



Responses to RFP Questions for Solidarity Center Global Labor Evaluation Solicitation

1.1 Background and Purpose

1. Can more information be provided on the portfolio of USG-funded international labor programs within the scope in terms of its coverage (thematic, amounts, grantees, locations, etc.)?

The RFP summarizes the USG-funded portfolio on page 7 under *Geographic Scope*. Additional details about the portfolio themes, funding amounts, implementing partners, locations, etc. will be shared only with the selected evaluation team. Applicants should refer to the refined list of the current sampling pool in SC's response to question 21.

2. Is there a specific timeframe or thematic focus for evaluating the selected programs, such as evaluating only certain years or particular themes? Additionally, will the evaluation include projects solely implemented by SC, or will it also encompass those managed by other organizations?

The evaluation will assess recently closed or active programs that have been in place long enough to generate measurable outcomes and impacts or are projected to be sufficiently advanced by mid-2025 to generate meaningful insights and support an effective evaluation of its progress. The Global Labor Evaluation will cover programming and projects implemented by several different organizations and implementing partners (IPs) funded by the same donor.

3. The RFP refers to a participatory evaluation that the SC was selected to co-manage in September 2023. Can the SC elaborate on what co-management entails, what the role of this procurement is in the evaluation, and whether it is for a separate activity?

The Global Labor Evaluation is the participatory evaluation referenced in the RFP. In September 2023, the SC was selected to co-manage the Global Labor Evaluation alongside the donor. The SC is responsible for overseeing the evaluation process, including the procurement process and the awarding of the evaluation contract to a qualified applicant through this current Request for Proposals (RFP). "Co-manage" in this context means that both SC and the donor will jointly oversee the management of the evaluation. While the evaluation firm will be responsible for independently conducting all aspects of the evaluation, the SC and the donor will provide oversight by reviewing and approving key deliverables throughout the process.

The evaluation firm will be expected to take the lead on all evaluation activities, ensuring they are executed effectively, while SC and the donor will maintain a collaborative role in quality control and strategic guidance.

4. The RFP states "The selected evaluation firms..." How many evaluation firms will be selected under this mechanism? If there is more than one, what will their roles be?

Per page 1 of the RFP, the SC anticipates awarding one contract to an evaluation firm capable of carrying out the full scope of work as outlined in the RFP. The cited text above has been revised in the RFP to make clear that only one firm is anticipated to be selected.

- 5. The RFP states that the contractor will receive a "detailed labor framework." Is that framework the same as the strategic framework(s) mentioned previously? Could SC please provide the current "global labor framework" and indicators?**

The detailed labor framework refers to the same strategic framework mentioned in the RFP. The evaluation of this framework will be a central aspect of the evaluation conducted by the selected evaluation team. As stated in the RFP, the Global Labor Evaluation aims to test the labor strategic framework related to the international labor programs being evaluated. This process will yield an evidence-based refinement of the strategic framework for the labor portfolio, highlighting its connections to enhancing democracy and expanding human rights protections. The SC will only provide the global labor framework and indicators to the selected evaluation team.

1.2 Scope of Work, Evaluation Tasks, and Deliverables

- 6. Could the SC provide more information about the documents/records to be reviewed during the Desk-Based Review?**

Applicants should anticipate that documents and archival records will cover a comprehensive range of materials that includes program reports, monitoring and evaluation documents, internal assessments, and relevant materials that provide programmatic context and progress. The documents and records will primarily focus on selected programs within the countries targeted for the evaluation. Additionally, other documents outside of these selected programs may also be provided if they are relevant to the strategic objectives of the evaluation. This approach ensures that the review is aligned with evaluation goals while still capturing pertinent information from a broader context.

- 7. Will the Solidarity Center provide a list of potential stakeholders for the design workshops, or is the contractor expected to independently recruit participants? Additionally, will USG donors be included in these design workshops?**

The SC will provide the list of stakeholders to invite to the design workshops. The selected evaluation team will be responsible for managing the coordination and communications with these stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the SC. USG donor representatives are also expected to participate in the design workshops. Competitive proposals should clearly articulate strategies for managing power dynamics during the design session, ensuring that no single group disproportionately influences the outcomes.

- 8. Will the contractor be expected to conduct in-person design workshops in all fourteen countries listed in the RFP (page 7)? What is the approximate number of workshops expected, and would a hybrid model of participation (i.e. in-person/remote) be acceptable for engaging stakeholders from various geographies?**

Although the contractor will not be expected to conduct design workshops in all fourteen countries listed in the RFP, or the finalized country list included under question 21, applicants are expected to propose a clear approach to organizing the design workshops. The contractor may envision holding one design workshop per region or holding one comprehensive design workshop that brings together relevant evaluation stakeholders (i.e. workers, labor advocates, program implementation staff, or union leaders across multiple sectors). The proposal should justify why their chosen approach would be beneficial to the evaluation.

Competitive proposals will clearly demonstrate an understanding of how to approach design workshops for a global portfolio evaluation and also leverage the applicants' geographical reach and/or trusted networks for the selected approach. Likewise, the number of workshop participants should be proposed by the contractor based on what is feasible and would best address the evaluation questions.

Regarding the mode of participation, a hybrid model will indeed be acceptable, allowing for engaging stakeholders from various locations. This approach will help ensure inclusivity while accommodating the logistics associated with in-person gatherings.

9. Will the contractor be responsible for planning all logistics for the workshops, including venue rental and food costs, or will the Solidarity Center provide any logistical support? Additionally, are honorariums or transportation stipends for workshop participants considered allowable costs under this contract?

While the SC and donor will provide overarching guidance on processes, the selected evaluation team will be responsible for providing full logistical support for the workshops, including covering any associated costs, such as venue rentals and catering. The allowability of specific costs will be reviewed and assessed in accordance with the cost principles available in the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200 Subpart E). Accordingly, offering a transportation stipend for participants would likely be considered an allowable cost under the contract and should be included in the firm's cost proposal for these design workshops/consultation sessions.

10. How many IPs and programs will be considered for participation in this evaluation? How many are expected to be selected for the evaluation?

Refer to questions #20 and 21 below for information regarding the initial mapping of potential countries that has already begun. Again, examples here are illustrative to help provide broad considerations for proposals, and should not limit applicants. Although the exact number of implementing partners and programs to be included will be finalized during the design phase, the estimated maximum number of IPs and programs under consideration currently stands at 15 and 40, respectively. However, please note that these numbers are subject to change as further consultations are conducted and refinements are made during the design phase.

Another important element to account for during the design stage, and throughout the evaluation, is the input and guidance that will be coming from the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is a consultative body that will be convened by the donor and will be composed of workers, worker representatives, labor advocates, and labor program implementers among others, to ensure the evaluation embodies a worker-centered approach. The selected evaluation team will be expected to engage with the Advisory Committee throughout the evaluation.

11. If there is more than one design workshop, is there more than one evaluation? How many inception reports and evaluations will there be? What is the approximate page length anticipated for these reports?

The design workshop series is expected to service the entire Global Labor Evaluation, thereby culminating in one inception report. The maximum page length (not including annexes) is 25 pages.

12. What is the scope of data collection expected in each country? How many interviews are expected?

The scope of the data collection and number of interviews will be determined with the selected evaluation team, and guided by the SC and the donor, alongside input from the Advisory Committee.

13. The language describing the second phase of fieldwork suggests it might be carried out only if deemed necessary after conducting the mid-point review. Is this interpretation correct, or does the SC anticipate that data will be collected in a second visit regardless of the mid-review results? Additionally, is the expectation that data collection will occur twice in each selected country, or will a subset of countries be covered in Phase One and others in Phase Two?

The second phase of fieldwork will be informed by the preliminary analysis of the mid-point review. However, the SC anticipates that certain data will need to be collected during the second phase, regardless of the mid-review outcomes because the evaluation will require ongoing data collection and/or triangulation to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the labor portfolio's effectiveness. This proactive approach allows SC and the contractor to gather necessary insights and adapt as needed, enhancing the overall evaluation process. If the applicant proposes certain countries and/or program themes are completed in separate phases, then this should be accompanied with clear justification.

14. Could the SC clarify if the contractor should plan to conduct three validation sessions in each country; whether sessions can be held virtually; and whether USG donor representatives will participate? If validation sessions are in person, will the SC cover the travel costs of participants?

The contractor will not be expected to conduct three validation sessions per country. Instead, the SC recommends that the applicant ensure that at a minimum, a representative group that is selected from the design workshops and participants in the data collection are included in the validation workshops. Doing so will complete the feedback loop from milestones in the evaluation.

Regarding the mode of participation, a hybrid model will indeed be acceptable, allowing for engaging stakeholders from various geographies. This approach will help ensure inclusivity while accommodating the logistical challenges associated with in-person gatherings.

USG donors should be included in the validation sessions. Contractor must factor into its design of these sessions tools and techniques that navigate power dynamics so that no groups are over influencing the validation discussions. All costs for validation sessions should be included in the applicant's cost proposal. The Solidarity Center will not cover travel costs for participants.

15. Labor Evidence Briefs: Could the SC clarify if the contractor will provide three succinct two-page documents overall for all findings, or separately for each of the selected countries?

Rather than producing three individual briefs for each selected country, the contractor is expected to produce three succinct two-page documents overall, each targeting a different audience. At this time, the Solidarity Center anticipates that these briefs should be tailored to the following groups: worker organizations, labor program implementers, and policymakers. However, target audiences may be adjusted during the design phase based on further consultations. Regardless, three briefs will be required overall. The language in the RFP has been revised to reflect the language provided in this response.

16. Page 5 of the RFP indicates the contractor should submit “coded data” along with the Final Overarching Evaluation Report. Could SC clarify whether this data submission must include qualitative data from interviews or focus groups and if yes, can the content be submitted in original non-English language? Is the contractor expected to translate the deliverable products into local languages other than English? If so, which products and into what languages?

Yes, the submission of qualitative data is required and should be coded, with flexibility regarding language. SC can accept data in its original non-English form, provided that key findings and interpretations are submitted in English for inclusion in the final report.

The design and validation sessions and any other engagement with worker organizations and workers should account for interpretation into local languages, ensuring that stakeholder input is captured accurately. Regarding the translation of key deliverables, such as the evidence briefs, lessons learned brief, and strategic framework/accompanying indicators, these documents must be provided in English as well as in local languages as they are directed toward worker organizations. If translations are necessary for other specific stakeholders or local dissemination, SC will collaborate closely with the contractor to determine which additional materials may require translation and into which languages, depending on the needs of local partners and available resources

17. What is precisely meant by “test changes on a small scale to validate effectiveness” with respect to any proposed changes to the Global Labor Framework Indicators?

“Test changes on a small scale to validate effectiveness” in relation to the Global Labor Framework Indicators refers to implementing proposed modifications in a controlled sample of projects before broader application. This involves, before fully integrating any revisions to the indicators or framework, the Contractor will conduct small-scale trials or pilot studies. This allows for assessing how proposed changes function and are perceived by key stakeholders– who may include and are not limited to the Advisory Committee, participants in the design workshops, and individuals or groups who participated in the data collection– to ensure that they effectively capture the desired outcomes that key stakeholders collectively prioritized. The focus will be on measuring whether the adjustments lead to improved clarity, relevance, and effectiveness in capturing the overarching goals of the labor framework.

18. The Global Labor Framework and Indicators refinement task references updates, revisions, and additions to the framework as well as the visual representation of the refined framework. Is there already some progress on refining this framework? Does SC have any guidelines to follow (e.g., ILAB’s Theory of Sustained Change) to capitalize from?

The SC will share with the selected evaluation team materials that document the updates to the Global Labor framework based on a sample of implementing partners that have provided input since September 2023. Publicly available resources that would complement and align with said updates include ILAB’s [Theory of Sustained Change](#) and report on [Worker Voice](#).

19. What does "Ensure alignment on resource utilization" mean regarding Stakeholder Validation Session 2?

“Ensure alignment on resource utilization” refers to validating how projects’ resources (financial, human, or material) have been allocated and used throughout implementation. During the Stakeholder Validation

Session 2, the contractor will discuss and confirm with stakeholders that the resources dedicated to their projects have been effectively utilized to support the goals and expectations set.

1.2 Scope of Work, Timeline

20. What is the total number of regions, and how many countries are expected to be included in the final evaluation?

While the evaluation is global in nature and encompasses wide geographic coverage, the SC and donor acknowledge that the RFP budget will be an important factor for proposals. Of the five regions below, the following countries have been selected for consideration.

- MENA: Morocco, Iraq, Sudan
- Europe and Central Asia: Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine
- Africa: Mauritania, Niger, Lesotho, Zambia, and Ethiopia or Kenya
- Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh
- Latin America: Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia

The selection of countries and regions will be finalized with inputs from evaluation stakeholders, including the Advisory Committee, SC, the donor, and the selected evaluation team. The SC estimates that the evaluation will cover approximately 12 countries covering 4-5 regions, with an estimated 2-3 countries per region depending on the final design. Note that this is an illustrative list and it may be adjusted, expanded, or narrowed down as the sampling frame is refined during the design phase. Competitive proposals should demonstrate a management approach that is responsive to future input from key stakeholders and is equipped to handle the logistics and evaluation activities across this range of countries and regions. The language in the RFP has been revised to reflect the country information provided in this response.

21. Could the SC clarify the criteria and process for selecting countries and regions for the Global Labor Framework evaluation, including whether there is flexibility in proposing other countries not listed in the RFP, and whether the country selection will be finalized in collaboration with the evaluator during the period of performance of the evaluation contract?

The SC and the donor have established criteria to guide the mapping of countries and projects to be covered as part of the evaluation. This process considered factors such as program maturity, alignment with strategic objectives, security considerations, and data availability. As mentioned previously, the selected evaluation team will help refine the sampling framework in collaboration with the SC, the Advisory Committee, and the donor. The evaluator's insights and recommendations will be taken into account when making final decisions.

22. Will the scope of regions or countries included have any effect on the proposed timeline or deadlines for the evaluation process?

The scope of regions or countries will not have any effect on the proposed timeline or deadlines for the evaluation process. The selected firm will be responsible for deploying sufficient resources to ensure data collection and other tasks under the Scope of Work are completed across the specified regions and countries within the designated timeframe. It is important to note that the deadline for deliverables will not be extended. While the RFP includes an illustrative 24-month timeline, applicants are welcome to

propose alternative timelines for completing the tasks, provided that all work and deliverables are finished within the 24-month contract period. Any proposed timeline must still meet the overall project deadlines.

23. Data Collection: The Inception Report will include data collection tools to be used, incorporating the recommendations that come from stakeholders. At the bottom of page 4, the RFP indicates the feedback on tools will come from one design workshop; is this correct or should the RFP say "...recommendations from the design workshops..."?

Applicants should refer to SC's response under question # 8.

24. Page 7 of the RFP states that "The SC may elect to release more information as part of addenda to the RFP." Can the SC clarify if this information is related to the countries the SC that would like to conduct data collection in? Is there an estimated timeline for when this information will be released as it will directly relate to the cost budget?

Additional details regarding country selection and related topics are thoroughly addressed in the Q&A responses provided. At this stage, the Solidarity Center does not foresee the release of further information.

25. For data collection, workers, worker organizations, and unions seem to constitute a key group of respondents across countries in the evaluation design. Some workers, especially those unaffiliated and those living in regions with anti-union labor regimes or *de facto* conditions may increase the difficulty to successfully contact and recruit workers. What information will SC provide to constitute a sample frame? And to what extent will the contractor need to obtain workers' contact information by themselves?

The SC will support the evaluation team in establishing the initial sampling frame for data collection by providing available contact information for affiliated workers, worker organizations, and unions across countries included in the evaluation. This will include data collected through program activities, project reports, and engagement with worker organizations and unions where permissible. Only when Do No (more) Harm (DNmH) protocols are tested and in place, the SC will provide support where feasible and work with the contractor to identify effective strategies for contacting hard-to-reach populations, ensuring ethical considerations and security concerns are prioritized throughout the process.

26. Are there any expectations regarding in-person fieldwork versus remote evaluations, particularly across different regions?

The decision regarding in-person fieldwork versus remote evaluations will depend on several factors, including security considerations, logistical feasibility, and other constraints in each region. The SC encourages in-person fieldwork wherever possible, as it often leads to richer data and deeper engagement with respondents. However, SC acknowledges that in certain regions, remote data collection methods may be more appropriate due to security concerns or travel restrictions. The evaluation team should propose a flexible approach that accommodates both in-person and remote methodologies, ensuring robust data collection while prioritizing the safety and accessibility of all stakeholders. The SC is open to discussing these considerations further once the evaluation design and sampling framework are finalized.

1.2 Scope of Work, Evaluation Questions and Methodologies

27. Under Building and Sustaining Collective Power, the SC includes the following question: “What factors are essential to building and sustaining collective power for workers who have been excluded in worker organizations?” Would the SC please clarify whether this is referring to workers who have been excluded from worker organizations or workers in worker organizations whose voices may have been marginalized?

This question addresses both situations: workers who have been excluded from worker organizations entirely and those whose voices have been marginalized within these organizations. The intent is to understand the challenges faced by underrepresented groups, such as informal workers, women, youth, or those in precarious employment, who may not be affiliated with existing worker organizations. Additionally, it seeks to explore scenarios where workers, despite being part of these organizations, have limited influence or their specific needs are not adequately represented.

2.3 Evaluation Team Requirements

28. The RFP mentions that the contractor should identify and engage in-country consultants throughout the evaluation, and any changes in key personnel should be communicated to the Solidarity Center for approval. Given this requirement, would it be preferable for in-country consultants to be designated as key personnel on the proposal?

In-country consultants do not need to be named in the proposal and are not required to be included as key personnel. However, the Solidarity Center will include in the evaluation contract a requirement that the selection of all in-country consultants must be prior approved by the Solidarity Center. It is up to the contractor to discern which evaluation team members are considered key personnel. Competitive proposals demonstrate expertise and experience relevant to the evaluation needs.

29. Is it possible to divide the role of Program Manager/Lead Evaluator into two separate individuals, to ensure effective project management and technical oversight?

The evaluation firm has the flexibility to propose its preferred management structure and may elect to divide the position into two roles. However, it is important to designate one individual who will be the main point of contact for communication and coordination with the Solidarity Center. This person must be included as “key personnel” and will be responsible for ensuring smooth project management and oversight.

3.2 Proposal Submission Documents

30. Please confirm that the cost proposal should be incorporated into a single proposal with the technical information.

Applicants may choose how to incorporate their cost proposal, either as part of a single document with the technical information or as a separate submission, based on their preference.

31. Could the SC confirm if applicants may modify the budget template to add any needed subcategories, and if there is a preferred narrative template for the cost proposal?

Applicants may modify the provided budget template as needed to include additional subcategories that better reflect their proposed budget structure and align with their cost elements. The SC does not have a preferred narrative template for the cost proposal. Applicants are free to use their own format, as long as it clearly details the proposed costs and provides sufficient justification and breakdown for the proposed budget items.

32. Would the SC kindly indicate the page limit for the Executive Summary?

There is no specific page limit for the Executive Summary outlined in the RFP. Applicants should exercise their discretion to keep it concise and relevant, ensuring that it clearly conveys the proposal's key elements.

33. Would SC provide the page limit for the Risk Mitigation section?

There is no page limit on the Risk Mitigation Section. It is entirely up to the applicant to determine the appropriate length based on the level of detail needed to address potential risks comprehensively.

34. The SC has requested that applicants include all contracts with the SC or USG for which services are currently being performed or have been completed within the last five years. Given the potential length of this list, could applicants include only the most relevant contracts? Are there any parameters or a minimum number of contracts the SC is specifically looking for?

There is no minimum number of contracts required to be included in your past performance list. You are welcome to include as many contracts as you consider relevant. If the number of contracts is significant, you may choose to highlight and only include those that are most aligned with the scope of work outlined in the RFP. This approach will ensure that your experience is effectively presented while maintaining relevance to the evaluation criteria. The language in the RFP has been revised accordingly.

35. Are the four pages for the Evaluation Team Structure and the one page for the timeline part of the 20 pages for the Technical Proposal Narrative?

The four pages for the Evaluation Team Structure and the one page for the timeline are not part of the 20 pages allocated for the Technical Proposal Narrative. These are separate sections as outlined in the RFP. The Technical Proposal Narrative itself should adhere to the 20-page limit, while additional sections such as the Evaluation Team Structure and the Timeline can be included as separate attachments without affecting the page count of the main narrative.

36. Please confirm that the technical approach is not part of the evaluation criteria.

The technical approach is an essential component of the evaluation criteria. The proposal review panel will assess the soundness and feasibility of the proposed technical approach as part of the overall review process.

General Questions

37. Could an acronym list be provided? For example, IP is undefined.

IP refers to implementing partner. As the RFP contains only a limited number of acronyms, the remainder of which are spelled out within the RFP document, a separate acronym list is not being provided. The language in the RFP has been revised to spell out the acronym in its first use.