

June 12, 2024

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

Subject RFP #:	RFP-217815-2024-02: Growth Poles Baseline Surveys Data Collection
RFP Issue Date:	June 15, 2024
Terms of Reference / Specifications:	Baseline Surveys Data Collection
Project:	Malawi Growth Poles
The Company:	Palladium International, LLC
Anticipated Contract Mechanism:	Firm-Fixed Price
Country of Performance:	Malawi
Closing Date and Time:	June 30, 2024 5:00PM CAT
Contact Person:	Liz Venable
Details for Submission:	Submissions should be emailed to <a href="mailto:Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com">Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com</a>
Templates Link:	<a href="#">Templates</a>

## Terms and conditions

### 1. Proposal Conditions

By submitting a proposal, potential suppliers are bound by these terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must submit offers with all details provided in English and with prices quoted in a single currency.

### 2. Proposal Lodgement

The Company may grant extensions to the Closing Time at its discretion. The Company will not consider any quotes received after the Closing Time specified in the RFP unless the Company determines to do so otherwise at its sole discretion.

### 3. Evaluation

The Company may review all proposal to confirm compliance with this RFP and to determine the best proposal in the circumstances.

### 4. Alterations

The Company may decline to consider a proposal in which there are alterations, erasures, illegibility, ambiguity or incomplete details.

### 5. The Company's Rights

The Company may, at its discretion, discontinue the RFP; decline to accept any proposal; terminate, extend or vary its selection process; decline to issue any contract; seek information or negotiate with any potential supplier that has not been invited to submit a proposal; satisfy its requirement separately from the RFP process; terminate negotiations at any time and commence negotiations with any other potential supplier; evaluate proposals as the Company sees appropriate (including with reference to information provided by the prospective supplier or from a third party); and negotiate with any one or more potential suppliers.

### 6. Amendments and Queries

The Company may amend, or clarify any aspect of the RFP prior to the RFP Closing Time by issuing an amendment to the RFP in the same manner as the original RFP was distributed. Such amendments or clarifications will, as far as is practicable be issued simultaneously to all parties.

Any queries regarding this RFP should be directed to the Contact Person identified on the cover page of this RFP.

### 7. Clarification

The Company may, at any time prior to execution of a contract, seek clarification or additional information from, and enter into discussions and negotiations with, any or all potential suppliers in relation to their proposals. In doing so, the Company will not allow any potential supplier to substantially tailor or amend their proposal.

### 8. Confidentiality

In their proposal, potential suppliers must identify any aspects of their proposal that they consider should be kept confidential, with reasons. Potential suppliers should note that the Company will only agree to treat information as confidential in cases that it considers appropriate. In the absence of such an agreement, potential suppliers acknowledge that the Company has the right to disclose the information contained in their proposal.

The potential supplier acknowledges that in the course of this RFP, it may become acquainted with or have access to the Company's Confidential Information (including the existence and terms of this RFP and the TOR). It agrees to maintain the confidence of the Confidential Information and to prevent its unauthorised disclosure to any other person. If the potential supplier is required to disclose Confidential Information due to a relevant law or legal proceedings, it will provide reasonable notice of such disclosure to the Company. The parties agree that this obligation applies during the RFP and after the completion of the process.

### 9. Alternatives

Potential suppliers may submit proposals for alternative methods of addressing the Company's requirement described in the RFP where the option to do so was stated in the RFP or agreed in writing with the Company prior to the RFP Closing Time. Potential suppliers are responsible for providing a sufficient level of detail about the alternative solution to enable its evaluation.

### 10. Reference Material

If the RFP references any other materials including, but not limited to, reports, plans, drawings, samples or other reference material, the potential supplier is responsible for obtaining the referenced material and considering it in framing their proposal. And provide it to the Company upon request.

### 11. Price/Cost Basis

Prices or costs quoted must show the tax exclusive price, the tax component and the tax inclusive price.

The contract price, which must include any and all taxes, supplier charges and costs, will be the maximum price payable by the Company for the Goods and/or Services.

### 12. Financial information

If requested by the Company, potential suppliers must be able to demonstrate their financial stability and ability to remain viable as a provider of the Goods and/or Services over the term of any agreement.

If requested by the Company, the potential supplier must promptly provide the Company with such information or documentation as the Company reasonably requires in order to evaluate the potential supplier's financial stability.

### 13. Referees

The Company reserves the right to contact the potential supplier's referees, or any other person, directly and without notifying the potential supplier.

### 14. Conflict of interest

Potential suppliers must notify the Company immediately if any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest arises (a perceived conflict of interest is one in which a reasonable person would think that the person's judgement and/or actions are likely to be compromised, whether due to a financial or personal interest (including those of family members) in the procurement or the Company).

### 15. Inconsistencies

If there is inconsistency between any of the parts of the RFP the following order of precedence shall apply:

- (a) these Terms and Conditions;
- (b) the first page of this RFP; and
- (c) the Schedule

so that the provision in the higher ranked document will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

### 16. Collusion and Unlawful Inducements

Potential suppliers and their officers, employees, agents and advisors must not engage in any collusive, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct with any other potential supplier or person or quote any unlawful inducements in relation to their proposal or the RFP process.

Potential suppliers must disclose where proposals have been compiled with the assistance of current or former the Company employees (within the previous 9 months and who was substantially involved in the design, preparation, appraisal, review, and or daily management of this activity) and should note that this may exclude their proposal from consideration.

Potential suppliers warrant that they have not provided or offered any payment, gift, item, hospitality or any other benefit to the Company, its employees, consultants, agents, subcontractors (or any other person involved in the decision-making process relating to this RFP) which could give rise to a perception of bribery or corruption in relation to the RFP or any other dealings between the parties.

### 17. Jurisdiction

This RFP shall be subject to the laws of the District of Columbia, United States of America. The language of the arbitration will be English.

The Potential Supplier and the Company will use their best efforts to settle amicably any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of, or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof. If no agreeable settlement can be found, any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof, shall be settled by mediation through the American Arbitration Association by filing a request for mediation with the AAA and the other party. The Parties will be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such dispute.

## Schedule - Terms of Reference

Dear Prospective Applicants,

Palladium is seeking applications under USAID's Diversified Agriculture-Led Growth Poles for Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Wealth Creation Project ("Growth Poles," or GP).

USAID Malawi's Growth Poles Project, implemented by Palladium International LLC, will accelerate environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable, resilient, and more inclusive wealth generation in Malawi by mobilizing rural based private sector investments and partnerships with anchor firms and their surrounding communities, smallholder organizations, cooperatives, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) in a growth pole approach, with a youth and gender lens. GP is a partnership with private sector to drive resilient prosperity that will improve food security, incomes, jobs, and exports in Malawi.

Palladium is seeking applications from qualified organizations to provide baseline survey data collection planning and implementation services.

This solicitation is comprised of the following main sections:

1. Project Description
2. Eligibility Requirements
3. Desired Qualifications of Offerors
4. Evaluation Criteria
5. Submission Instructions
6. Point of Contact
7. Other Information

Please refer to the Project Description section of this solicitation for a complete statement of services sought. Palladium reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposals submitted.

**Word and Excel templates of Annex A and Annex B application documents (see below) can be downloaded from the link indicated. Prospective applicants who are unable to download from the link must email Yvonne Kalongonda (Yvonne.Kalongonda@thepalladiumgroup.com) to request the templates.**

To be eligible, Offerors must provide all required information in their proposal, including the requirements found in the annexes to this solicitation. Proposals which are submitted late, incomplete, or are non-responsive will not be considered.

Palladium requires that Full Proposals be submitted electronically (e-mailed) to Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com in PDF and Excel format no later than **June 30, 2024 at 17:00 hours CAT**. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Issuance of this solicitation does not constitute a commitment to award a contract on the part of Palladium, nor does it commit Palladium to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Further, Palladium reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. Proposals are submitted at the risk of the Offeror, and all preparation and submission costs are at the Offeror's own expense.

Sincerely,

Aissata Himmelfarb

Senior Manager, Grants, Subawards, Contracts & Procurement

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this activity is to support Growth Poles under Objective 5: Play a networking, facilitating, coordination and adaptive role based on evidence and data within Malawi. This activity will feed into the impact evaluation of the Growth Poles Project, as well as formative research addressing learning questions of interest to growth pole partners.

The key learning questions for the Growth Poles Project impact evaluation include:

1. What is the impact of participating in growth pole-linked community and value chain livelihood programs on household incomes and assets?
2. What are the spillover effects of growth pole-linked community and value chain livelihood programs on non-participants in the same community as participants?
3. What descriptive statistics and correlations can we observe related to learning interests of private sector partners?

The impact evaluation will use quasi-experimental and non-experimental methods drawing on a large sample of household surveys conducted at baseline, midline and endline in communities around partner growth poles. The sample will include direct participants in community and value chain livelihood activities, non-participants in communities with participants, and members of communities with no participants. For direct participants, sample selection will be carried out using project implementation data. For non-participants, the applicant will work with the Growth Poles Project to develop a method for conducting population representative random selection. This could involve conducting a census to support random selection, or conducting random selection in the field, but there is a strong preference for the approach to be fast and low cost.

The questionnaire for the survey will be drafted by the Growth Poles Project. The applicant will be responsible for electronic programming and testing of the electronic survey, providing hardware and software for data collection, developing a data collection plan, implementing data collection and data quality assurance protocols, and providing a cleaned data set.

The Growth Poles Project aims to collect surveys around 5-8 partner growth poles, each including 800-1000 households. Data collection is targeted for July, August, and September 2024. Applicants should only apply if they have capacity to implement within that timeframe. More than one applicant may be selected to allow for sufficient capacity to implement data collection.

## **Type of Contract**

Firm Fixed Price

## **Anticipated Contract Term**

July to September 2024

## **Company Information**

Palladium is a global leader in the design, development and delivery of Positive Impact — the intentional creation of enduring social and economic value. We work with corporations, governments, foundations, investors, communities and civil society to formulate strategies and implement solutions that generate lasting social, environmental and financial benefits.

## **Project**

The USAID Diversified Agriculture-Led Growth Poles for Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Wealth Creation Project (“Growth Poles,” or GP), implemented by Palladium International LLC, will accelerate environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable, resilient, and more inclusive wealth generation in Malawi by mobilizing rural based private sector investments and partnerships with anchor firms and their surrounding communities, smallholder organizations, cooperatives, and micro, small, and medium

enterprises (MSME) in a growth pole approach, with a youth and gender lens. In short, GP is a partnership with private sector to drive resilient prosperity that will improve food security, incomes, jobs, and exports in Malawi.

The objectives of GP will be accomplished with and through partners that have long-term strategies and business cases that overlap with the GP's intended development impacts. GP has five objectives as follows:

- Objective 1: Develop and/or strengthen growth poles that leverage and expand private sector investments;
- Objective 2: Strengthen systems resilience through improved climate and natural resource management;
- Objective 3: Expand inclusive development, increasing incomes, assets, and jobs for smallholders, youth and women, and strengthening household and community resilience;
- Objective 4: Mobilize innovative, impact-oriented credit and finance;
- Objective 5: Play a networking, facilitating, coordination and adaptive role based on evidence and data within Malawi.

### **Timeline**

Palladium requires that Full Proposals be submitted electronically (e-mailed) to Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com in PDF and Excel format no later than **June 30, 2024 at 17:00 hours CAT**. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Data collection is targeted for July, August, and September 2024.

### **Scope of Work and Standards**

#### Deliverables

For each of the surveys, deliverables under this activity are expected to include:

- List of randomly selected participants to include in survey sample
- Proposed method for randomly selecting population representative non participant households to include in the survey sample
- Data collection plan and timeline
- Programmed electronic data collection draft survey
- Programmed electronic data collection final survey
- Raw survey data in csv and dta format
- Cleaned survey data in csv and dta format
- Brief data collection report summarizing the number of households selected, replaced, and interviewed, and any challenges or context information relevant to survey data interpretation

#### Eligibility Requirements

Offerors may be for-profit or non-profit organizations that are legally registered and recognized in Malawi; comply with USAID Geographic Code 935; and provide corresponding supporting documents. The criteria are as follows:

- Must be a registered legal entity;
- Must not be debarred, suspended, excluded or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding;

- Must possess or be able to obtain Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number (for budgets over \$25,000);
- Costs reflected in the submitted budgets for establishment of milestones must be reasonable, allocable and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles;
- Must comply with all applicable USAID rules and regulations.

Desired Qualifications of the Offerors:

In addition to the eligibility criteria outlined above, Offerors must demonstrate:

- Experience conducting high quality household survey data collection in Malawi
- Experience programming and piloting electronic surveys
- Experience conducting stratified random sample selection; experience with in-field random selection highly desired
- Ability to plan and implement in-field population representative random selection
- Capacity to conduct at least one 1000 household survey between July – September 2024
- Has access to devices and software for survey data collection
- Excellent logistics, planning and coordination capacity to plan and carry out data collection working closely with the Growth Poles Project and its partners

**Evaluation and Award Process**

Applicants should submit proposals containing the following:

1. Proposed approach for random sample selection for non-participants. The targeted survey sample will include both households with a member who has already participated in project activities, and households with no participants. The Growth Poles Project has data on participants in its activities to date, including name; sex; and District, TA, GVH and village of residence; and phone number if available. These data will form the sample frame for the participant households.
2. Proposals will be scored and ranked according to the following selection criteria:

Selection Criteria	Full Application
<p><b>1. Proposed Sampling Approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed method for conducting sample selection to capture data for non-participants is sound and likely to result in a sample that is approximately population representative</li> <li>• Proposed method of conducting sample selection to capture data for non-participants is low cost and can be completed quickly</li> </ul>	20 points
<p><b>2. Project Implementation Plan &amp; Milestone Schedule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gantt chart of planned activities and a timeline with a brief narrative is realistic for scope of work</li> </ul>	15 points
<p><b>3. Experience, Capacity, and Past Performance</b></p>	35 points

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant demonstrates technical and managerial capacity to implement the proposed activity;</li> <li>• The applicant has past experience in large scale household survey data collection</li> <li>• Capacity to implement at least one 1000 household survey in the period of July – September 2024</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Cost and Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants provides budget and narrative, including the summary of the information provided in the application budget forms.</li> <li>• Budget is realistic for scope of work, while showing good value for money</li> <li>• Demonstration of cost efficiencies based on past work in Malawi or leveraging previously created data collection or analysis tools</li> </ul>	30 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Upon receiving Proposals, Offerors may receive a request for additional information or clarifications. Proposals will be scored and ranked by the Evaluation Panel based on the criteria described above.

Palladium reserves the right to award under this solicitation without further negotiations. The offerors are encouraged to offer their best terms and prices with the original submission.

**PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY AND ETHICS**

It is Palladium's Policy that no gifts of any kind and of any value be exchanged between vendors/contractors and Palladium personnel. Discovery of the same will be grounds for disqualification of the vendor/contractor from participation in any Palladium's procurements and may result in disciplinary actions against Palladium personnel involved in such discovered transactions.

GP reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted in reference to this RFP. Prior signing the Contract, the applicant will be required to supply the following:

**UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER NUMBERS**, unless exemption applies (budget is less than \$25,000 performed by foreign entities overseas). Applicants are required to submit documentation of either their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, or a snapshot of the SAM.gov webpage confirming the submission of their UEI application. Instructions on requesting a UEI are available at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

**DUE DILIGENCE QUESTIONNAIRE**: The Company must complete A Due Diligence Questionnaire if selected for Award.

Any contract/purchase order resulting from this solicitation must be signed by both parties in order to be considered valid and in force. All costs associated with, but not limited to, production, preparation and/or delivery of goods or services, including deliveries, accepted by Palladium staff, without a fully executed (signed by both parties) contract/purchase order, are at the vendor's risk only. Palladium shall not pay for any costs, without limitation, associated with production, preparation or delivery of goods and/or services under this or any other contract/purchase order, which has not been signed by both parties.

If your proposal is successful, you will be required to enter into the Company's standard contract for the types of goods or services being provided. In the provision of the Goods and Services, you will be required to comply with the Company's policies, including (without limitation) its Business Partner Code of Conduct and any relevant client terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must also comply with the Company's Business Partner Code of Conduct in the submission of any proposals pursuant to this RFP.

If you are bidding as part of a joint venture, partnership or similar, please make this clear in your submission. Likewise, if you propose to subcontract any part of the goods or services provision, then disclose this fact

within your submission. The Company may require additional information from you and approval for subcontracting will not be automatic as subcontractors will be subject to Palladium's Due Diligence process.

### **Instructions to the Offerors**

The following items are required to be submitted as part of the proposal:

All final submission documents must be sent via email to [Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:Aissata.Himmelfarb@thepalladiumgroup.com) in the format specified below. The email subject line must read "RESPONSE TO SOLICITATION RFP-217815-2024-02."

Prospective applicants must reach out to [Yvonne.Kalongonda@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:Yvonne.Kalongonda@thepalladiumgroup.com) to request Word and Excel templates of Annex A and Annex B application documents (see below) if unable to download from the indicated link: **Templates**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is open until **June 30, 2024 at 17:00 hours CAT**. Proposals received after this time will not be evaluated.

Offerors must submit the following documents:

- **ANNEX A: FULL APPLICATION NARRATIVE TEMPLATE;**
- **ANNEX B: BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE**
- **A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number or snapshot of the SAM.gov webpage confirming the submission of their UEI application**

The Full Proposal must be submitted in English, using Times New Roman font, size 11.

The submitted Full Proposal must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Plagiarism will result in disqualification from consideration.

GP will retain all materials and documents submitted by Offerors. It will not use this information for purposes other than proposal review and will not share it with other persons or institutions.

After the evaluation process, the results will be communicated to the Offerors via e-mail.

### **Annex A: Full Proposal Narrative Template**

#### **I. Introduction (1-2 paragraphs)**

Describe applicant interpretation of key learning questions, and the role of proposed activity in addressing these questions and supporting development learning in Malawi.

#### **II. Applicant Experience and Approach to Evaluation (2 paragraphs)**

Describe applicant past experience, capacities and qualifications related to large scale household survey data collection, including electronic survey programming and electronic data collection, survey planning and logistics, survey data quality assurance, data cleaning and data management, and random sample selection.

#### **III. Proposed Sample Selection Approach (2-3 paragraphs)**

The targeted survey sample will include both households with a member who has already participated in project activities, and households with no participants. The Growth Poles Project has data on participants in its activities to date, including name; sex; and District, TA, GVH and village of residence; and phone number if available. These data will form the sample frame for the participant households. For non-participant households, the project does not currently have existing lists of households or individuals to use as a sample frame. However, the project has community mapping data that include a list of the villages targeted for inclusion in the sample, and the estimated number of households in those villages.



Please propose an approach for selecting a random sample of non-participants that is approximately representative of the households in villages targeted for inclusion in the sample. Approaches may include collecting data needed to create a list that can be used as a sample frame, or using methods carried out in the field, such as creating protocols for random sampling households within a village based on household location, etc. Approaches will be scored based on 1) likelihood of achieving a good representative sample for the targeted villages, 2) cost, and 3) time required to implement.

#### IV. Data Collection Implementation Capacity (2-3 paragraphs)

Please estimate how many 1000 household surveys the applicant could carry out between July 1 and September 30, up to a total of eight (8). Assume that each surveyor can carry out an average of 2.5 surveys per day, and that each survey is in a different district.

Describe the approach for data collection, including proposed total number of enumerators, number and structure of enumerator teams, and how teams will be managed.

#### V. Gantt Chart (no more than 1 page)

Include a Gantt Chart illustrating proposed tasks and timeline for:

1. Electronic survey programming, testing, and finalization for a 1-hour household survey
2. Sample selection for one 1000 household survey to be carried out with a population representative sample in TA Khongoni, Lilongwe
3. Data collection for one 1000 household survey to be carried out with a population representative sample in TA Khongoni, Lilongwe
4. Submitting a clean data set for one 1000 household survey

#### VI. Budget (use attached template)

Please estimate a budget covering:

1. Electronic survey programming, testing, and finalization for a 1-hour household survey
2. Sample selection for one 1000 household survey to be carried out with a population representative sample in TA Khongoni, Lilongwe
3. Data collection for one 1000 household survey to be carried out with a population representative sample in TA Khongoni, Lilongwe
4. Submitting a clean data set for one 1000 household survey

#### VII. Three past performance references

Please list the name, email contact, and a 1-3 sentence description of the work performed for three references for past work performed. The description of the work should include type of data collection (e.g. qualitative or quantitative, household survey, focus group, etc.) and sample size for the survey.