Impact Evaluation (IE) of Plantwise Pakistan (PW-P)
Terms of Reference

Background

CAB International (www.cabi.org) is a not-for-profit science-based development organization whose mission is to improve people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment. Plantwise is a global programme led by CABI whose overall objective is to increase food security, alleviate poverty and improve livelihoods by enabling farmers around the world to lose less, grow more and improve the quality of what they grow. The Plantwise strategy focuses on strengthening systems for providing plant health advice to smallholder farmers through three core and inter-related interventions:

1. **Plant clinic networks at the core**. Working with existing extension providers in target countries to implement networks of locally-owned and operated plant clinics where farmers can find relevant practical advice on management and prevention of plant health problems. Gender equity drives the efforts to support delivery of services to farmers in an equitable manner: women and men, young and old, as well as different social and ethnic groups are involved.
2. **Systems for management and use of plant clinic data:** Supporting the establishment of appropriate systems and procedures for managing plant clinic data, which enable the pro-active use of data for operational and strategic purposes at local and national levels. The Plantwise knowledge bank (www.plantwise.org/KnowledgeBank) is a global gateway to practical plant health information from diverse expert sources, with online and off-line resources in multiple languages for advisory services. It also serves as a platform for plant clinic data management and use.
3. **A systems approach:** Working with key stakeholders to improve the capacity and responsiveness of national plant health systems by strengthening linkages between various actors including; agricultural service providers, plant health regulatory bodies, research and training institutes and agro-input suppliers. The plant clinics and the associated data management systems constitute a strategic entry point for capturing and understanding farmer demand and identifying the needs for systems response.

The overall purpose is to deliver an effective system for providing plant health advice and support to smallholder farmers in target countries backed up by a global knowledge bank, through:

- Fostering diverse national, regional and international partnerships that underpin and sustain global efforts to remove constraints to agricultural productivity through increased access to information and effective delivery of national advisory services
- implementing national networks of plant clinics and strengthening national plant health systems to improve agricultural services for farmers
- Developing a global Knowledge Bank that provides data collection and management tools; and through a crowd sourcing approach, brings together existing and new information on plant health to support and inform stakeholders in national plant health systems, international bodies and the commercial sector, with long-term potential for effective national and global vigilance against plant health problems, particularly pests.

Plantwise started its activities in Pakistan in 2012 and by the end of 2016, the programme has 429 actively running plant clinics with 71,325 males and 38 female (total 71,363) farmer visits. CABI plans to conduct an Impact Evaluation (IE) of its Plantwise Programme in Pakistan (2012-2016) to assess progress towards outcomes and impact and learn from the current situation on how to improve performance and delivery of the programme.

Plantwise Impact Studies[1]

Current attempts to assess the impact of Plantwise have to date focused mainly on the impact of plant clinics on farmers visiting the clinics using household level indicators such as input use, productivity and net income.

The first quantitative studies attempted took place in Bolivia and Bangladesh and gave indications that farmers were changing practices leading to increased incomes as a result of attending clinics. Data were collected for all crops brought into the clinic. However, different years were compared and there was not a rigorous household sampling protocol. Results from one year were compared with the year before attending the clinic, but the data was based on recall and there was no counterfactual group to identify general changes that affected all farmers (e.g. climate).

In 2011 a quasi-experimental approach was used to quantify household level impact for farmers in Uganda. Some of the key issues that make estimation of impact complicated were considered:

1. Self-selection of plant clinic clients
2. Disperse nature of clinic clients
3. Any crop with any problem can be brought to the plant clinic

Other important attempts on measuring Plantwise programme impact at CABI included the following:

1. In 2014 CABI commissioned a full-fledged impact evaluation in Kenya. The American Institute of Research is conducting the study in 13 counties of Kenya using both qualitative and randomized control trials (RCTs) and initial reports and findings will be shared to selected consultants.
2. On-Farm Impact Study in 2016
3. Quasi-experimental study in 2017: on-going

Overall Objective

Measure impacts of the Plantwise programme at system and farm level and propose practical recommendations for the improvement of specific interventions to strengthen the outputs, outcomes and impact.

Guiding Evaluation Questions

Process: Does PW-P lead to system change within the country's plant health system? What changes have occurred? What contextual factors affect delivery of system changes? How well does PW-P deliver technical quality as judged by the programme's beneficiaries (plant health system stakeholders, extension staff, and farmers)? How relevant is PW-P to all programme beneficiaries?

Efficiency: How efficient is PW-P, in translating its activities into support (i.e., outputs) among its beneficiary groups, compared to other country programmes? How productive are male and female plant doctors after PW training? How cost effective is PW-P compared to existing extension models in the country?

Impact: Does PW-P increase knowledge among farmers and extension workers and does this result in significant contributions to farming households to realise production gains and income increase, how and why does this vary? To what extent have the benefits/impact reached male and female farmers of different ages?

Sustainability: How and to what extent does PW-P stimulate lasting changes in the behaviours of and relationships among those who work in the plant health systems, and what contextual factors,

[1] Findings/reports from the above examples may be requested by the selected consultant.

among which institutional/policy modifications, affect such changes? How and to what extent does the Plantwise approach result in a sustainable system of well-functioning plant clinics and what are the critical factors to establish such a system?

Implementation of the Plantwise approach is expected to establish sustainable plant health systems in countries leading to improved plant health, improved productivity and income of smallholder farmers through multiple causal pathways. Such pathways may include decreased incidence or severity of key pests and diseases; better management of outbreaks; improved productivity; and changed behaviours of PHS actors as a result of plant health system strengthening. Similarly numbers of farmers receiving and responding to information will also be important. It is expected that the evaluators will work with CABI to define additional details to elaborate on the research questions above and that reflect the programme logframe (see Annex 1 for the logframe revised 2017). The intention is to implement a robust evaluation approach that is appropriate for the scope of the evaluation, the resources allocated, and the intended users.

Approach and Methodology

It is expected that impact evaluation will take place in areas where PW-P has worked since programme started and also compare to similar areas where PW is planning to implement the programme. A rigorous Evaluability Assessment (EA) was carried out in Pakistan in late 2016. This EA was conducted to ensure the readiness and appropriateness of PW Pakistan as fit for such a study. Results stated that an evaluation was possible. See Annex 2 for the Executive Summary of the Evaluability Assessment report which outlines the findings, and some of the challenges that will shape the impact assessment design. It is suggested that the impact evaluation should use a robust mixed method approach which will include quantitative methods that can help to empirically measure outcomes and attribute those to the Plantwise effort. Methodology, timelines and teams should be proposed keeping in mind the programme scope, evaluability assessment report and this ToRs document.

Gender: Gender and age: Plantwise aims to deliver services to both women and men; young and old farmers in an equitable manner. The contractors should ensure that evaluations are able quantify the impact of Plantwise by gender and age, look for spill-over benefits for women, even if they are not attending the plant clinics themselves and consider how to improve implementation to benefit more women.

Proposals should clearly elaborate on an evaluation design including sampling, methods and tools that address the following:

- Pakistani context
- Lack of baseline
- Difficulties in establishing attribution
- Processes of systems change
- Evidence capture at farmer, community and system level.

Evidence of unexpected outcomes should be captured throughout the work. It is expected that lessons will emerge during the course of the study that will inform improvements in the implementation of the programme.

Accountability, reporting and communication

At country level, the PW-P staff will facilitate the coordination and logistics of the field work and help establish relations between the IE team and relevant stakeholders. The team will collect information with minimum support by PW-P staff. At global level, the Global CABI/Plantwise M&E unit, with the Global Director M&E as contact person, will support the IE team where relevant and will provide feedback on the submissions related to this work.

Competency of the evaluation team

A team of well-experienced professionals is required with a background in conducting impact evaluation of agricultural/rural programmes (design, methods, and tools), having in-depth knowledge of institutional and social change processes. The team should include expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods, depending on the methods proposed. Team members are expected to be familiar with gender aspects within their field of expertise.

The proposal will be reviewed and scored by a team of at least four reviewers from the M&E team and Plantwise Programme Board. A representative(s) from Plantwise donors will also be invited to comment on the IE proposal. If necessary, CABI will provide comments and request a resubmission of the proposal if the proposed design does not meet requirements. CABI reserves the right to not award any contract. If the proposed design is approved, CABI will award the research team a grant to conduct the impact evaluation.

Selection criteria

Bids submitted in response to this call will be reviewed and scored according to the following criteria:

- Understanding and methodology========== 45%
- Financial bid========== 25%
- Proposed team and their roles[2]========== 20%
- Availability and travel in Pakistan[3]========== 10%

Instructions for applicants

Responses to this call must include the following:

1. A short statement of interest document that briefly lays out;
    a. Experience with informing and assessing theories of change and logframes that are similar to the one used by Plantwise (Plantwise Theory of Change Annex 3)
    b. Experience in methods to determine attribution of changes in outcomes similar to Plantwise including any experimental and/or quasi-experimental methodologies
    c. Experience in the use of mixed methods (using a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods) for initiatives that are similar to Plantwise
2. Methodology for Pakistan evaluation
3. Work plan with team responsibilities
4. Budget[4] well synchronised with methodology and plan
5. CVs of proposed team members
6. Copies of up to three relevant impact evaluations with proposed team as authors

Eligibility

We seek applications from national and international researchers qualified to undertake impact evaluations. The research team might include mix of national and international experts keeping in view the matters related to foreigners' visa and local travels in Pakistan.

Submission

Any questions and queries related this should be directed a.alawy@cabi.org before 20th April, 2017. The proposals, including budgets and timelines should be submitted to a.alawy@cabi.org by or before 1st of May, 2017. Incomplete submissions will be considered ineligible. This Request for Qualifications does not constitute a guarantee of award.

[2] Joint-venture submissions involving teams/firms from Pakistan and abroad will be given preference.
[3] Travel arrangements, visas, insurances, etc. shall be the responsibility of applicants and CABI may provide necessary support.
[4] Please provide conversion rates in case if the budget is in a currency other than British Pound (Sterling £).

Annex No.	Title	Document
1	Plantwise Logframe	Adobe Acrobat Document
2	Executive Summary of Evaluability Assessment Report Pakistan	Adobe Acrobat Document
3	Plantwise Programme Strategy	Adobe Acrobat Document