

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement Number:	MENA2020A11o
Open Date:	August 18, 2020
Questions Deadline:	August 25, 2020
Closing Deadline:	August 28, 2020
Geographical Area Restrictions:	n/a
Point of Contact:	Andrew Larsen (alarsen@iri.org)

Background

The International Republican Institute (IRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, organization dedicated to advancing freedom and democracy worldwide. Since 1983, IRI has worked to develop democratic institutions and ideals, carrying out a variety of international programs to promote freedom, self-government and the rule of law worldwide. IRI provides technical assistance in the areas of political party strengthening, developing civic institutions and open elections, promoting democratic governance and advancing the rule of law.

IRI will use the polling data to assess the current and upcoming socio-political dynamic to obtain possible information about a) Measuring public perceptions of the Afghan electoral system and post-“peace deal” future of Afghan electoral system in at-risk communities. It is IRI’s preference that data collection for this survey is conducted through phone interviews (CATI).

Period of Performance

September 2020- October 22, 2020

Statement of Work

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Public opinion data shall be obtained through a telephone survey of select provinces in **Afghanistan** that is designed to obtain the most accurate possible information about:

- (1) Better understand perceptions of the 2019 electoral cycle among citizens in rural, at-risk communities
- (2) Better understand perceptions of the on-going peace process and its implications for future elections among citizens in rural, at-risk communities

RESEARCH TASKS

(1) General Responsibilities of Bidder. The bidder shall be responsible for the project design and execution, including the following specific tasks:

- (a) translation, formatting, pretesting, adaptation, and programming of questionnaires;
- (b) development of a CATI sampling methodology
- (c) training supervisors and interviewers;
- (d) arranging and supervising all aspects of fieldwork, including back-checks;
- (e) processing the survey data, including data cleaning and encoding survey responses;
- (f) ascertaining the representativeness of the sample and weighting the data, if necessary;
- (g) Statistical analysis of findings and writing an 3-5 page analytic report to place the findings within the local political and other context.

(2) Questionnaire. IRI will provide a draft questionnaire and the bidder will provide input, such as a need for rephrasing certain terms for local context.

IRI requests translation into **Dari and Pashto**. Translations will be reviewed and approved by IRI.

At least the main interview language must be programmed—only programming in English (unless English is the main interview language) is not sufficient. For CATI the estimated average interview duration is **15** minutes.

3) Sample Design. IRI requires a provincial sample of Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangahar, Nuristan, Paktia, that is representative of the adult population of the survey universe (each province separately; there is no requirement for aggregation of provinces.), as well as oversamples in select districts. Planned exclusions of the population of the survey universe (e.g. geographic, linguistic, lacking accessing to a phone etc.) must be discussed during quotation stage.

Province	Provincial Sample Plan (over 18, both sexes)	Potential District Sampling Plan (over 18, both sexes)	
		Districts marked* contains oversamples (required oversample inserted in (...))	
		Districts in bold MUST be included in the sample	
Helmand	=200	N/A	
Kandahar	n=1000 (plus n=15 oversample)	Provincial Capital (Kandahar)	452
		Arghandab	50
		Daman	28
		Panjwayee	70

		Zhire	69	
		Shah Wali Kot	35	
		Khakrez	18	
		Arghistan	28	
		Ghorak	8	
		Maiwand	47	
		Spin Boldak	81	
		Nesh	11	
		Miyanishin	12	
		Shorabak	9	
		Maruf	27	
		Reg (Shiga)	7	
		Dand	36 (15)	
Khost	n=200	N/A		
Kunar	n=200	N/A		
Laghman	n=700	N/A		
Nangahar	n=1500 (plus n=100 in oversamples)	Provincial Capital (Jalalabad)	240	
		Behsud	113	
		Surkh Rud	120	
		Chapar har	60	
		Kama	77	
		Kuzkunar	55	
		Rodat	69	
		Khugyani	130	
		Bati Kot	75	
		Deh Bala	40 (10)	
		Pachiragam	42 (10)	
		Darah -i- Noor	40	
		Kot	52	
		Goshta	27 (20)	

		Achin	48
		Shinwar	60
		Muhmand Dara	45
		Lalpoor	20 (30)
		Sher Zad	66
		Nazyan	15
		Hesarak	31
		Dur Baba	23 (30)
		Spinghar	52
Nuristan	n=200	N/A	
Paktia	n=200	N/A	
TOTAL	n=4200		

IRI will accept a sampling plan that does not cover every single district and combines less populous districts (except for bold districts in the table above, which must be covered.) If such an approach is suggested, such a sampling plan needs to be included in the proposal.

The sample shall be drawn using recognized probability methods, all the way down to the selection of the individual respondent. In the event that any departure from probability sampling methods is recommended by the bidder for all or any part of the survey, the sampling methodologies to be employed shall be described in detail and a rationale for their use shall be provided. IRI’s preferred approach to CATI is sampling list-based, provided that recent sampling frame data exists in form of listings of all phone numbers (landline and mobile, incl. of all major mobile phone service providers.) Alternatively, IRI accepts an RDD approach, ideally with some stratification, e.g. by area code. A detailed sampling methodology shall be submitted to the IRI prior to fieldwork, including a description of the survey coverage, allocation of the sample, description of the sampling frame, description of any stratification criteria to be used, description of the stages of selection and the selections methods to be used at each stage, the method to be used for selection of the respondent in case of shared phone numbers, and call-back rules to be employed. It is assumed that the sample will be distributed in proportion to the population of each region or other geographic unit to be surveyed; in the event that the bidder wishes to propose a sample design departing from this principle the proposal should describe the allocation to be used and the reasons for doing so. Surveys should utilize all possible telecommunications carriers.

(4) Pre-test. The questionnaire shall be pre-tested by the bidder prior to the commencement of any fieldwork. No less than 20 pre-test interviews shall be conducted and in surveys with translations into multiple language, no less than 10 interviews per language. The bidder shall

provide IRI with a written report of the results of the pre-test, along with details of any problems encountered and suggested remedies, prior to the commencement of any fieldwork.

(5) Fieldwork. Interviews shall be conducted by experienced field workers who shall be thoroughly briefed by bidder prior to commencement of any fieldwork. Remote training via video-conference is acceptable. The bidder shall ensure that interviewers are thoroughly familiar with household and respondent selection procedures, call back procedures (at least 3 attempts before substituting a selected respondent), and the structure of the questionnaire, including routing and filtering. Interviewer training shall include practice sessions in administering the questionnaire. All interviewers must have at least completed secondary education and must be fully fluent (reading and speaking) in the language(s) in which they are to administer the interviews. A minimum of 10% of interviews shall be back checked or accompanied by a team supervisor.

The interviews will be conducted on the phone.

The bidder will need to track contacts (and reasons for unsuccessful interview attempts) to calculate the response rate. During the quotation process, the bidder will disclose the anticipated response rate. Should this anticipated response rate be less than 50%, the bidder will list in the proposal additional steps that will be taken to boost response rates, e.g. additional call-backs, opening the call-center during additional hours, etc.. Informed consent (oral is acceptable unless country laws require written) must be sought prior to commencing the interview. IRI will provide draft informed consent language to the bidder and this template may be updated by the bidder to conform with the country's legal requirements.

(6) Data Processing. The bidder shall be responsible for data entry cleaning, and processing, including development and implementation of a coding scheme for all open-ended questions. The bidder shall supply data to IRI as a clean, fully labeled in English SPSS “*.sav” file with a complete data dictionary of variable names and value labels. There shall be one data record for each respondent and records shall be of fixed length. The bidder shall be responsible for deriving and applying any post-stratification weights required to bring the sample into conformity with the demographic profile of the population at the very least for gender and age groups, as well as any additional weighting factors required to correct for disproportionate allocation, if use. Ideally, IRI would want education groups included in weights, and if available demographic data allows it, those without formal education will be assigned a separately code from those with a least some primary education. If demographic weights were to exceed a factor 1:8, this must be discussed in writing with IRI before the weight is applied. IRI has strict upper limits on post-weighting and requires unweighted samples already generally matching the population's rough gender and age distribution. For example, an unweighted sample of 65% male and 35% female would not be accepted, even if corrected with post-weights, unless the potential for this skew is already disclosed in the proposal.

Each record shall include a unique respondent ID number, interviewer ID number, interview duration, landline versus mobile phone, interview start and end times, date of interview, and

interview language if there is more than one. Each record shall include demographic information about the respondent, including: gender, exact age, and education level.

(7) Technical Report. When delivering data, the bidder shall provide a Technical Report which shall include the following:

- (a) Complete sampling methodology
- (b) Details of response rates, including tabulation of unsuccessful interview attempts, with reasons for non-response (i.e. respondent refusal, proxy refusal, inability to reach selected respondent, etc.).
- (c) A brief report on survey operations including any practical difficulties encountered in carrying out the survey;
- (d) Estimated sampling error;
- (e) A complete explanation of the weighting scheme including details of how weighting factors were developed and applied, as well as the demographic data on which weights were based (i.e., age, gender, and education distributions in the population);
- f) any abnormalities encountered during data QC, including but not limited to: suspicious patterns by interviewer ID (e.g. usually fast completion rates), potential contradictions (e.g. respondents who rate a certain politician as highly untrustworthy yet definitely plan on voting for this person), significant data changes of indicators since the previous poll etc.

(8) Analytical Report. The bidder will provide an analytical report of 3-5 pages highlighting key findings from the data and placing these findings within the local context. Mere description of data is not sufficient; the report must contain analysis.

(9) PowerPoint Presentation. The bidder will provide a presentation with a chart for every survey question. A template (already completed with historic data for trend charts if applicable) will be provided by IRI.

(10) Summary of deliverables. The Deliverables to be provided to IRI by the bidder are as follows:

- (a) Sampling Methodology
- (b) Pretest report
- (c) Copies of the final questionnaire, as fielded, in English and translations
- (d) A complete data set formatted as SPSS file
- (e) A technical report
- (f) An analytical report
- (g) PowerPoint Presentation

(10) Delivery Schedule. Bidder will advise IRI on a feasible timeline for completing work on this project as soon as possible, with the deliverables c-e listed in Section 9 above to be submitted no later than two weeks after the conclusion of fieldwork, and deliverables f-g no later than one week after acceptance of the data by IRI.

(11) Proposals must contain:

- List CATI surveys with similar specifications previously conducted in this country
- Explain if planning on using subcontractors for any tasks
- Is bidder able to comply with all requirements listed on the SOW without alterations? If any proposed alterations, explain.
- Coverage, if not 100% of non-institutionalized adults aged 18+:
- Describe sampling methodology, including design and the source the sampling frame is drawn from, household selection, respondent selection, number of call-backs
- Anticipated response rate
- Describe Interviewer Training (duration, topics etc.)
- Describe fieldwork quality control (direct listening, backchecks etc.)
- Describe data entry and data checks protocol (e.g. logic checks etc.)
- Explain any risks associated with the Coronavirus situation to your company's operations, employees, and respondents, and how you intend to mitigate such risks
- Describe anticipated challenges if any

Technical Proposals

All proposals submitted to IRI must include:

1. Information addressing Bidder's experience in providing each of the services identified in the above Statement of Work and Bidder's proposed specific approach for providing those services to IRI under this contract, including sufficient information to determine a clear definition of services as it relates to other providers that may be involved.
2. A statement confirming your firm's agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to the services identified above, specifically identifying any disagreement with or exceptions to the terms, conditions, and provisions.
3. The name, address, and telephone and facsimile numbers of the Bidder (and electronic address if available). If the Bidder is a firm, name(s) should be provided for individuals authorized to conduct business on behalf of the firm.
4. Bidders may provide a list of up to five references for work performed of a similar nature during the last three years, along with contact details. IRI may contact the references to evaluate past performance.
5. If the Bidder is a U.S. organization/resident, or a foreign organization/resident which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., the information submitted must contain Bidder's Taxpayer Identification Number.
6. Proposals will not exceed 15 pages (not including cover page).
7. **Additionally, all proposals must also include:**

- CATI surveys with similar specifications previously conducted in this country
- Explain if planning on using subcontractors for any tasks
- Is bidder able to comply with all requirements listed on the SOW without alterations? If any proposed alterations, explain.
- Coverage, if not 100% of non-institutionalized adults aged 18+:
- Describe sampling methodology, including design and the source the sampling frame is drawn from, household selection, respondent selection, number of call-backs
- Anticipated response rate
- List interview method (F2F Paper and Pencil, CAPI)
- Describe Interviewer Training (duration, topics etc.)
- Describe fieldwork quality control (direct observation, direct listening, personal backchecks, phone backchecks etc.)
- Describe data entry and data checks protocol (e.g. checks for duplicate entries, logic checks etc.)
- Explain any risks associated with the Coronavirus situation to your company's operations, employees, and respondents, and how you intend to mitigate such risks
- Please describe which, if any, effects of COVID-19 you expect on the survey and your operations conducting the survey (e.g. response rates, changes in sample composition etc.)
- Describe anticipated general challenges, if any
- Lastly, if the CATI phone polling option was made over face-to-face due to COVID-19 circumstances, describe how switching to a phone survey would affect your response rate (typically phone surveys have lower response rates than face-to-face); if there are any exclusions (e.g. people who do not have access to either a landline or mobile phone); and what kind of sampling methodology you propose to employ (either list-based or random digit dialing.)

Price Proposals

Bidders must propose a firm-fixed Unit Price for each of the deliverables identified below and in the format of the table below. The Bidder's pricing must be valid until November 1, 2020. **The proposed Unit Price should be fixed and inclusive of all costs to perform, including inspection services, transportation, taxes, import duties (if any), and other levies.** To the extent that a Bidder proposed to include any pricing not reflected in the table below, such pricing must be fully described in the proposal. Proposals must be submitted in USD, payments under any resulting contract will be made in this currency.

Cost proposals must include the following criteria:

Polling

- Prices for one, two and three surveys for each CATI
- Each quote for 4,200 respondents

CATI Unit (phone)	Cost Per Unit Poll 1	Poll 2	Poll 3	No. of Units	Total Cost
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Sampling Plan				1	
Pretest Report				1	
Copies of the final questionnaire, as fielded, in English and translations				1	
A complete data set formatted as SPSS file				1	
A technical report				1	
An analytical report				1	
PowerPoint Presentation				1	
Total price:					

Evaluation and Award Process

1. IRI may contact any Bidder for clarification or additional information, but Bidders are advised that IRI intends to evaluate the offers based on the written proposals, without discussions, and reserves the right to make decisions based solely on the information provided with the initial proposals. IRI may but is not obligated to conduct additional negotiations with the most highly rated Bidders prior to award of a contract, and may at its sole discretion elect to issue contracts to one or more Bidders.
2. Mathematical errors will be corrected in the following manner: If a discrepancy exists between the total price proposed and the total price resulting from multiplying the unit price by the corresponding amounts, then the unit price will prevail and the total price will be corrected. If there is a discrepancy between the numbers written out in words and the amounts in numbers, then the amount expressed in words will prevail. If the Bidder does not accept the correction, the offer will be rejected.
3. IRI may determine that a proposal is unacceptable if the prices proposed are materially unbalanced between line items or sub-line items. Unbalanced pricing exists when, despite an acceptable total evaluated price, the price of one or more contract line items is significantly overstated or understated as indicated by the application of cost or price analysis techniques. A proposal may be rejected if IRI determines that the lack of balance poses an unacceptable risk.
4. IRI will conduct a source selection based as follows:

Best Value:

IRI intends to make an award to the responsible Bidder based on the following evaluation factors:

- a) **Technical evaluation, (including technical capabilities, and proposed technical approach) – 40 percent**

- *Offeror has the technical capacity to perform all objectives as laid out in the SOW in a reasonable period of time- 20 percent*
- *Proposed technical approach and outlined technical capabilities- 20 percent*

b) Relevant Experience –30 percent

- *Detailed descriptions of successfully completed public opinion polls in past calendar year- 30 percent*

c) Price – 30 percent

IRI intends to evaluate Bidders' proposals in accordance with these factors and make an award to the responsible Bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the program.

5. If a cost realism analysis is performed, cost realism may be considered in evaluating performance or price.

Submission Instructions

Bids must be submitted via email to Andrew Larsen, at alarsen@iri.org with the subject line "MENA2020A11o" by the deadline listed above.

RFP Terms and Conditions

1. Prospective Bidders are requested to review clauses incorporated by reference in the section "Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference".
2. IRI may reject any or all proposals if such is within IRI's interest.
3. Proof of costs incurred, such as but not limited to receipts, pictures and financial documents, may be requested during and for up to three years after the end of the contract period.
4. The Bidder's initial proposal should contain the Bidder's best offer.
5. Payment will be made upon receipt of invoices and deliverables/services.
6. Discussions with Bidders following the receipt of a proposal do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.
7. IRI will hold all submissions as confidential and submissions shall not be disclosed to third parties. IRI reserves the right to share proposals internally, across divisions, for the purposes of evaluating the proposals.
8. For any currency conversion, the exchange rate to US Dollars listed on oanda.com on the closing date of this solicitation shall be used.
9. Every contract will contain provisions governing termination for cause and termination for convenience.
10. By submitting a proposal, offeror agrees to comply with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to the services identified above, and will specifically identify any disagreement with or exceptions to the terms, conditions, and provisions.
11. Offerors confirm that the prices in the proposal/proposal/application/quote have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Bidder or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
12. Bidders agree to disclose as part of the proposal submission:

- Any close, familial, or financial relationships with IRI staff and agents. For example, the Bidder must disclose if a Bidder's mother conducts volunteer trainings for IRI.
- Any family or financial relationship with other Bidders submitting proposals. For example, if the Bidder's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the Bidder must state this.
- Any other action that might be interpreted as potential conflict of interest.

Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference

IRI is required to make the contractor subject to certain flowdown clauses of the prime award. This awarded contract will incorporate one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Where "flow-down" to the contractor is applicable, references to "USAID/Department of State" shall be interpreted to mean "IRI", "Recipient" to mean "Contractor", and "Subrecipient" to mean "lower-tier subcontractor." Included by reference are the applicable provisions contained in Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200 and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-governmental Organizations/US Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions.

IRI Obligations

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of IRI, nor does it commit IRI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal or quotation.

Required Certifications

The following certificates need to be signed by all Bidders. These certifications are an integral part of the quotation/proposal. Please print them off and send back to us with your proposal after signature on each certificate. They are:

- Certification regarding debarment, suspension, ineligibility and voluntary exclusion lower tier covered transactions
- Authorized Individuals

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

This certification implements Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension and the requirements set forth in 2.C.F.R. 180, Subpart C.”

Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the person to which this proposal is submitted.

1. By signing and submitting this proposal/application/quote, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal/application/quote is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "lower tier covered transaction," "participant," "person," "primary covered transaction," "principal," "proposal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of the rules implementing Executive Order 12549.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal/application/quote that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the IRI.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal/application/quote that it will include the clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transactions," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals.
8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 above, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a

person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Signature: _____
Date: _____
Name: _____
Title/Position: _____
Entity Name: _____
Address: _____

Authorized Individuals

The offeror/bidder/applicant represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with IRI and to bind the recipient in connection with this procurement:

Name	Title	Telephone	Email

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Entity Name: _____