

Terms of reference (ToRs) for the procurement of services below the EU threshold

Digital Advisory Application Survey	Project number/ cost centre:
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0. List of abbreviations

AG	Commissioning party
AN	Contractor
AVB	General Terms and Conditions of Contract for supplying services and work
FK	Expert
FKT	Expert days
KZFK	Short-term expert
ToRs	Terms of reference

The Special Initiative "**Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems**" is a global initiative of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Federal Government of Germany, launched in 2014. It addresses a wide variety of topics in the field of agriculture, food and nutrition security, and rural development. The global programme '**Soil Protection and Rehabilitation for Food Security**' project has been commissioned under this initiative and is implemented by GIZ together with partner agencies since 2015 in seven countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, India, Madagascar, and Tunisia. The program's strategy aims at achieving the broadest possible impact by implementing tried-and-tested approaches in soil protection and rehabilitation of degraded soils and adapting them to new contexts as well as promoting innovations and lessons learned.

In India, the project 'Soil Protection and Rehabilitation for Food Security in India' (ProSoil) is implementing sustainable approaches for the protection and rehabilitation of degraded soils, including soil fertility management, in 7 districts of two states (Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra). The project is implemented by GIZ together with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and three implementing NGOs named – BAIF Research Development Foundation (BAIF), Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR), and Foundation for Ecological Security (FES). These NGOs are directly working on the grassroots with smallholder farmers in Maharashtra (Yavatmal, Jalna, Dhule, Ahmednagar, Amravati) and Madhya Pradesh (Balaghat and Mandla) building their capacities, providing training on sustainable soil management implementing measures for soil protection and rehabilitation.

1. Context

The ProSoil project aims to enlarge its outreach to farmers within the mentioned districts and develop a knowledge ecosystem for farmers by sending out Sustainable Soil Management advisories by using a digital platform name - niceSSM (Network for information on climate exchange). niceSSM is a web-based open-source platform that enables two-way communication to link farmers' need for technical knowledge to experts from state universities on a real-time basis. The use of the digital platform is being institutionalized with the agriculture extension workers of the state universities in Madhya Pradesh (JNKVV- Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwavidyalaya) and Maharashtra (MPKV - Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Rahuri). These universities will be sending out seasonal advisories to the registered farmers in different formats. In the integration process, the state universities have adapted the niceSSM information (farmers list/data) and have been sending out messages to the registered farmers through the Phule Balraja (MPKV) and Balram mobile app (JNKVV). The contracting agency will be assessing the application of these distributed advisories among the registered farmers. The results of the study will be reported against the output indicator 1.1 mentioned below.

Output 1.1: 28% of the 373.374 smallholder farmers involved, of which 24% are women, adopt the promoted packages of measures that are suitable for adapting to climate change.

Indicator Features and Context for the study -

Under the indicator, there are two approaches for reaching out to 373.374 smallholder farmers in the mentioned locations. –

Under the direct intervention approach, an area of 55,000 ha has been leveraged from the previous project on watershed development. ProSoil project intends to cover 55.000 smallholder farmers (assumption 1 hac=1farmer) by implementing agriculture interventions in five districts of Maharashtra (Ahmednagar, Amravati, Dhule, Jalna, and Yavatmal) and two

districts of Madhya Pradesh (Balaghat and Mandla). The NGOs working in these areas are responsible for the on-ground implementation of the project, including project preparation, capacity building, and training at the community level, reporting the progress, stakeholder consultations, etc.

To increase the outreach of its agricultural interventions, the niceSSM (Network for Information on Climate Exchange) intends to reach out to around 455.200 farmers including the NGO intervention areas within the project districts mentioned in the description. Out of which the assumption is send the advisories to 341,000 registered farmers. These registered farmers are integrated in the university system through the applications used by them. The selected consulting organisation will be taking out sample from the registered farmers and will be asking the questions for ensuring the application of the advisories at the field level by the farmers.

Farmers receive SSM (Sustainable Soil Management) advisories through both digital and analogue channels such as android applications, social media, illustrative posters, village notice boards, SMS, in-person interactions, and video sharing sites, facilitated by trained extension agents. These extension agents use android tablets to disseminate advisories to farmers customized up to farm-level needs. At state level, the State agriculture universities (JNKVV and MPKV) and the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) at the district level use the niceSSM platform short advisories accurate for each farmer based on the weather, soil type, and cropping patterns relevant to farmers' field. The advisory developed for dissemination is based on the promoted package of measures defined under the indicator as follows:

- I. Efficient water management
- II. Soil fertility management
- III. Soil protection & water conservation
- IV. Common property resource management/rehabilitation of land
- V. Crop management

The streamlining of the niceSSM platform has been facilitated through the following mainstreaming strategies:

- Handing over of niceSSM to two Partner State Agriculture Universities, JNKVV, Jabalpur from Madhya Pardesh and MPKV, Rahuri from Maharashtra
- Integrating niceSSM into existing Information and communications technology-enabled agriculture extension services. Here it has been the apps used by the universities name - Phule Balraja (MPKV) and Balram mobile app (JNKVV).
- Development of Supporting standard operating procedures, guidelines, Govt. communication from the Department of Agriculture
- Disseminating the advisories to niceSSM registered farmers

The Consulting firm will be assessing the application of the advisories disseminated at the field level (arranged in line with the package of measures promoted) through the digital platform name - niceSSM or Balram app or Phule balraja app consecutively for two years (2023 and 2024). The registered farmers list will be collected from the Universities' apps. The data will

be analysed and the changes in the application of the digital advisories disseminated will be reported at the end of each year's survey. The Agency will be conducting the data through telephonic/virtual interviews with a sample of representative farmers through using guiding questions in digital structured tool. The sample size calculated for each year will be approx. 600 farmers (Sample size calculation done for registered farmers with 95% of Confidence Level and 5% of Margin of Error.) The results analysis of these responses will entail the % of people who applied the SSM measures shared through the digital advisory application based on the indicator definition. The scope of work is classified under the following focus areas:

I. Delivery & receipt of advisories

Under the digital approach, the package of measures is promoted in the form of weather, soil health, cropping, and feedback advisories. Therefore, the assessment of the application of the promoted packages of measures can be established only once the effectiveness of the advisory process on the digital advisory platform is ascertained. The assessment of the advisory process requires the measurement of its delivery and receipt on the digital advisory platform.

Data about the delivery of the advisories is established from the system-generated reports via the digital advisory application such as farmers registered, the socio-economic profile of the registered farmers, multidisciplinary advisories generated, etc. This requires a further review of the receipt of advisories, captured through the registered farmers' feedback on the advisories disseminated through the digital advisory application. Some of the guiding questions include:

- a. How frequently do the registered farmers receive the advisories through the niceSSM application?
- b. How frequently do the registered farmers take benefits of the digital advisory application?
- c. What is the response time of the queries/feedback sent by the registered farmers?
- d. What type of advisories application by the farmers through the digital advisory platform?

2. Application

Under this component, the application of the package of measures promoted through the digital advisory platform of weather, soil health cropping, and feedback advisories is assessed. The description in the indicator definition sheet is to be considered for the difference in the application and adoption of digital advisories. Since the adoption of any advisory require intensive efforts and does take time to show results, the study will be limited to assessing the application of the advisories at the field level based on the following criteria:

- implementation of a technology package (set of measures) applied by the farmers
- a combination of 3 technologies packages out of 5 promoted (at least one activity from each package)

The measurement of the application rate is primarily quantitative in nature. However, certain qualitative factors such as the needs and profile of the registered farmers viz. weather conditions, cropping history, and cropping season could also be captured via the registered farmer's feedback. Some of the guiding questions include:

- a. Does the farmer adopt/apply the advisory in his farm practice?
- b. Does the farmer intends to continue applying it?

3. Attribution of spill-over effects

The study assignment further assesses the indirect effects via spill-over (e.g., in the extended kinship or neighbourhood, within peasant organizations), of the digital approach to derive the beneficiaries reached through the project. The methodology to capture the spill-over effects must account for the overlaps between different target groups of the project i.e. the farmers receiving the digital intervention and the indirect beneficiaries i.e. farmers receiving no digital or direct intervention. Some of the guiding questions include:

- a. How many of the registered farmers of niceSSM, discuss the received advisories with their neighbours, relatives, or other farmers?
- b. How many of the registered farmers of niceSSM, forward the received advisories to their neighbors, relatives, or other farmers?
- c. How many of the farmers recommend the installation of digital applications to their neighbors, relatives, or other farmers?

To include a comparison between the 2023 and 2024 results, a dedicated section could be added to the report that describes any similarities or differences between the two sets of findings and provides an analysis of any patterns or trends that have emerged. This section could be called "Comparison of 2023 and 2024 Results."

To incorporate an overall conclusion in the 2024 report considering the termination of the project, a separate section has to be created that summarizes the project's findings, implications, and any recommendations for future research or action. This section could be titled "Final Conclusions and Recommendations."

To ensure that the results are available by the time needed, clear timelines and deadlines for data collection, analysis, and report writing could be established. Other team members or stakeholders could also be involved to ensure that the final report is comprehensive and well-written.

- a. GIZ shall hire the contractor for the anticipated contract term, from 01 July 2023 to 15th June 2024

4. Tasks to be performed by the contractor.

The contractor is responsible for providing the following services:

- Development of survey methodology for assessing technology packages used by farmers, including sample size of 600 and telephonic data collection.
- Review of project documents and existing work, including niceSSM platform and past studies.
- Developing a questionnaire with guiding questions for each focus area
- Sampling representative farmers who received the digital advisory application
- Collecting accurate and reliable data in a structured format prepared on survey solutions
- Conducting telephonic/virtual interviews with selected farmers
- Analyzing the data to determine the % of farmers who applied the SSM measures

- Preparing a concise report that summarizes the findings in a clear and professional manner.

In addition to the reports required by GIZ in accordance with the AVB, the contractor submits the following reports:

- Inception Report
- Final Report of the study for both the years
- Master data sheets along with the analysis
- Presentation sharing the results (2023 and 2024)

The contractor shall observe the local data protection laws in the fulfilment of its performance obligations and shall protect and disseminate the contact data received accordingly and shall not use them for any other purposes.

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones/process steps/partial services	Deadline/place/person responsible
Submission of the Inception report	7th July 2023
Tool Development and data collection format	14th July 2023
Analysed data with the master data sheets for 2023 data collection	8th August 2023
Results Presentation to stakeholders	30 th August 2023
Final Report for 2023 Application Status	10 September 2023
Inception report for 2024 study	7 th May 2024
Updated tool and data collection format	14 th May 2024
Analysed data with the Master Sheet for 2024 data collection	8 th June 2024
Results Presentation to stakeholders	10 th June 2024
Final Report for 2023 Application Status	15 th June 2024

Period of assignment: from 01 July 2023 until 15th June 2024.

5. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show *how* the objectives defined in Chapter 4 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept). In addition, the tenderer must describe the project management system for service provision.

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 0 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 4 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

The tenderer is required to present the actors relevant for the services for which it is responsible and describe the **cooperation (1.2)** with them.

The tender is required to have a steering structure to steer the measures with the project partners. The approach and process of steering structure is described with the project partners in the section (1.3.1)

The tenderer is required to describe the key **processes** for the services for which it is responsible and create a schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 4 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided. In particular, the tenderer is required to describe the necessary work steps and, if applicable, take account of the milestones and **contributions** of other actors (partner contributions) in accordance with Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) (1.4.2).

Project management of the contractor (1.6)

The tenderer is required to explain its approach for coordination with the GIZ project. In particular, the project management requirements specified in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) must be explained in detail.

The tenderer is required to describe its backstopping concept. The following services are part of the standard backstopping package, which (like ancillary personnel costs) must be factored into the fee schedules of the staff listed in the tender in accordance with Section 3.3.1 of the GIZ AVB:

- Service-delivery control
- Managing adaptations to changing conditions
- Ensuring the flow of information between the tenderer and GIZ
- Assuming personnel responsibility for the contractor's experts
- Process-oriented steering for implementation of the commission
- Securing the administrative conclusion of the project

6. Criteria for Eligibility of firms

The eligibility criteria for the firms include the following points-

1. The average annual turnover for the last three financial years should be at least 50.000 EURO
2. The number of employees as at 31.12 of the previous year has to be minimum 10
3. There is a minimum requirement of at least 5 reference projects in technical area of Evaluation of Digital Applications and at least 3 reference projects in Natural Resources Management Practices with a commission value of 10.000 Euro.

The weighted criteria for the assessing the eligibility of the firms has been divided into three categories –

1. **Technical Experience** – The firm should have experience in Natural Resource Management (20%), Digital adoption study (20%), Development research (20%) and in Data collection through telephonic survey (20%).

2. Regional Experience – The regional experience of working in India (20%).

- **Personnel concept**

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, based on their CVs (see Chapter □), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

Team leader

Tasks of the team leader

- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor (quality and deadlines)
- Coordinating and ensuring communication with GIZ, partners and relevant project stakeholders
- Personal Management.
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines.
- Overseeing the study in a professional and ethical manner.
- Developing the study design with the contractor.
- Managing the research team and providing guidance and support.
- Ensuring the accuracy, completeness, and reliability of the data.
- Overseeing the data analysis process and interpreting the results.
- **Lead and ensure timely, stakeholder-involved, and comprehensive report writing for dedicated sections of the 2024 report: "Comparison of 2023 and 2024 Results" and "Final Conclusions and Recommendations".**
- Presenting the findings to stakeholders in a clear and concise manner

Qualifications of the team leader

- Education/training (2.1.1): university degree (German 'Diplom'/Master/equivalent) in agriculture/economics/statistics/social science
- Language (2.1.2): C1-level language proficiency in Hindi and English
- General professional experience (2.1.3): 10 years of professional experience in the agricultural research or advisory projects sector
- Specific professional experience (2.1.4): 3 years in digital technologies in agriculture with a strong background in data analysis and conducting evaluations
- Leadership/Management Experience (2.1.5): **5 years in the leadership management role for evaluations in development sector**

Key expert 1 (3 Research Associates)

Tasks of key expert 1:

- Collect data from farmers through telephonic/virtual interviews
- Ensure accuracy and completeness of data collected
- Organize and manage the data collected for easy analysis
- Assist the data analysis team and provide insights
- Prepare draft reports and assist the team leader in preparing the final report
- Follow ethical guidelines and maintain confidentiality
- Communicate regularly with the team leader.

Qualifications of key expert 1

- Education/training (2.2.1): master's degree in agriculture/ economics/ statistics/ social science or related fields
- Language (2.2.2): C1 -level language proficiency in Hindi, Marathi and english
- General professional experience (2.2.3): 5 years of experience in conducting adoption studies/survey
- Specific professional experience (2.2.4): Conducting telephonic interview and using digital applications for data collection
- Regional experience (2.2.6): Maharashtra or Madhya Pradesh
- Other (2.2.8): Familiarity with the use of digital technologies in agriculture would be an advantage.

Key expert 2 – Data Analyst

Tasks of key expert 2:

- Cleaning and organizing data.
- Developing a data analysis plan
- Conducting data analysis
- Interpreting results and providing recommendations
- Validating results through statistical tests and sensitivity analyses
- Preparing draft reports and assisting the team leader
- Ensuring data security and confidentiality
- Communicating regularly with the team leader.

Qualifications of key expert 2

- Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree in statistics/ data science/mathematics/ economics or related fields
- General professional experience (2.2.3): 5 years of relevant work experience in data analysis, statistical modeling, or related fields
- Specific professional experience (2.2.4): Proficiency in statistical software and data collection softwares

Soft skills of team members

In addition to their specialist qualifications, the following qualifications are required of team members:

- Team skills
- Initiative
- Communication skills
- Socio-cultural skills
- Efficient, partner- and client-focused working methods
- Interdisciplinary thinking

The tenderer must provide a clear overview of all proposed experts and their individual qualifications.

- **Costing requirements**

Assignment of personnel and travel expenses

The study does not currently require any accommodation, per diem costs as the travel budget is only for presentations or half-day meetings. However, if the project evaluation team or

ProSoil staff require a longer duration, accommodation costs may be incurred based on approval.

Local Travel and the cost of flights and other main forms of transport can be reimbursed against evidence.

All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project.

Sustainability aspects for travel

GIZ would like to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest-emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with a higher CO₂ efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

If they cannot be avoided, CO₂ emissions caused by air travel should be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

There are many different providers in the market for emissions certificates, and they have different climate impact ambitions. The [Development and Climate Alliance \(German only\)](#) has published a [list of standards \(German only\)](#). GIZ recommends using the standards specified there.

Specify the domestic travel sectors from which your team will be travelling. Please refer the following mentioned sectors in country of assignment.

Particular	Travel Sector	Travel Mode
Team Leader	Delhi, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh	Air/Train Travel
Particular	Travel Sector	Travel Mode
Local Travel	Delhi, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh	Taxi

Specification of inputs

Fee days	Number of experts	Number of days per expert	Total	Comments
Team Leader	1	35	35	
Research Associate	3	46	138	
Data Analyst	1	10	10	

Travel expenses	Quantity	Price	Total	Comments
Per-diem allowance in country of assignment				
Overnight allowance in country of assignment weekends can be reimbursed between the fee days.				
Transport	Quantity	Price	Total	Comments
International flights				Travel to the place of service delivery
Domestic flights	6		6	Travel sectors: Delhi, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh
CO₂ compensation for air travel				A budget is earmarked for settling carbon offsets against evidence.
Travel expenses (train, car)	6		6	Local travel related to project assignment
Other travel expenses				e.g. visa costs
Fixed travel budget				A budget is earmarked for travel to the following countries: You can find further information on the travel expense budget in the 'Price schedule' document. Please use the 'Explanations' column in the price schedule to break down the individual items. Settlement is possible only until the budget is depleted.
Other costs	Number	Price	Total	Comments
Flexible remuneration <i>Please calculate a number corresponding to approximately 10% of the contract value and specify this</i>	15	EUR 200	3000	A budget of EUR 3000 is foreseen for flexible remuneration. Please incorporate this budget into the price schedule.

<p><i>amount in the specification of inputs.</i></p> <p><i>In accordance with Section 3.3.5.7 AVB, when the flexible remuneration item is used, the contractually agreed amounts may be exceeded up to the amount of this budget item. This can be used only for cost items specified in the original agreement.</i></p> <p><i>The contractually agreed individual rates (e.g. amount of air travel expenses) and type of settlement (against evidence or flat rate) may not be changed.</i></p>				Use of the flexible remuneration item requires prior written approval from GIZ.
Workshops	2		2	Online presentation or workshop must be conducted. The online training recording will be submitted to GIZ.
Subcontracts				The budget contains the following costs .
Procurement of materials and equipment				The budget contains the following costs .
Local subsidies				The contractor administers the following local subsidies in accordance with Section 2.7 AVB: .
Other costs				The budget contains the following costs .

Workshops and training

Please describe in your concept how you implement GIZ's minimum standards for sustainable event management (see annexes to the terms of reference).

The contractor implements the following workshops/study trips/training courses:

- Two Online trainings/ workshops

- **Inputs of GIZ or other actors**

GIZ and/or other actors are expected to make the following available:

- *In special cases*, workstations on GIZ premises ()
- Transportation on site with own project vehicle
- Logistics for workshops:

- **Requirements on the format of the tender**

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToRs. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English (language).

The complete tender must not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter □ of the ToRs must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long. The CVs can also be submitted in English (language).

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule.

Requirements on the format of the tender for the option

Please submit two price schedules: one price schedule for the main service and one price schedule for the optional service. Please designate each one in the file name.