**Scope of Work**

**Independent Consultant Pesticides and Fertilizers**

**Proposal for Feed the Future Nepal USAID Agricultural Transformation**

1. **Background**

Heifer International (Heifer) plans to serve as the prime in a consortium that will respond to the “Feed the Future Nepal USAID Agricultural Transformation” activity. The goal of the activity is to catalyze transformation of Nepal’s agricultural sector required for inclusive economic growth. The four (4) objectives of the activity are to:

* Increase agricultural productivity, competitiveness, and diversification.
* Improve the environment for enabling private sector investment in agriculture and equitable access to market systems.
* Enhance climate and economic resilience of women, youth, and marginalized communities; and
* Strengthen capacity of national agricultural research institutions and extension systems.

The activity will focus on fine rice, industrial maize, lentils, high-value vegetables, and goat value chains.

As prime of the consortium, Heifer will lead program design and the technical and cost proposal development. The proposal will be developed through a collaborative design process through both in-person and remote platforms.

1. **Identified Need**

Heifer seeks an independent consultant with deep expertise in the supply, storage, and application of fertilizers and pesticides in Nepal agriculture, especially within fine rice and industrial maize value chains, to provide technical guidance regarding government regulations and environmental mitigation management in Nepal. The independent consultant should have relevant expertise and knowledge that can inform a technical response to a hypothetical scenario in Nepal involving stockpiles of unused chemical pesticides and fertilizer intended for local agricultural usage that are posing a threat to the environment and residents of the municipality (the hypothetical technical scenario outlined in the Request for Proposals for the “Feed the Future Nepal USAID Agricultural Transformation” activity). The work of the independent consultant will be directed by the Heifer Proposal Design team leads.

1. **Objectives**

As part of the delivery of the Services and/or Goods, the consultant shall accomplish the following:

* Participate in an orientation meeting with the Heifer Proposal Design team leads.
* Conduct targeted desk research on the following topics to prepare for discussions with the Heifer Proposal Design team (though the current focus is the western terai region, this is subject to change should the Request for Proposal hypothetical scenario be updated to focus on a different geographical region of Nepal):
  + Access to fertilizer challenges, legal vs. informal fertilizer supplies, distribution and logistics, application equipment and methods, mechanization usage and challenges.
  + Potential fertilizer supply, access, and distribution policy reforms.
  + Environmental regulations, government agencies, and mitigation and stakeholders' management processes for fertilizer and/or pesticide leakage and contamination.
  + Specific capacity and management challenges of the parastatal and government agencies responsible for the import, storage, handling, management, and distribution of fertilizers and pesticides.
  + How fertilizers (urea, di-ammonium phosphate, muriate of potash) and pesticides are imported into the terai region.
  + How the Agriculture Input Corporation Limited (AICL) and the Salt Trading Corporation Limited (STCL) import fertilizers into the terai region and the agencies at the municipal level responsible for its handling and storage including sales distribution processes amongst stakeholders (e.g., direct to farmers; via agro-dealers; via agro-vets);
  + Typical storage conditions for fertilizers and pesticides at the municipal level.
  + Typical farm household fertilizer application and recommended fertilizer rates for industrial maize and fine rice in the western terai region.
  + Suggestions on roles of the Junior Technical Assistants, Agricultural Knowledge Centers, Cooperatives and self-help groups, agro-dealers, agro-vets and AICL and/or STCL in managing the distribution, subsidies and use of fertilizers and pesticides in western terai region; and
  + Recommendations on the types of pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, fungicides) which are most commonly applied to rice and maize in the terai region.
* Provide relevant reports, documents, policies, and regulation information regarding the hypothetical scenario as soon as they are identified.
* Participate in a daily half hour conversation in afternoon or early evening (Nepal time) with Heifer Proposal Design Team leads (based on Nepal and US) during the week of November 5 to 12, 2023, and reasonably thereafter prior to the submission of the Phase 1 concept note for the proposal (as needed and mutually agreed upon in writing);
* Provide technical guidance in technical design meetings with the Heifer Proposal Design team as needed; and
* Summarize recommendations to help formulate solutions as part of the response to the hypothetical technical scenario outlined in the Request for Proposals for the “Feed the Future Nepal USAID Agricultural Transformation” activity.

1. **Deliverables**

As part of the consultant’s delivery of the Services and/or Goods, the consultant shall present and/or accomplish the following:

* Bullet points capturing observations and reflections about the hypothetical technical scenario outlined in the Request for Proposals for the “Feed the Future Nepal USAID Agricultural Transformation” activity.
* Relevant reports, documents, policies, and regulation information regarding the hypothetical scenario; and
* Written summary of recommendations and proposed solutions as part of the response to the hypothetical technical scenario.

1. **The expected level of effort** for this activity shall be up to ten (10) working days. The level of effort may be non-consecutive and spread over a period of days.

1. **Travel requirements**

The consultant is expected to conduct in-person and virtual meetings with Heifer Proposal Design team and potentially travel to a district in the western terai region (to be determined upon discussion with Heifer) to collect information and gather technical knowledge for recommendations to feed the design process.

1. **Expected completion dates for deliverables.**

All deliverables should be completed prior to the submission of the Phase 1 concept note for the proposal, the deadline for which is currently November 22, 2023, but subject to change, unless otherwise agreed in writing between the Parties (email shall suffice). Heifer Proposal Design Team leads will establish deadlines for specific deliverables in writing with the consultant (email shall suffice).

1. **Desired Qualifications:**

* Proven expertise and experience in the pesticides and fertilizers agricultural industry, environmental impacts of pesticides and fertilizers, studies, and research.
* Deep contextual understanding of the southern and western terai regions in Nepal, or another Nepali region as mutually agreed upon with Heifer.
* Ability to travel to field designated areas to collect data/information as needed.
* Excellent team player with ability to work independently and in collaboration with proposal team members.
* Fluency in written and spoken English.
* Flexibility in working and attending team meetings that may be outside of traditional work hours, due to proposal design team members living in multiple time zones and the need to meet tight deadlines.