a third party organisation) which will expose them to information disorder. It is expected that the respondent may take around 10-15 minutes to complete the game. The game will be pre-loaded to a Client provided tab and the tab will be given to the respondent. (maximum of 3 tabs with pre-loaded game will be provided per centre, i.e.; total of 12 tabs)*
 - Membership in a news verification WhatsApp group – *In this intervention, once the respondent has completed the baseline evaluation, he/she will be added to an existing WhatsApp group (managed by a third party organisation). The Group Admin will send some WhatsApp messages with Fact Checked articles to the group within the following 10 – 15 minutes. The respondent is expected to go through the articles at the CLT venue prior to post evaluation 1 being administered. The respondent will not be removed by the Admin for the next two weeks (until the post evaluation 2 is completed), hence, it is expected that the respondent will remain as a member of the WhatsApp group. However, if the respondent himself/ herself exists from the group, this will be recorded as a finding at the post evaluation 2 interview.*
 - Exposure to a website on an online newspaper-based fact-checking articles – *In this intervention, once the respondent has completed the baseline evaluation, he/she will be given a tab/laptop with a link to an online website which does fact checking on articles. The respondent is expected to go through some of the fact-checked articles at the CLT venue. It is expected that this will take about 10-15 minutes. The Bidder is expected to provide laptops/ tabs to be used for this intervention.*
 - Control group: Post the baseline evaluation, the control group will be given an article to read (newspaper article). After about 10 minutes, the post evaluation 1 will be administered for the control group.
3. It should be noted that the devices (tabs or laptops) used for one intervention should not be used for the other interventions.
4. As each intervention is different to the other, it is important that the respondents belonging to separate panels are kept well-separated at the CLT venue. *Note: Bidders should discuss in their Technical proposals as to how they suggest to keep the groups separated so that the respondents in one group does not see what the respondents in the other groups are doing at the venue.*
5. Depending on the timing of fieldwork and when the presidential elections will be held, there is a possibility that part of the fieldwork will have to be conducted before the elections and the rest after the elections. In such a scenario, the Consultant should ensure that similar percentage of fieldwork is conducted in all provinces, across the six panels prior to elections.

3.2.3 TASK B (2): EXPERIMENTAL STUDY – QUALITATIVE MODULE

The qualitative module of the experimental study will be an explanatory phase with the aim of getting an in-depth understanding of the different interventions the respondents were exposed to.

3.2.3.1 Respondent selection

A sub-set of respondents who already participated for the experimental study – quantitative module will be selected for the experimental study – qualitative module.

The respondent selection will be based on the analysis of the experimental study – quantitative module. Homogenous groups and groups with significant differences will be identified through the analysis. These groups will be targeted in the qualitative module.

3.2.3.2 Sample size

FGDs and IDIs will be used in collecting data for the qualitative module. In total there will be 5 FGDs, and 10 IDIs. The maximum number of research participants in each FGDs should be 5. The consultant shall follow the quota specified by the client to recruit participants for FGDs and IDIs. However, the group compositions may be adapted to suit

logistical requirements while respecting established quotas for FGDs. All FGDs and IDIs shall be conducted in the Western Province, covering Urban, Rural, and Estate sectors. Additionally, fair representation of gender, age, ethnicity and socio-economic strata shall be included in the composition of the FGDs and IDIs. FGDs and IDIs will be conducted in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages, depending on participants' requirement.

3.2.3.3 Key Informant Interviews

In addition to the above, the qualitative module of the study also includes 10 KIIs with the domain experts, including academics, journalists and activists. The Consultant is expected to draw up a list of possible respondents for the KIIs and share with the Client and get Client's approval prior to conducting the KIIs. KIIs will be conducted in Sinhala, Tamil and English, depending on participants' requirement. KIIs may be conducted remotely or in-person.

3.3 CONTINGENCY PLAN / ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF CONDUCTING THE FIELDWORK IN THE CASE OF UNEXPECTED DISRUPTIONS TO FIELDWORK

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 government-imposed lockdowns, significant surges in the spread of COVID-19, any other pandemic or similar situations, and / 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 quality and precision of the survey. The Bidder must discuss how the study objective will be achieved in terms of representativeness and the precision for Task A. The Bidder must discuss how the study objectives will be achieved in terms of coverage for Task B. 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.

3.4 TASKS

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

3.4.1 Study and sample design and method

- a) The Consultant shall work closely with the Client to apply the sampling methodology that has been outlined in Section 3.1 for Task A and in Section 3.2 for Task B. .
 - i) 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.
 - ii) For Task A:
 - a. Bidders should note that the Client's main requirement is a nationally representative sample adhering to random selection at every stage of sampling, with derivable selection probabilities.
 - b. Consultant shall also be responsible for the subdividing of GNs 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.
 - c. Bidders should also indicate possible methods for blocking (subdividing) GNs with more than 250 households, discussing the option outlined in Section 3.1.2.1
 - d. 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.
 - iii) For Task B:
 - a. Bidders should note that the Client's main requirement is a sample based on the quotas provided by Client
- b) The Consultant shall supply all necessary raw field data (number of households per selected GN/segment) to calculate sampling weights (for the nationally representative survey) as per Section 3.1.2.3, although the Consultant shall calculate the weight variables and include the same in the final datasets.

- c) The Consultant shall provide a finalized fieldwork schedule along with location details to the Client as early as possible.

3.4.2 Research Instrument Finalization

Separate “Research Instruments” (survey questionnaire/s, screener, consent forms, draft qualitative discussion guides etc.) are being prepared by the Client for the study.

The survey questionnaires will include modules as explained under Task A and Task B.

- a) 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.
- b) the Client will provide the Consultant with a draft version of the translated questionnaires (both Sinhala and Tamil). The Consultant shall review the translation and do any changes as required. The Consultant shall ensure that the translated versions are checked for consistency and ensure that the meanings have been correctly translated; to the best of its capabilities. The Consultant will share the final translated versions with the Client, who 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.
- c) The translated Research Instruments shall each be pilot-tested among a total of 10 households in both urban and rural locations, ensuring a range of income/socioeconomic groups are also covered. (10 pilots to be conducted each for Task A and Task B). The pilot-testing should be carried out in a mix of both Sinhala and Tamil languages. The pilot testing shall be conducted at an appropriate point in time to be determined by the Client and the Consultant. Based on the pilot tests, the Consultant will prepare a short report on how the Research Instruments are working and indicate 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.
- d) The Consultant shall work with the client to prepare discussion guides for FGDs, IDIs and KIIs. The Client shall translate the discussion guides to local languages (Tamil and Sinhala) before commencing data collection.

3.4.3 Collection, Entry and Processing of Data

- a) The Consultant will recruit qualified respondents and administer the Research Instruments in local languages and dialects.
- b) 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.
- c) The capture of data shall be done by electronic (CAPI) means. As the respondents will need to be exposed to the cue cards which will be shared as images with the Consultant, it is **compulsory to use tabs or devices which has a screen size of at least 7”**. (Note: the bidder is required to give assurance of its ability to use tabs or devices with screen size of at least 7” in their Technical proposals). The Bidder should clearly indicate previous experience with using CAPI, and what 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.

- d) 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.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.
- g) The total interview time is expected to be as follows:
 - i) Task A (Nationally representative survey): It is expected that the interview will be around 45 – 60 minutes.
 - ii) Task B (Experimental study): It is expected that the Baseline and Post evaluation 1 will take around 20 minutes each. The Post evaluation 2 is expected to take around 45 - 60 minutes.
- h) 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.
- i) 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 (for qualitative phase) or verbal consent with audio recording (for quantitative phase) 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).
- j) After obtaining consent to re-contact has been obtained as specified in 3.4.3.(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.
- k) The Consultant will ensure a response rate according to the parameters set out in Section 3.4.5.
- l) For Task A, 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 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 (selected respondent) before the household can be replaced with a random selection from the list of houses (applying the predetermined sampling interval).
- m) In the event that a selected household cannot be enumerated (for example due to inaccessibility or security concerns), a random replacement household will be provided by the Client. The reason for household

replacement should be clearly indicated in writing to the Client. **The Consultant may not replace a household at its own discretion.**

- n) In the event that a selected GN cannot be enumerated (for example due to inaccessibility or security concerns), a random replacement GN will be provided by the Client. The reason for GN replacement should be clearly indicated in writing to the Client. **The Consultant may not replace a GN at its own discretion.**
- o) The Consultant will capture a sample of the fieldwork process (for Task A: five photographs per sampling location, for Task B(1): 10 photographs from each CLT, for Task B(2): 1-2 photographs of each FGD/IDI) 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.
- p) 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 3.4.7).
- q) 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 hours’ notice, in order to conduct, monitor and supervise the data collection processes. The Consultant will be expected to:
 - i) 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.
- r) 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. The consultant shall provide 2 separate datasets for Task A (“Main data set – National survey”) and Task B (“Main dataset – Experiment”). For Task A, the Consultant shall also provide a cleaned database for the listing of households in SPSS format (“Listing Dataset”). For both Task A and Task B, the Consultant shall provide the “Contact dataset” separately, which includes the name, address, contact numbers and other personal information of the respondents. This should have a unique identifier which will link the contact dataset to the main data set.
 - i) 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.
 - ii) Note: The submission of a Technical proposal by the Bidder is considered as agreement in providing the above-stated datasets. (unless stated other-wise in the proposal)
- s) After the Consultant hands over the Datasets 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.
- t) 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 GNs they are, and also include the numbering of the segments and should indicate clearly which segment was selected for fieldwork.

3.4.4 Coordination

- a) The Consultant’s 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 Consultant will inform the Client 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.
- b) 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.

- c) 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.
- d) The Consultant will work with the Collaborating Entity to quickly resolve any problems that arise.
- e) 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.

3.4.5 Quality and Penalty Clause

- a) 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 on in the Bidder's Technical Proposal in the relevant space provided.
- b) 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 4. 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 3.4.7).
- c) 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 the sampling procedures as specified in Task A and Task B. The Consultant is expected to provide replacement interviews 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 3.4.7).
- d) 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 3.4.3 (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 (for Task A and Task B separately). The Consultant shall ensure relevant consent for data collection and use is obtained and recorded from respondents upon interview, as specified in Section 3.4.3.(i). Access to the selected respondent's data shall be made available to the Client for verification. Consultant is also expected to audio record the full interview as a quality control measure.
- e) 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 4. 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. Submission of a Technical proposal is taken as Bidder's agreement to adhere to this clause (unless specifically stated).
- f) 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.

Table 4: 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 uncontacted households, lack of rigorous behavior of the enumerators in the data collection process, especially with regard to 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

3.4.6 Initial Data Analysis and Top-line Presentation

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) The Consultant will be expected to make a comprehensive presentation based on the analyzed qualitative data.
- d) Once the Datasets 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.
- e) Once the qualitative data (word to word transcripts in the local language the discussion was conducted and in English language, photographs, audio recordings and moderator notes), and the presentation from the qualitative data 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 qualitative data, as well as methodology.

3.4.7 Methodology Note

- a) After the completion of fieldwork (i.e. quantitative and qualitative data collection), 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, FGD audio recordings and transcripts, IDI audio recordings and transcripts, and KII audio recordings and transcripts) should be provided here.

Note: The Consultant should provide separate Methodology Notes for the Tasks/sub Tasks.(i.e.; Task A, Task B(1) and Task B(2))

- b) 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.
- c) The Methodology Note shall contain details on the quality metrics, *including but not limited to* the following:
 - a. Survey response rates (with raw data)
 - b. Missing values rates
 - c. Number of replacement interviews due to fatal errors (along with district-wise and urban, rural and estate distribution of same)
 - d. Number of replacement interviews due to non-contactability of respondent (along with district-wise and urban, rural & estate distribution of same)
 - e. Number of back-checked interviews and outcome
- d) The Methodology Note for quantitative study 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.

3.5 Health and safety precautions and procedures

The Client expects the Consultant to follow basic health and safety guidelines issued by the government and local authorities throughout the project duration, i.e., throughout all activities. Proposals by the Bidders should contain information about the health and safety precautions being deployed by the Consultant.

3.6 DELIVERABLES

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

3.6.1 Deliverables | Task A (Nationally representative survey)

1. Report of Pilot Tests
2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (Questionnaire and Discussion Guides) (English and local language versions)
3. Data collection (as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning.
4. Respondent Contact Information Database
5. Finalized, cleaned Listing Dataset (see Section 3.4.3(r))
6. Finalized, cleaned Main Dataset (including consent variables (see Section 3.4.3®))
7. Top-line Presentation
8. Methodology note (including section on quality metrics and health and safety measures taken (see Section 3.4.7))
9. Field Photographs (five photographs per sampling location)
10. Field Maps (see Section 3.4.3(t))
11. Assistance with queries on data and methodology

3.6.2 Deliverables | Task B(1) (Experimental study – Quantitative Module)

1. Report of Pilot Tests
2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (Questionnaire and Discussion Guides) (English and local language versions)
3. Data collection (as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning.
4. Respondent Contact Information Database
5. Finalized, cleaned Main Dataset (including consent variables (see Section 3.4.3(r))
6. Top-line Presentation
7. Methodology note (including section on quality metrics and health and safety measures taken (see Section 3.4.7))
8. Field Photographs (10 photographs from each CLT)

9. Assistance with queries on data and methodology

3.6.3 Deliverables | Task B(2) (Experimental study – Qualitative Module)

1. Discussion guides for FGDs, IDIs and KIIs
2. Respondent recruitment questionnaire
3. Signed or verbal consent from every research participant, including surveys, FGDs, and IDIs
4. Complete set of word to word transcripts of FGDs, IDIs, and KIIs in the language that discussions were conducted. [Transcripts should be submitted with all discussion details (eg: type of protocol, location, date, sample category, name of the moderator) stated in each transcript. Unique Identifications should be assigned each respondent when transcribing the records (eg: R1, R2...)]
5. Complete set of word to word English language transcripts of FGDs, IDIs and KIIs, if the the discussion/interview conducted in local languages: Sinhala or Tamil. [Transcripts should be submitted with all discussion details (eg: type of protocol, location, date, sample category, name of the moderator) stated in each transcript. Unique IDs should be assigned each respondent when transcribing the records (eg: R1, R2...)]
6. Spreadsheet with FGD and IDI participants' details including unique ID, an assigned pseudonym, and details collected through screening questionnaire
7. Spreadsheet with Key Informant details including Name, Designation, Affiliated institute
8. Recordings of discussions (If the recording is not available detailed notes from the discussion/interview)
9. Field Photographs (1-2 photographs of each FGD/IDI)
10. Comprehensive presentation from the qualitative data collected
11. Final report (detailed MS Powerpoint report)
12. Methodology Note (Qualitative)

3.7 BUDGET FOR THE STUDY

The maximum Client budget for the different components of the study are as follows:

Task A - Nationally representative survey:

Option 1 (N=4,400) | USD 75,000

Option 2 (N=3,800) | USD 64,775

Task B: Experimental Study (Both quantitative and qualitative modules)

Option 1 (If 5 interventions are being evaluated) | USD 92,000

Option 2 (If 4 interventions are being evaluated) | USD 73,600

Note: For both Tasks, the bidders are encouraged to quote for an Option 3 (if required) with the optimal sample size. If suggesting an Option 3, the bidder should provide the details in the technical proposal and provide the cost in the financial proposal.

These amounts include all of the Consultant's costs, i.e., is all-inclusive.

Payments shall be made in Sri Lankan Rupees (LKR), according to the Sri Lanka Rupee-US dollar (LKR-USD) exchange rate on the date of the Client's approval of the invoice submitted by the Consultant (Applicable rate will be the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, middle rate published on this date)

3.8 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 or any other specific events that may take place, which might affect the research process) should be clearly indicated.

The ideal completion date for the Study (and all associated tasks and deliverables) shall be by 31st October, 2024, however if there are any unforeseen issues which arise such as national elections, timelines will be mutually agreed upon and adjusted accordingly.

The following is the payment schedule for the Study.

Table 5(1). Payment schedule | Task A (Nationally representative survey)

Deliverables/milestone	Ideal completion date based on current knowledge	Payment amount (% of contract value)
Signing of contract	10 June, 2024	20%
1. Report of Pilot Tests 2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (English and local language versions) 3. Data collection (as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning.	25 July, 2024	40%
4. Respondent Contact Information Database 5. Finalized, cleaned Listing Dataset 6. Finalized, cleaned Dataset 7. Top-line Presentation 8. Methodology notes 9. Field Photographs 10. Field Maps	8 August, 2024	40%
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 will continue to work with the Client by responding to queries if any thereafter.	

Table 5(2). Payment schedule | Task B(1) (Experimental study – Quantitative phase)

Deliverables/milestone	Ideal completion date based on current knowledge	Payment amount (% of contract value)
Signing of contract	10 June, 2024	10%
1. Report of Pilot Tests 2. Finalized, translated, field-ready Research Instruments (English and local language versions)	8 August, 2024	10%
3. Data collection (as detailed in previous sections, adhering to response rate > 95 %), entry and cleaning. 4. Respondent Contact Information Database	22 August – 10 October	40%

5. Finalized, cleaned Dataset 6. Top-line Presentation 7. Methodology note 8. Field Photographs	22 October, 2024	40%
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 will continue to work with the Client by responding to queries if any thereafter.	

Table 5(3). Payment schedule | Task B(2) (Experimental study – Qualitative phase)

Deliverables/milestone	Ideal completion date based on current knowledge	Payment amount (% of contract value)
1. Discussion guides for FGDs, IDIs and KIIs 2. Respondent recruitment questionnaire for FGDs and IDIs 3. Spreadsheet with Key Informant details including Name, Designation, Affiliated institute	1 September, 2024	10%
4. Presentation from the qualitative data collected 5. Final report (detailed MS Powerpoint report)	31 October, 2024	30%
6. Signed or verbal consent from every research participant, including surveys, FGDs, and IDIs 7. Recordings of discussions (If the recording is not available detailed notes from the discussion/interview)	18 October 2024	20%
8. Spreadsheet with FGD and IDI participants' details including unique ID, an assigned pseudonym, and details collected through screening questionnaire		
9. Complete set of word to word transcripts of FGDs, IDIs, and KIIs in the language that discussions were conducted. [Transcripts should be submitted with all discussion details (eg: type of protocol, location, date, sample category, name of the moderator) stated in each transcript. Unique Identifications should be assigned each respondent when transcribing the records (eg: R1, R2...)] 10. Complete set of word to word English language transcripts of FGDs, IDIs and KIIs, if the the discussion/interview conducted in local languages: Sinhala or Tamil. [Transcripts should be submitted with all discussion details (eg: type of protocol, location, date, sample category, name of the moderator) stated in each transcript. Unique IDs	31 October 2024	40%

<p>should be assigned each respondent when transcribing the records (eg: R1, R2...)Field 11. Photographs (1-2 photographs of each FGD/IDI) 12. Methodology note (Qualitative Phase)</p>		
<p>Assistance with queries on data and methodology</p>	<p>Although all final payments will have been made to the Consultant by this point, it is expected that the Consultant will continue to work with the Client by responding to queries if any thereafter.</p>	

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

The consultant shall raise invoice only upon the Client approving a given deliverable(s).

The Client shall make payments no later than 14 days of receiving invoice from the consultant.