Solicitation #: **3879-06-139-Consultant-25**

Issued on: **21 October 2013**

For: **Local Principal Investigator – Wildlife Farm Biosecurity Assessment, Vietnam**

Period of Performance: November 11, 2013 – August 15, 2014

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded FHI 360 the Associate Award No.: GHN-A-00-09-00002-00 under Leader Award No. GPO-A-00-07-00004-00 entitled, "Global Avian Influenza and Zoonotic Behavior Change and Communication Support Activity," or the PREVENT project. In Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, PREVENT activities are also supported by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). PREVENT focuses on using behavior change and communication to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and control avian and pandemic influenzas and emerging pandemic threats.

Currently, for both public health and economic reasons there is significant government interest in strengthening biosecurity/good production guidelines and management of wildlife farms. Wildlife farming is a growing industry in Vietnam, and poor biosecurity at these farms poses a substantial health risk to human and animal populations. Current biosecurity practices, the make-up of the animal population and the general farm characteristics are not well known. Much of the work that has been done on wildlife farms in Vietnam has been focused on possible conservation impacts, rather than biosecurity and human health risk. To fill this knowledge gap, PREVENT will conduct a cross-sectional study of wildlife farms focusing on primates, rodents, civets, and wild boars (the animals that are farmed that are most likely to be implicated in transmission of viruses that might be emerging pandemic threats).

PURPOSE

FHI 360 wishes to identify a *local principal investigator* for up to 119 days to assist in obtaining local IRB approval, pretest study instruments, supervise the implementation of data collection activities and participate in preliminary analysis.

STUDY

The goal of this study is to characterize wildlife farms raising priority species of mammals in Southern Vietnam and document biosecurity practices that may pose a potential risk for zoonotic disease emergence and/or reduce production. At wildlife farms with priority species the study will:

- Collect data on practices that may affect biosecurity and farm productivity.
- Identify factors that might encourage or be barriers to good farm biosecurity.

Three main research questions will guide data collection and analysis:

1. What are the biosecurity measures and farm production practices in place on wildlife farms that raise priority species?
2. How well are biosecurity measures implemented on these farms?
3. What factors influence wildlife farmers' willingness (current or potential) to adopt good biosecurity practices?

Sites

The study will take place in Southern Vietnam. Farms to be included will be selected from wildlife farms raising rodents, primates, civets, and wild boar in the 11 provinces of Bình Phước, Đồng Nai, Bình Dương, Tây Ninh, Bến Tre, Bà Rịa - Vũng Tàu, Lâm Đồng, Long An, Bình Thuận, Tien Giang, Dong Thap, and Hồ Chí Minh City.

Methods

This is a cross-sectional study of wildlife farms. The study will use both qualitative and quantitative methods to address the research questions, including a survey, a structured observation and focus group discussions. The unit for this study is individual wildlife farms and the target population is the managers of individual wildlife farms. The study will consist of an on-farm assessment and off-farm focus group discussions (FGD). The biosecurity assessment (BA) will be completed before the FGDs begin. This will allow the research team to know farms and better understand farmers, as well as to expand on the FGD research themes identified during the BA.

Biosecurity Assessment: A biosecurity assessment will be implemented in a sample of wildlife farms raising a threshold number of animals belonging to priority species. Researchers will administer a survey to obtain in-depth information on current biosecurity measures and production practices. Upon completion of the questionnaire the researchers will conduct an observation walkthrough of the farm.

Focus group discussion: Following the biosecurity assessment, a sub-set of wildlife farm managers will be purposively selected to participate in FGDs about factors that influence a farmer's willingness to adopt biosecurity practices and factors which affect their business operations.

All data collection forms/processes will be pretested, along with guidelines for conducting biosecure and biosafe farm visits. One to two focus groups will also be conducted in order to pretest the discussion guide.

Research team

To implement this study, there will be a core research team and two implementation teams. The core research team will consist of the headquartersprincipal investigator (HQ PI) Kathleen O'Rourke and the local PI, a VNForest staff person, and PREVENT's program coordinator in Vietnam. This team will be responsible for development and implementation oversight of the study as well as analysis.

Biosecurity Assessment: The implementation team for the BA will be comprised of the consultant, two team leaders (both with field management experience and one with qualitative experience and one with quantitative experience), ten field researchers, and two data entry operators, responsible for data entry and management. The consultant will manage the day-to-day implementation of this field study, including preparation and supervising the data collection activities in the field and data entry. The consultant will work closely with the team leaders and program coordinator on preparation for field implementation and with the provincial VNForest official on permissions and approvals.

Focus Group Discussion: The implementation team for the FGDs will be the consultant, the qualitative team leader as the FGD facilitator and a note taker. The consultant will work closely with the program coordinator on preparation for field implementation and with the provincial VNForest official on permissions and approvals. The consultant will be supported by a translation and transcription firm (identified and hired by PREVENT) as well as third party reviewer of the quality of the translation and transcription.

Language

The research will be conducted in *Vietnamese* language. All information obtained will be translated into English.

Timing

PREVENT anticipates that IRB submission will begin in November 2013. Researcher recruitment will begin in December 2013 for researcher training in mid-March 2014, with field work beginning late March 2014 (subject to receiving IRB and local ethical committee approval). The consultant will work part time when this contract starts preparing for the study (about 1 day per week). The consultant will work full-time to set up and conduct the pretesting (approximately 17 days in December) and again from the start of researcher training through data collection for the biosecurity assessment and focus group discussions (approximately seven weeks). The consultant should expect to work full-time for approximately two weeks directly after implementation to write report, then part-time to comment on final analysis and report writing.

SCOPE OF WORK:

The local PI will work with FHI 360 staff to recruit, train and supervise quantitative and qualitative researchers to implement the cross-sectional study.

The local PI will be expected to perform the following tasks:

1. **Preparation:**
    a. Participate in necessary phone calls and in-person meetings leading up to the study. Review the research protocol and other relevant literature provided by FHI 360 to gain a good understanding of the rationale and plan for the study.
    b. Participate in discussions and assist FHI 360 staff with logistical issues.
    c. Complete research ethics training (e.g., the web-based NIH course on "Protecting Human Research Subjects").
    d. Assist in obtaining ethical clearances and other approvals.
    e. As needed, assist in recruitment of research candidates, including research team leaders (x2), field researchers (x10), note taker (x1), third party quality check of translation/transcription (x1), and data entry operators (x2).

2. **Pretest the study instruments:**
    a. Review the instruments and consent forms and provide comments on aspects which may need adaptation for local conditions. Also review analysis plan, biosecurity measures and indicators lists.
    b. In collaboration with PREVENT's program coordinator organize the pretest – selecting farms with PREVENT staff, setting up appointments with farm managers, setting up the focus groups (including recruiting a note taker), completing informed consent over the phone, taking care of pretest logistics, and printing questionnaires.
    c. Attend a training led by PREVENT research staff on conducting the pretest.
    d. Conduct pretest of the on-farm biosecurity assessment tools (survey and walkthrough) at five to ten wildlife farms with a PREVENT researcher from Washington, DC and potentially a biosecurity expert.
    e. Conduct cognitive interviews on identified 'trouble' questions/response categories at five to ten wildlife farms on-farm with a PREVENT researcher from Washington, DC and a qualitative researcher.
    f. After the pretest and in collaboration with the PREVENT researcher from Washington, DC –
        i. Provide track edited methodology, instruments (survey, walkthrough, and focus group discussion guide), and biosecurity guidelines, showing recommended changes.
        ii. Provide report to explain changes made to the methodology, instruments, and biosecurity guidelines.
    g. Assist with finalizing forward and back translation of data collection instruments and consent forms.
    h. Participate in debriefing meeting after pretest with VNForest, USAID, and partners such as FAO.

3. **Implementation:**
   A. Training: Co-facilitate a 7-day training to prepare for ***the Biosecurity Assessment and Focus Group Discussion.***
      a. Review and provide comments and suggestions for changes to the training materials, to help finalize them prior to training.
      b. Work with FHI 360 staff to ensure that training venue, materials and field training sites are prepared.
      c. The HQ PI, the consultant, one to two senior researchers from PREVENT, and the program coordinator will train the entire team on the study objectives and protocol, research ethics and human subject protection protocols, data management, and 'Guidelines for Conducting a Biosecure and Biosafe Farm Visit'. Groups will be split up into two for a portion of the training. One group of field investigators will be trained on the tools and methods for the biosecurity assessment, specifically best practices in quantitative approaches to implement the questionnaire, *General Farm Characteristics and Species Specific Module*, and the structured observation, *Farm Walkthrough Module*. Another group will be trained on best practices for qualitative research to implement the focus group discussion guide, *Wildlife Farm FGD Module*. Training will include two days of field practice for the survey and walkthrough and one day for the FGDs.
      d. Provide personalized tutoring on data collection and conducting safe farm visits guidelines to individual research team members as needed.
      e. More field researchers will be trained than are needed for implementation. The consultant will provide input to FHI 360 staff regarding the field researchers that should be selected for the study.

   B. Fieldwork: Biosecurity Assessment: Supervise two research team leaders, who will each oversee a team of five, and coordinate with the PREVENT program coordinator, VNForest officials, and the HQ PI. For each of the 11 provinces and HCMC:
      a. Travel to the field with the research teams. Stagger the start date of the two teams; spend several days with one team until assured that each member is doing well and that the team leader is correctly conducting the daily debrief. Then go and oversee the other team for four days, and continue alternating. (Start of field for second team will be about 4 days after first team to enable this).
      b. Coordinate with the team leaders, to assign daily farms to go to. Oversee that the team leaders ensure the correct farm and the correct species are documented at each farm.
      c. Supervise the team leaders to ensure the quality of implementation of all components of the study, including obtaining informed consent, facilitation of interviews, and adherence to storage of data collected.
      d. Work closely with the team leaders to ensure they oversee the adherence of all team members to the 'Guidelines for Conducting a Biosecure and Biosafe Farm Visit'.
      e. Secure all hard copy forms and email/mail documents according to the protocol.

f. Coordinate with the HQ PI to make decisions on next steps of research and adjust plans accordingly.
g. Observe and ensure team leaders are taking detailed field notes of daily field implementation and debrief sessions with a team of field researchers. Use template to report to the HQ PI every three days.
h. Keep track of and document all data collection activities, as well as problems encountered in the field. If an adverse event or any breach of protocol occurs, report it immediately to the PREVENT program coordinator and HQ PI.

C. Fieldwork: Focus Group Discussions: Supervise implementation by the FGD facilitator (qualitative team leader) and note taker of between five and eight focus group discussions (2 for each key species, if there are enough farms raising the priority species).

a. Travel to the field with the research team.
b. Supervise and ensure the quality of implementation of all components of the study, including recruitment of FGD participants, obtaining informed consents, facilitation of interviews and discussions, recordings, and taking of notes.
c. Conduct post-FGD debrief sessions, take detailed field notes, and enter them into organized computer files.
d. Use template to report to HQ PI every three days.
e. Keep track of and document all data collection activities, as well as problems encountered in the field. If an adverse event or any breach of protocol occurs, report it immediately to the local program coordinator and the HQ PI.

4. **Data management and analysis:** Participate in data finalization, management and analysis once fieldwork is complete.
    a. Ensure that all data products (questionnaires, structured observation forms, notes, and recordings) are correctly catalogued, labeled and appropriately stored.
    b. Oversee the entry of structured data into computer forms, ensure the quality of the data, and see that data entry is revised if necessary. (Data entry will be conducted by two separate data entry operators and then comparison and reconciliation of data collection forms will be completed.)
    c. Manage process of transcription and translation with qualified, independent firm identified and hired by PREVENT to transcribe and translate all data collection notes into organized computer files.
    d. Supervise the revision of transcriptions/translations based on feedback provided by the third party translation/transcription reviewer.
    e. Respond to data queries from FHI 360 in a timely manner.
    f. Write a report summarizing field experience and debriefing notes and personal observation.
    g. Review data analysis and final report prepared by PREVENT and add/clarify information based on field experience.

DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are to be submitted in electronic form by the consultant to the designated FHI 360 contact person as implementation of the study progresses. Consultant should anticipate that multiple drafts of the deliverable (revisions) may need to be produced and

submitted for feedback before the deliverable can be considered final and approved as fulfilling the terms of the contract. The following deliverables are required:

1. Certificate of completion of research ethics training (e.g., the web-based NIH course on "Protecting Human Research Subjects").
2. Submission of IRB approval documents.
3. Submission of pre-test report of findings and recommendations for changes to the instruments, consent forms, and guidelines for conducting biosecure and biosafe farm visits to the HQ PI and local program coordinator.
4. Submission of final forward and back translation of data collection instruments, consent forms, and guidelines for farm visit, incorporating agreed on pretest changes.
5. Submit final training materials.
6. Co-facilitate 7-day training with PREVENT staff to prepare for Biosecurity Assessment and Focus Group Discussion.
7. Submission ofBiosecurity Assessment hard copies to data entry operator; and electronic data to HQ PI
8. Conduct up to 8 FGD (2 for each key species primates, wild boar, rodents and civets). Submit audio recordings, electronic notes, FGD proceeding documents (flip charts, drawings, etc.) to independent qualified firm for transcription and translation from Vietnamese into English.
9. Submission of final complete set of the following catalogued research products:
    a. Digital audio recordings of all recorded sessions
    b. Notes and other original research products
    c. Consent forms
    d. Original questionnaires and structured observation forms
    e. Checked electronic files of any structured data
    f. Detailed notes from data collection activities and preliminary analysis notes in English (electronic)
    g. Checked transcriptions/translations of all recorded sessions
10. Final report in English summarizing field work and preliminary findings.
11. Provide comments on final report and analysis

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Consultant should provide a cover letter, current CV, biographical data form, writing sample and confirmation of availability to perform the work:

1. The CV shall contain, but not be limited to:

- A half page statement describing the consultant's capability for completing the assignment and previous experience with similar activities, especially surveys and structured observation. Indicate experience recruiting and managing field staff in multiple sites.
- List of work conducted in Vietnamese with dates, funder and information about study size and methods used.
- A description of fluency level in English and Vietnamese and type of experience using them in quantitative and qualitative research.

- List of at least three references with contact email and phone numbers who can independently verify past work.

2. Biographical data form:
   - Attachment B - 1420 biographical data form
3. A writing sample of a paper or report
4. .Confirmation of availability to perform the work during the anticipated period of performance indicated above (November 2013 – August 2014)

Consultants are responsible for the review of the terms and conditions provided in the attachments and listed below. Consultant must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this solicitation and its attachments.

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CRITERIA/QUALIFICATION FOR EVALUATION

The selection will be based on the best value/trade off (weighing price against technical factors as follows*:*

- **Education**: *20 points*
  - Masters (required) or PhD (preferred) in related field (Animal Sciences and/or Husbandry, Zoology, Medical Anthropology, or Public Health) or combination of education and experience

- **Capabilities and experience:** *50 points*
  - Knowledge of animal farming (domestic or wild) and biosecurity.
  - Experience conducting quantitative research and structured observation in Vietnam.
  - Experience organizing field teams
  - Experience conducting/managing focus group discussions a plus.
  - Experience managing data entry and processing
  - Strong communication skills (both verbal and written)
  - Fluency in *Vietnamese* and ability to converse in and read and write in English required.
  - Experience analyzing data and report writing strongly desirable
  - Past research experience in zoonotic diseases and/or other studies focusing on human/animal interfaces is a plus.

- **Cost**: *30 points*

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Any questions or requests for clarification need to be submitted in writing to Mr. Le Thanh Hai, hlethanh@fhi360.org and copy to Ms. Kathleen O'Rourke (korourke@fhi360.org) by **5:00 p.m. Vietnam time on 24 October 2013**. Inquiries and answers to inquiries will be shared with all applicants. No telephone inquiries will be answered.

Please provide the requested information by **5:00 p.m. Vietnam time on 01 November, 2013** via email to Mr. Le Thanh Hai, hlethanh@fhi360.org and Ms. Kathleen O'Rourke, korourke@fhi360.org.

NOTE: Please **DO NOT** begin work until a contract has been signed between FHI360 and the consultant.

NOTE

1. FHI 360 will not compensate individuals for preparation of their response to this Solicitation.
2. Issuing this Solicitation is not a guarantee that FHI 360 will award a contract.
3. FHI 360 reserves the right to issue a contract based on the initial evaluation of offers without discussion.
4. FHI 360 may choose to award a contract for part of the activities in the Solicitation.
5. FHI 360 may choose to award contracts to more than one offeror for specific parts of the activities in the Solicitation.
6. FHI 360 may request from short-listed offerors a second or third round of either oral presentation or written response to a more specific and detailed scope of work that is based on a general scope of work in the original Solicitation.
7. FHI 360 has the right to rescind the solicitation, or rescind an award prior to the signing of a contract due to any unforeseen changes in the direction of FHI 360's client (the US Government), be it funding or programmatic.
8. FHI 360 reserves the right to waive any deviations by offerors from the requirements of this solicitation that in FHI 360's opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition.
9. Data produced by this belongs to FHI 360 and USAID. Any distribution of data must first have written authorization from FHI 360 or its designated representative.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Consultant Assignment General Terms and Conditions
Attachment B – 1420 Biographical Data Form

- END OF SOLICITATION -