

Request for Proposal (RFP)
Micronutrient Fortification Index (MFI): Methodology Audit Consultant

Date: August 17, 2021

Subject: Request for Proposal

TechnoServe Inc. (TNS) – Nigeria, invites your firm to participate in this competitive solicitation for pricing, delivery and terms of potential sale on the following service for TNS office in Nigeria.

1. Introduction to the MFI Program

Food fortification, in which essential micronutrients are added during food processing, has been widely identified as a cost-effective strategy for addressing micronutrient malnutrition at scale. Undernutrition can lead to lifelong consequences, increasing the risk of impaired physical and cognitive development, and of diminished productive capacity. TechnoServe's (TNS) Strengthening African Processors for Food Fortification (SAPFF) project takes a holistic approach to addressing this challenge by working to strengthen the enabling environment that promotes the competitive, healthy and effective production of fortified foods.

TechnoServe (TNS), an international non-profit that promotes business solutions to poverty in the developing world by linking people to information, capital and markets, manages the ***Strengthening African Processors for Food Fortification (SAPFF)*** project which takes a holistic approach to addressing this challenge by working to strengthen the enabling environment that promotes the competitive, healthy and effective production of fortified foods. The programme is funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to increase the availability of nutritious foods in Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania.

This ***Micronutrient Fortification Index (MFI)*** ranks company performance in food fortification in regard to compliance with national standards. It forms part of a suite of SAPFF programme solutions, and specifically exists to support existing regulatory systems with an industry-driven initiative that effectively differentiates between compliant and non-compliant companies, illustrates the characteristics aligned to fortification compliance, and serves as a pathway to promote competitive business practices amongst participants on a voluntary basis. The MFI framework is made up of a number of indicators referred to as ***the 4PG***, an acronym that reflects the coverage areas – Personnel, Production Processes, Procurement & Suppliers, Public Engagement & Governance.

At the core of the MFI is a self-assessment (SA) tool that participating companies will own and update at intervals. The second component of the MFI system involves periodic independent testing of products while the third component of the MFI tripod involves the indirect validation of the SA outputs through stakeholder feedback done by a body of experts. This body of relevant stakeholders (buyers/consumers, related industry representatives, independent experts) called the Industry Expert Group (IEG) will arrive at a moderated opinion of each participating company based on their market intelligence as well as knowledge of the industry involved. These three aspects, each weighted for relevance, all feed into an overall score (i.e. 60% for Self-Assessment aspect, 20% for the Product Testing aspect and 20% for the Industry Expert Group aspect) presented in a dashboard that consolidates all the constituent parts of the MFI. The dashboard may include a short narrative report to put context on the performance of the organisation being assessed.

HEADQUARTERS

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2. MFI Project Background & Rationale

The MFI approach splices concepts of quality and is anchored in the creation of a ‘product’ that consists of qualities that consumers desire to attain and can pursue through a series of steps that lead to a behavioural change in the medium to long term. This approach has already been seen to work in other sectors, such as in corporate governance where industry-based initiative, such as a publicly available index, serves as a commercial incentive for corporations to maintain or grow market share, rather than have to justify their non-participation or risk adverse consumer reactions to same¹. There are examples of how these initiatives (e.g. in corporate governance and anti-corruption) have successfully delivered a substantial increase in compliance. The non-reliance on a state-funded regulatory body for the delivery of this initiative is an important element in its design and operation.

As with corporate governance, the mere existence of clear regulatory requirements for micronutrient fortification has not been an effective driver for performance in Nigeria. The development of a fortification index therefore serves as a pathway towards the achievement of better all-round quality, performance, and governance, with better performing businesses able to distinguish themselves, and others aspiring to achieve same. When delivered in tandem with advocacy and public enlightenment, an index could also serve as a potent tool to drive systemic and behavioural change in the market.

The 2018 CEO Forum, co-hosted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Aliko Dangote Foundation (ADF), with both Bill Gates and Alhaji Aliko Dangote in attendance, marked the birth of the MFI program and its framework was developed with active engagement, support and buy-in from the industry.

3. MFI Methodology

The MFI currently targets processors of food products that are mandatorily required to be fortified with key micronutrients, in effect to meet a legal product description. In order to create a tool that could be operationalized by these food processors, the framework should take holistic cognizance of linkages with other aspects of business activities that can impact micronutrient fortification thereby deeply entrenching fortification in all business activities. This approach compels food processing companies to be deliberate and strategic about their food fortification efforts and provides ideas of policies and processes that should be in place for effective micronutrient fortification.

Hence, the 4PG framework approach was developed with the 4PG being an acronym for the following systemic indicators – **P**ersonnel, **P**roduction, **P**rocurement & **P**artnerships, **P**ublic Engagement and **G**overnance (4PG).

- Personnel (23%)
- Production (20%)
- Procurement & Partnerships (15%)
- Public Engagement (17%)
- Governance (25%)

¹ The Novomercado in Brazil and the Corporate Governance Rating System (CGRS) in Nigeria

4. Objectives of the Methodology Audit

The primary objective of the methodology audit is to review the current iteration of the MFI: the concept, framework, governance, tools and processes against public index good/best practices as well as establish their direct or indirect contribution towards the overarching goal of increasing food fortification compliance and excellence in Nigeria. This includes reviewing the performance of each component against its expected outcomes/impact and proffering recommendations on how these processes can be optimized.

5. Responsibilities of the MFI Methodology Auditor

The Consultant will carry out the following tasks:

- Review the MFI concept, framework, governance, tools and processes and components against international standards and performance.
- Conduct an in-depth comparative analysis on relevant indices and best practice
- Conduct workshop or brainstorming sessions with relevant internal stakeholders & external partners (as identified in collaboration with the project team).
- Submit a detailed assessment report on audit findings and recommendations, which will include, but not limited to, the following factors:
 1. Areas of alignment and divergence with reference indices
 2. SWOT analysis of current MFI methodology and tools
 3. Risk mitigation strategies
 4. Suggestions around potential re-calibrations of weightings
 5. Opportunities for refinements, evolution and continuous improvement

6. Responsibilities of the MFI Team

- Provide technical support, information, materials, and resources relevant to the delivery of all tasks.
- Support the consultant with accessibility and availability to workshop ideas suggested.
- Support the identification of relevant stakeholders to engage during the exercise.
- Review deliverables and share feedback in a timely manner.

7. Budget

Please submit a budget including all expenses related to the audit activities as well as other administrative and professional fees. A proper breakdown of unit costs, quantities/number of days and total costs should be clearly stated for each activity outlined in the proposal.

8. Payment and Deliverables

Payment will be made in the following stages –

Deliverable 1 – Desktop Research

Deliverable 2- Stakeholder Interviews and Workshop

Deliverable 3- Final Report

9. Timeframe

The duration of the service contract will be from August 30th to September 9th, 2021. However, this engagement should not surpass 7 total billable consultancy days within the same period.

10. Required competencies

- Sound (industry or academic) knowledge of public indexes, preferably linked to developmental indices – healthcare, nutrition, SDGs, or program sustainability would be given preference.
- Proven experience in business, program system reviews or audits of national or international level entities.
- Excellent communication skills especially in report writing, conducting interviews, facilitating informational sessions or workshops.
- Experience coordinating mind-mapping activities, workshops, and capacity & process development sessions.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The evaluation of each response to this RFP will be based on the requirements set out in the solicitation and any addenda thereto. At the sole discretion of TNS, the top proposals may be selected for follow-up questions or to provide an oral presentation.

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

Technical Proposal – 40%		
Assignment Approach/Methodology	10 points (maximum)	40 total points
Quality of Work Plan	20 points (maximum)	
Project Deliverables	10 points (maximum)	
Management Proposal -30%		
Description of Internal Controls	15 points (maximum)	30 total points
Experience of firm	15 points (maximum)	
Cost Proposal – 30%	30 points (maximum)	30 total points
TOTAL		100 POINTS

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the organization whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of and most advantageous to TNS and the Donor.

TechnoServe will not award a contract to any bidder where there is indication of a lack of business integrity.

The Organization with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Those who were not selected may or may not be notified, at the sole discretion of TNS.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
2. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated below. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for entire period provided by respondent or required by RFP.
5. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
6. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.

7. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
8. All information provided by TNS in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
9. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
10. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.
11. Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

FORM/CONTENT OF RESPONSE

1. Be in the English language.
2. Contain detailed cost in Nigerian Naira, with applicable Tax/Charges clearly identified. Please note that TNS Nigeria has its tax-exempt status and also a government agent for the withholding of relevant taxes such as (Withholding Tax) and remits same to the government.
3. Provide organization's Tax Identification Number and indicated the Tax Authority.
4. Provide requested payment terms and conditions.
5. Describe the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the firm in providing the type of services being request by this RFP. Resumes or CVs of "key personnel" shall be submitted as an attachment.
6. Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between TNS and the submitting organization.
7. Email subject must contain "**Application and Proposal for MFI Methodology Audit Consultant**"
8. A brief outline of the organization and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company
 - Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President and / or Chief Executive Officer, and all other officers and senior managers of the company
 - Year business was established
9. Applicants are requested to submit an offer will also include:
 - company profile (including number of personnel and references);
 - a proposal on how they intend to undertake this assignment; and
 - a comprehensive budget

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1. Questions regarding this request should be sent to procurementng@tns.org, and must be received no later than a week after publication. Responses to questions will be distributed to all interested parties no later than three days before submission deadline.
2. Responses to the RFQ should be addressed to TechnoServe Nigeria, email procurementng@tns.org **no later than August 24th, 2021; 17h00 WAT.**