

Request for Bid/Proposal

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from experienced organizations /consultants (further “vendor”) interested in conducting action research on changing migration patterns from and within Central Asia.

[6920-REG-RFP-001]

Issued:

The Safe Migration in Central Asia Project

Winrock International

Cooperative Agreement: 72011519CA00002

Country: Central Asia region

Geographic Code: 937



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Introduction

The Safe Migration in Central Asia (SMICA) project aims to strengthen the ability of Central Asia (CA) to promote safe migration and reduce trafficking in persons (TIP). SMICA builds on previous United States Agency for International Development (USAID) counter trafficking in persons (CTIP) activities in the region and establishes close coordination with other U.S. Government (USG) programming to leverage additional resources, magnify impact and avoid overlap. The project collaborates with national, regional, and international experts and organizations to strengthen bilateral and multi-country strategies and actions to promote rights-based migration and counter TIP. It focuses on reducing the vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of TIP; and expanding and improving the identification and assistance to trafficked persons.

The overarching goal of the SMICA project is to strengthen the mutual accountability of all stakeholders—including governments, NGOs, and the private sector—to become more self-reliant in efforts to prevent TIP, protect survivors of human trafficking, and promote safe migration. By supporting governmental, nongovernmental, and business stakeholders, the project addresses both the push and pull factors for TIP and protection for vulnerable migrants, recognizing that these factors and the political and economic climate of each country are unique.

In order to achieve this goal, SMICA project carries out activities that generate the following intermediate results:

- Strengthened bilateral and multi-country strategies and actions to promote rights-based migration and TIP (IR1)
- Vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of TIP reduced (IR2)
- Identification and assistance to trafficked persons expanded and improved (IR3)

Submission Details

Submission Deadlines

Proposals must be received no later than 17:00 Almaty time on January 7, 2025. Late submissions will not be accepted. All proposals are to be submitted following the guidelines listed below. Telephone requests will not be honored.

Winrock International may request additional documentation after the bid/proposal deadline.

Submission Delivery Address

Please submit all documentation to:

Email: SMICAProcurement@winrock.org with the subject line “Action research on migration patterns”

Please include the name of the person in your organization who is submitting the application as well as the current telephone and email contacts.

Submission Questions and Clarifications

Inquiries/questions must be received no later than December 25, 2024, 17:00 Almaty time

and must be submitted via e-mail to SMICAProcurement@winrock.org.

Winrock will evaluate complete vendor proposals to determine which proposal represents the best value to Winrock. Winrock reserves the right to negotiate with the vendors.

Incomplete or late applications will be marked as such and will be ineligible for review or award. However, Winrock reserves the right to accept and include incomplete or late applications in the review and award process if it is determined to be in the best interest of Winrock to do so. Applications that are submitted late or incomplete run the risk of not being considered for review.

Instructions to Vendors

- Validity of bid/proposal: 60 working days starting from the submission date.
- Delivery time: as per the timeline given below.
- The budget must include both the unit price and the total price in USD. However, the contract and payments will be made in local currency, based on the official exchange rate on the date of contract signing.
- Include VAT, if applicable.
- Banking information.
- Recommended service location will be in CA countries.
- Winrock reserves the right to make changes or cancel this solicitation.
- A pre-application conference will not be held.

Document Standards

Proposal should cover all Central Asian region..

Vendors interested in implementing this assignment are requested to submit the following in the specific order below:

1. Technical proposal. Applications must be submitted in Russian and/or English and may not be more than 10 pages, using Times New Roman, font size 11, single-spaced. The page limit does not include CVs of proposed staff. The vendor shall provide authorized contact including address, phone number and email, a detailed plan of specific activities, a timetable for carrying out the assignment, as well as data collection and analysis methodology, indicating why the proposed research methods are suitable to be able to answer the research questions. The vendor shall list and briefly describe current projects/services, current clients/grantors related to this RFP, past and current Geographical Outreach.

2. Budget. The vendor shall propose a realistic cost estimate for this assignment, including a breakdown of the budget categories and justification of expenses. The budget shall include only those costs that can be directly attributed to the proposed activities (with explanation of line items).

The vendor must show existence of financial and administrative systems to adequately account for funds provided under this assignment. The ceiling of this procurement is USD 15,000. The final amount awarded will depend on award activities and final negotiations.

3. Personnel. The vendor shall list and briefly describe the name, role, and qualifications of the staff proposed to work on the assignment (CVs of proposed personnel to be included in an annex).

4. Experience. List contracts, grants, or agreements involving similar or related assignment in the last three years. Describe experience conducting action research and/or assessments such as mid-term, end line evaluation, survey of multidimensional development sector project (TIP, migration, labor recruitment and etc.). Vendors should also submit:

- Two samples of similar kind of study reports on related topics.
- At least two (2) references that will support the vendor's record of service. Reference information must include the location, a brief description of work performed; reference company and focal point contacts.

Submissions must be in English and/or Russian and typed single-spaced. All pages must be numbered and include the RFP reference number and the name of organization on each page.

Award

Winrock anticipates notifying the successful vendor and providing the agreement for signature during January 2025.

- Winrock will run an open and fair competitive bid/proposal process.
- As warranted, Winrock may increase or decrease the requirements.
- Winrock reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted, in part or in whole.

Scope of work

Overall Goal

CA has historically been characterized by complex migration patterns, particularly involving labor migration to Russia and other countries. However, recent global and regional developments have affected these patterns, creating new risks and vulnerabilities for migrants.

The Russian war in Ukraine has disrupted traditional migration routes and created economic instability, prompting migrants to reconsider their destinations or return home. Many Central Asian migrants in Russia have faced increased challenges, including economic difficulties, legal uncertainties, and instances of discrimination, which have influenced migration decisions across the region. Additionally, events such as the terrorist attack at the Crocus center, which resulted in casualties, have heightened security concerns, further complicating migration flows and the risks migrants face. At the same time, new migration opportunities are emerging in the EU, UK, Turkey, Western Europe and other countries, offering alternatives for Central Asian migrants. These destinations provide prospects for better wages, safer working conditions, and more transparent legal frameworks. As a result, there is growing interest among migrants in diversifying their migration routes, particularly to countries that prioritize skilled labor and

temporary work programs. This shift underscores the importance of exploring alternative pathways to ensure safer, more secure migration options for Central Asian workers.

SMICA aims to conduct action research to better understand how various factors are reshaping migration patterns within and from CA. The research will focus on analyzing the changes in migrant flows, vulnerabilities, and opportunities to ensure that migration remains safe and rights-based while identifying areas where support and interventions are most needed. This initiative underscores SMICA's commitment to adapting its strategies to the evolving realities faced by migrants and their communities.

The research should mainly focus on labor migrants from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Turkmenistan, which are countries of origin in Central Asian region. Kazakhstan should be reviewed as a country of destination.

The methodology of the research should be suggested by the potential vendors. However, the following methodologies and approaches can be considered.

1. Desk Review and Secondary Data Analysis:

- Collect and analyze existing data from government statistics, international organizations (e.g., IOM, UNHCR, and World Bank), and research studies on migration before and after the mentioned events.
- Focus on data related to migration flows, remittances, and legal or social challenges faced by migrants.

2. Qualitative Methods:

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIs):** Conduct interviews with policymakers, migration experts, civil society representatives, and private sector actors involved in labor migration.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Engage with migrant communities, including returnees and prospective migrants, to understand their lived experiences, challenges, and motivations for migration.

3. Quantitative Surveys:

- Administer structured surveys with any of the above groups to gather data on factors affecting migration, destinations, methods and experiences during migration.

4. Case Studies:

- Develop in-depth case studies of migrants affected by the events in Ukraine and the Crocus incident to illustrate specific challenges and adaptive strategies.

5. GIS Mapping:

- Use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map changes in migration routes and destinations, highlighting key points of departure, transit, and arrival.

Key Research Questions (to be further developed and finalized by vendor, in consultation with SMICA:

Migration Patterns and Trends:

1. How have migration flows from and within CA shifted since the Russian war in Ukraine and the Crocus terrorist attack? How different are the shifts across genders, ages, professions, etc.?
2. What are the primary new destinations for Central Asian migrants, and why are they emerging as alternatives to traditional routes?
3. What are the key challenges related to migrating to the new destinations?

Drivers of Migration:

3. How have economic, political, and security factors influenced migration decisions for Central Asian migrants?

Vulnerabilities and Risks:

5. What new vulnerabilities (e.g., trafficking, exploitation, violence, human rights abuses, legal precarity) have arisen for migrants as a result of these geopolitical events? How do vulnerabilities differ for male, female, and other groups of migrants?

Response Mechanisms:

7. What coping strategies have migrants and their families been adopting to manage the risks associated with migration in the current context?
8. How have governments, CSOs, and international organizations adapted their support to address emerging migration challenges?

Policy and Programmatic Recommendations:

9. What policy interventions are needed to improve the safety and well-being of Central Asian migrants in light of these changes?
10. How can regional and international cooperation address the challenges posed by evolving migration patterns?

By considering integration of these methods and questions, the research will provide actionable insights into the shifting dynamics of migration in CA, ensuring evidence-based policymaking and programmatic responses.

Key Objectives

1. **Analyze Evolving Migration Trends.** Understand how migration routes, destinations, and flows have changed in recent years, with a focus on patterns specific to CA.
2. **Review if/how the drivers of migration have changed,** including economic, political, and social factors.
3. **Assess Vulnerabilities and Risks.** Investigate how new migration pathways have affected risks for Central Asian migrants of labor exploitation, trafficking, legal precarity, and safety concerns.
4. **Identify Current Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems.** Explore how migrants and their families adapt to the changing environment, including financial adjustments, reliance on social networks, and access to institutional support.

5. Evaluate Policy and Program Gaps. Assess the effectiveness of current national, regional, and international policies and programs addressing migration challenges, with attention to gaps in legislative frameworks and service provision.
6. Enhance Evidence-Based Recommendations. Provide actionable recommendations to policymakers, civil society organizations (CSOs), and international agencies to mitigate risks and improve the safety and well-being of migrants.
7. Promote Regional and International Collaboration. Identify opportunities to strengthen cross-border cooperation among Central Asian governments and global stakeholders to respond effectively to evolving migration patterns.
8. Document Socio-Economic Impacts. Quantify the socio-economic implications of changing migration flows on migrants, their families, and their home and host communities, including remittance trends and labor market impacts.

Key Responsibilities

The vendor will be required to perform the following tasks, but will not be limited to these tasks:

- Conduct a preliminary literature review to identify existing knowledge and data gaps.
- Work with the SMICA Chief of Party (COP) and Monitoring & Evaluation (MEL) Officer to develop and approve the research design, work plan and methodology, including stakeholder validation.
- Ensure ethical research practices, including obtaining informed consent and safeguarding data privacy.
- Conduct research in line with the approved work plan, integrating both qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) and quantitative (e.g., surveys, statistical analysis) methods.
- Maintain and organize all data collected in a database in MS Excel, MS Access, or another agreed format.
- Provide regular updates to SMICA on research progress and emerging findings.
- Prepare and present interim results using appropriate tables, charts, and narratives for feedback.
- Complete a draft report and submit it for SMICA review, addressing all feedback in subsequent revisions.
- Facilitate a learning/debriefing workshop to present findings, conclusions, and recommendations to stakeholders.
- Submit the final report and other agreed deliverables, incorporating insights from the workshop, within the specified timeline.
- Propose a knowledge dissemination plan for sharing findings with a broader audience.

DELIVERABLES

The key deliverables are as follows:

The following deliverables are required; this list may be revised as a preliminary set of methods is identified. Deadlines for each deliverable will be included within the proposal and will be reviewed and finalized by the SMICA project at the beginning of the assignment.

The deliverables include:

- Approved methodology and work plan.
- Pilot data collection instruments, including adjustments made based on piloting results.
- Final data collection tools, instruments, consent forms (translated into relevant local languages), and ethical protocols.
- Data collection plan with specified dates, locations, supervision details, and risk mitigation strategies.
- Data analysis plan with coding documentation and variable descriptions.
- Electronic and hard copies of all raw data in SPSS, Excel, or other agreed formats, with clear documentation of coding processes.
- Draft report that will be maximum of 30-pages long in English and/or Russian, including the following sections:
 - Summary (Executive Summary included).
 - Background.
 - Objectives.
 - Study Methodology: including methods for reaching each target population, project/survey locations, sampling design, questionnaire development, field work, data entry/processing, analysis, and study limitations.
 - Results in narrative and visual formats (tables/graphs).
 - Conclusions and Recommendations.
 - Annexes: including references, questionnaires, training materials for enumerators, and pre-testing processes/results with adjustments made.
- Draft a two-page document, with the summary of the research, major conclusions and recommendations.
- Facilitate a learning workshop/debriefing session to present findings to the SMICA team and stakeholders, gathering feedback and actionable insights. The event will be organized by SMICA, including covering of all related organizational costs.
- Final report in English and/or Russian, incorporating all feedback from the draft review process and including an optional dissemination strategy.

ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF PROCUREMENT CONTRACT TO CONDUCT STUDY

The ceiling of this procurement is USD 15,000. The final amount awarded will depend on award activities and final negotiations.

ANTICIPATED START DATE AND DURATION OF PROCUREMENT CONTRACT

For the purposes of the proposal, the vendor should present a proposed timeline for completion of the aforementioned activities with an overall duration of no more than 4 months starting with the signing of the agreement.

PAYMENT TERMS

- 1) 20% upon approval of data collection package (includes: inception report, survey protocol with work plan/schedule and tools; piloted data collection package and report)
- 2) 30% on completion of the primary data collection exercise (includes: field data collection report, field quality assurance visits report)

- 30% upon approval of the submitted draft report (no more than 30 pages) and 2-page Summary document.
- 3) 20% upon approval of the submitted final report and complete study package.

TYPE OF PROCUREMENT CONTRACT TO BE ISSUED

Winrock will determine the appropriate procurement contract mechanism, in consultation with the vendor during the negotiation process, based on the pre-award assessment of the vendor and the final cost of the award.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- ✓ In-depth knowledge and experience conducting research, experience in research related to TIP, migration, labor recruitment is an asset.
- ✓ Vendor should have team member(s) in Russian and/or one or more of the languages of CA. Vendor should be able to adjust to country-specific requirements and provide translation, if needed during the study implementation.
- ✓ The vendor has proven experience in appropriate data analysis technology, potentially including software such as SPSS, Excel, Atlas.ti and/or NVIVO, etc.
- ✓ Ability to analyze and present complex data in a clear and understandable format
- ✓ The vendor should have proven experience in preparing quality evaluation reports in English and/or Russian
- ✓ The vendor should have valid legal documents (government registration, tax and VAT certificate, etc.) (only for organizations)
- ✓ The vendor should be able to maintain deadlines and confidentiality

Assumptions & Constraints

- 1- The vendor will be solely responsible for the deliverables and will be responsible to achieve the milestones.
- 2- Any delay should be reported prior to the time point of the milestones as per the submitted work plan.

Evaluation Criteria

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this RFP. A total of 100 points are possible for all components of the application. The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by approximate weight by points.

In evaluating the applications, Winrock will examine overall merit and feasibility, as well as specific criteria relevant to each component as elaborated below. Vendors should note that these criteria: (1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters which vendors should address in their applications.

Merit Review Criteria		Points	Weightage
1.	Technical proposal	100	40%
	Quality and relevance of proposed study methodology, approach and timeframe	100	
2.	Past performance and experience	100	25%
	The vendor should have proven experience in regional research (Samples of two similar regional study reports, preferably on TIP, migration, labor recruitment, etc., produced for any international organization).	50	
	At least two (2) references that will support the vendor's record of service.	50	
3.	Personnel	100	20%
	The vendor has team member(s) who are knowledgeable about CA and fluent in Russian and/or one or more of the languages of CA.	50	
	The vendor has team member(s) who demonstrate an appropriate mix of skills and experience, including in research methodology and data analysis, to carry out the proposed technical approach.	50	
4.	Cost Effectiveness of the Proposed Budget	100	15%
	Proposed budget is complete, detailed, and in line with RFP	50	
	Amounts are reasonable and adequate for ensuring quality	50	

Overall Rating (out of 100 points)	100
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Certification of Independent Price Determination

(a) The vendor certifies that—

(1) The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently, without, for the purpose of restricting competition, any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other vendor, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which vendor has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor relating to (i) those prices, (ii) the intention to submit a proposal, or (iii) the methods or factors used to calculate the prices offered;

(2) The prices in this offer have not been and will not be knowingly disclosed by the vendor, directly or indirectly, to any other vendor, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which vendor has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor before bid/proposal opening (in the case of a sealed bid/proposal solicitation) or contract award (in the case of a negotiated or competitive solicitation) unless otherwise required by law; and

(3) No attempt has been made or will be made by the vendor to induce any other concern or individual to submit or not to submit an offer for the purpose of restricting competition or influencing the competitive environment.

(b) Each signature in the proposal is considered to be a certification by the signatory that the signatory:

(1) Is the person in the vendors organization responsible for determining the prices being offered in this bid or proposal, and that the signatory has not participated and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above; or

(2) (i) Has been authorized, in writing, to act as agent for the principals of the vendor in certifying that those principals have not participated, and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above; (ii) As an authorized agent, does certify that the principals of the vendor have not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs

(a)(1) through (a)(3) above; and (iii) As an agent, has not personally participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through

(a)(3) above.

(c) Vendor understands and agrees that –

(1) violation of this certification will result in immediate disqualification from this solicitation without recourse and may result in disqualification from future solicitations; and

(2) Discovery of any violation after award to the vendor will result in the termination of the award for default.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Submission Checklist (in Russian or English)

1. Technical proposal (no more than 10 pages)
2. Financial proposal detailing all staff and support costs associated with the project
3. CVs of personnel who will be assigned to the study
4. Sample of two similar kind of previous regional study report, preferably on TIP, migration, labor recruitment and etc. produced for any international organization
5. At least two (2) references that will support the vendor's record of service
6. Valid legal documents (government registration, tax and VAT certificate, etc.) (only for organizations).

Important dates to know:

- Optional Questions and Clarifications – December 28, 2024, 17:00 Almaty time and must be submitted via e-mail to SMICAProcurement@winrock.org
- Proposals Due – January 7, 2025, 17:00 Almaty time and must be submitted via e-mail to SMICAProcurement@winrock.org