

Questions and Responses for RFP-WI-WEECAP-2025-05-06

Questions	Responses
1. Could you please clarify in what form does Winrock track participant information? Is it digital? Is it Excel or another database? Do the records contain participants' name, contact information, stakeholder type, gender, age, area they are located in, et cetera?	Winrock will track participant information digitally. However, since the project hasn't started intervention activities, there are no participant lists yet. A sample frame will have to be based on potential regions and data from firms and cooperatives.
2. If there is a digital database, for the 252 target firms does it have complete contact information? For the potential participants, would you expect us to identify them on our own or have a list from which we would draw?	Winrock can provide an aggregated list of cashews processing firm recommendations that it has received from stakeholder outreach so far, but applicants are encouraged to expand upon this list to develop a balanced sample frame between different sized and capacity firms.
3. Can Winrock please share any key background studies or data sources used to develop this RFP, that focused on the following topics such as number of producers, cooperatives / production output by country or regions of focus, etc.?	The data referenced in the RFP reflects the best available secondary sources and sector estimates, but we recognize that reliable and up-to-date statistics on cashew producers, cooperatives, and production outputs can vary significantly by country and source. We will share the sources we have used. Please note that coverage and reliability vary by country and data set. Where available, sectoral annual reports and country profiles are linked directly. We expect all baseline methodologies to triangulate these with primary data collection and field verification. Key data sources we have used are provided in the endnote of this document.
4. Winrock references in table 2, and refers to team leaders, senior experts, senior analysts, and junior field staff, as separate roles. However, on page 27, senior expert appears to	The information in Table 2 is for illustrative purposes only. Senior analyst is not a required position. It can be the same as the senior expert.

be synonymous with senior analyst, with no separation in their types of experience. Could you please clarify the qualifications or expectations for these roles and how they might differ?	
5. Would it be possible to clarify a budget target or ceiling that Winrock would expect baseline evaluation applicants not to exceed? Or is there a specific expectation regarding expected level of effort of the baseline implementer?	The maximum budget ceiling for the baseline evaluation is set at \$135,000. Proposals should reflect a realistic and efficient level of effort aligned with the scope of work and deliverables described in the RFP. Value for money, methodological rigor, and a credible work plan will all be key considerations during the review process.
6. Based on our experience conducting baseline assessments and our review of Table 5: Illustrative schedule of activities and deliverables, we estimate the budget to be approximately \$xxx,xxx, is this in your expected range or is it higher or lower?	See response to item 5 above. Proposals should be commensurate with the required scope, level of effort, and quality standards. All budget justifications and cost assumptions should be clearly outlined in your submission.
7. Does Winrock anticipate that a firm selected for the baseline evaluation might also be selected for mid or endline evaluations based on quality of work?	Winrock will evaluate the work of the selected firm's completion of the baseline assessment and make an informed decision about firm selection for the mid-line and end-line evaluations.
8. Would it be possible for Winrock to select the same firm for the WEECAP baseline evaluation and the WEECAP baseline market diagnostic?	Winrock will consider all competitive proposals that demonstrate the required expertise for both opportunities.
9. Could a few more details be provided regarding the quantitative data collection expectations and Winrock International's requirements?	Winrock expects the selected firm to draw a statistically valid sample of potential program participants and determine the baseline values for indicators with non-zero values. So that they can be compared against the values at midline and endline evaluations.
10. Can you please confirm whether a statistically significant sample size is required for each country? The current guidance includes both "A statistical sample shall be drawn	The expectation is that each country's cashew sector will be sampled using a statistically robust approach, sufficient to support meaningful country-level analysis.

<p>from the cashew sector population in each country, focusing...” and “Where appropriate, stratification will be applied at the country, regional, and actor-type levels,” which may have different implications for sample design and required resources.</p>	<p>However, we recognize that the size, distribution, and diversity of sector actors may vary significantly between countries. Stratification should be applied as appropriate to ensure key subgroups are adequately represented, but the final sampling strategy should balance statistical rigor with practical considerations, such as cost, field realities, and data quality.</p> <p>Bidding firms should propose and justify their sampling design—including assumptions, minimum sample sizes, and any relevant stratifications so that both national and critical subgroup findings will be reliable and actionable. Final decisions on statistical significance and stratification will be made collaboratively during the inception phase.</p>
<p>11. Is the expectation to have one combined survey instrument for the multiple actor types (with appropriate skip logic), or should separate surveys be developed for each? Additionally, are statistically significant sample sizes required for each actor type individually? This is particularly important to clarify since cashew producers, processor employees, and processors (kernel vs. apple) represent quite different populations.</p>	<p>Bidding firms may propose either a single, modular survey instrument—with appropriate skip logic to accommodate different actor types—or separate instruments for each group, provided data quality and field practicality are maintained. We recognize the diversity of populations involved (e.g., cashew producers, processor employees, kernel vs. apple processors) and encourage approaches that ensure data comparability while minimizing respondent and field team burden.</p> <p>Regarding sample sizes, we expect statistically robust samples for each key actor group for which disaggregated analysis or reporting will be required. Bidding firms should propose and justify their sampling strategy, including any trade-offs between statistical</p>

	<p>power, representativeness, and logistical feasibility, especially for smaller or harder-to-reach subgroups.</p> <p>Final survey design and sampling frameworks will be refined during the inception phase in consultation with Winrock and the Mastercard Foundation.</p>
12. Could you please provide some rough guidance on the expected qualitative sample size? There are numerous stakeholder groups proposed for both key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) across the three countries, and it would be helpful to understand the anticipated scope.	Winrock expects the bidding firm to use the best practices related to sample sizes in qualitative research. Each stakeholder type from different countries and regions should be represented in the sample.
13. Lastly, is there an approximate budget that can be provided to guide the design and feasibility of a proposed study design and sampling approach?	See response to item 5.
14. The RFP states that the sampling frame for the survey will include members of the 252 firms targeted by WEECAP, as well as major cashew cooperatives and value chain actors in high-production regions across the three targeted countries (pages 10–11). Will the WEECAP project assist in facilitating access to the databases or contact lists of these firms, cooperatives, and value chain actors during the sampling process for the survey?	WEECAP can assist with facilitating access to relevant databases and contact lists for targeted firms, cooperatives, and value chain actors as part of the sampling process. However, applicants are expected to demonstrate substantial sector knowledge, established networks, and credibility within the cashew value chain, particularly given the business-sensitive nature of some of the data required from processors and other private sector stakeholders. Winrock’s role will be to support and complement the firm’s own outreach and engagement strategy, not to replace it.
15. There is some data on cashew production for each country provided on page 10 of the RFP, which is helpful for survey planning. However, are there additional data sources recommended by the WEECAP project that could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the current cashew	Key data sources we have used are provided in the endnote of this document. We are also in the process of creating GIS maps of regions of interest with Cashew production and processing data. These will be shared with the selected firm.

sector, particularly in relation to the key baseline indicators to be collected? These additional data sources would be valuable in ensuring an efficient and robust sample size and design that meets the survey requirements.	
16. Is there a list of producer organizations, cooperatives, and enterprises already engaged by WEECAP?	See response to item 2 above.
17. Is there any expectation or preference for overlap between participants selected for the quantitative survey and those engaged in qualitative data collection (e.g., KIIs or FGDs), or should the samples be completely independent?	We encourage overlap in areas for logistical purposes, and samples for both methods should be from the same population. However, we do not prefer the same individuals to be interviewed more than once (to prevent undue burden on the same individual). We suggest selecting the quantitative sample first, and then selecting the qualitative sample from those not included in the quantitative sample. However, we understand that overlap may be unavoidable for some stakeholders. Bidding firms should propose an approach that balances overlap with breadth and justify their sampling strategy accordingly.
18. Is there a recommended number or minimum threshold of qualitative interviews (KIIs) and FGDs per country to meet stakeholder representation requirements?	See response to item 12 above.
19. Based on the indicators outlined in Annex 1, can we assume an estimated questionnaire length of 20–25 minutes?	This will depend on the content of the final questionnaire (for quantitative survey). Very likely, it will take longer for qualitative interviews and focus groups.
20. Are there word or page limits for the final report (e.g., RFP states that the executive summary should not exceed 4 pages)?	While we don't have a page limit for the final report, we expect the report to be succinct and efficiently designed.
21. Should the findings for Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau be presented in separate sections within a	WEECAP is a regional initiative and seeks both strong country-level analysis and actionable cross-country insights. The final report should present country-specific

consolidated report, or would WEECAP prefer a regional synthesis with standalone country data in the annex?	findings in distinct sections but must also include a robust regional synthesis that highlights opportunities for integration, regional supply chain development, and cross-border trade to enhance global competitiveness. Standalone country data and detailed tables may be included in the annexes as needed, but the main body of the report should weave together both national and regional perspectives to inform program strategy and identify opportunities for regional arbitrage and market integration.
22. Are we expected to report against all indicators listed in Annex 1, even those for which baseline values may not yet be obtainable or applicable at this stage? For example, there are 12 baseline zero or n/a indicators.	Yes, WEECAP expects the selected firm to report against all indicators. However, there may be some indicators that do not require data collection (for example, number of trainings), and there may be some with 0 baseline values that may need supplementary data to validate the targets.
23. Will Winrock provide a comprehensive list or database of the 252 targeted firms and affiliated cooperatives to support the sampling design and ensure representativeness across the three countries? Will this list include contact information and location details (e.g., region, district, town/village)?	See response to items 1 & 2 above.
24. Are the performance indicators listed in Annex 1 finalized and approved by Mastercard Foundation, or should we anticipate revisions or additions during the inception phase?	The performance indicators listed in Annex 1 reflect the current proposed monitoring framework for WEECAP. However, these indicators have not yet been formally finalized or approved by the Mastercard Foundation. We expect that some revisions, refinements, or additions may be required during the inception phase as the project’s monitoring and evaluation framework is finalized in consultation with the donor and other key stakeholders. Bidding firms should be prepared to adapt

	their baseline approach and data collection tools to align with the final set of indicators.
25. Does Winrock have pre-established sample size targets per country or per respondent group (e.g., youth-led enterprises, women processors), or should the evaluator propose these independently?	<p>WEECAP does not have pre-established, fixed sample size targets per country or respondent group. However, we expect the evaluator’s sampling strategy to align with the program’s portfolio approach, ensuring robust coverage of key subgroups—including women- and youth-led enterprises, micro and small firms, and larger end-market connected actors. The sampling frame should reflect the diversity of firm sizes and types, as well as the economic linkages and interdependencies that are central to WEECAP’s model.</p> <p>Bidding firms should propose and justify their sample size calculations for each major respondent group, taking into account both statistical rigor and the need to analyze commercial relationships across the value chain. Proposals should clearly articulate how the sample will allow for meaningful analysis of the project’s priority groups and the broader economic ecosystem.</p> <p>See additional information on sample size in response to item 10 above.</p>
26. Can Winrock confirm the specific regions or districts within Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau where fieldwork will be concentrated, or should we propose these based on cashew production	Winrock will not prescribe specific regions or districts for fieldwork at this stage. Rather than focusing solely on traditional production zones, WEECAP’s approach is to “follow the market.” Fieldwork should be concentrated in areas where cashew processors are actively sourcing, where there is a critical mass of organized producers, and where supporting market infrastructure (such as supply chain service providers) exists or is emerging.

	We encourage applicants to propose fieldwork locations based on a clear analysis of current market dynamics and supply chain flows, rather than relying only on production statistics. Proposals should detail the methodology for identifying priority areas, including relevant data sources and market intelligence. If applicants wish to include emerging regions that show strong potential for future market integration, this should be justified with evidence.
27. Is it mandatory that the selected firm for the baseline assessment must be registered within the WAEMU region?	No, it is not mandatory for the selected firm to be registered within the WAEMU region. We welcome proposals from both international and regional firms. However, we strongly encourage international firms to partner with in-country organizations or experts to ensure robust local knowledge, regulatory compliance, and field execution. Proposals should demonstrate a clear strategy for in-country presence and stakeholder engagement, whether through partnership, consortium, or local subcontracting.
28. How much do you budget for this assessment?	See response to item 5 above.

Endnote: Data sources.

Côte d'Ivoire

1. Conseil du Coton et de l'Anacarde (CCA)

- Main page (French): <https://www.conseilcotonanacarde.ci/>
- Annual reports: <https://www.conseilcotonanacarde.ci/publications/rapports-annuels/>
 - *Note: Look for “rapport annuel” and statistical annexes for numbers on producers, cooperatives, and output by region.*

2. Ministry of Agriculture, Côte d'Ivoire

- <https://www.agriculture.gouv.ci/>
 - *Census and sectoral stats sometimes published in “publications” section, but frequency is irregular.*

3. African Cashew Alliance (ACA)

- Country profile: <https://www.africancashewalliance.com/en/country-profiles/cote-divoire>

4. FAOSTAT (Ivory Coast cashew data)

- <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QCL>
 - *Filter by country and “cashew nuts, with shell” or “cashew nuts, shelled.”*

5. USDA GAIN Reports (Ivory Coast)

- https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/search?f%5B0%5D=field_countries%3A329&f%5B1%5D=field_report_type%3A610

Senegal

1. Ministry of Agriculture, Senegal

- <https://www.agriculture.gouv.sn/>
 - *Relevant statistics may be found under “Statistiques” or annual reports (“Rapports annuels”). Cashew data is less detailed.*

2. African Cashew Alliance (ACA)

- Country profile: <https://www.africancashewalliance.com/en/country-profiles/senegal>

3. FAOSTAT (Senegal cashew data)

- <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QCL>

4. USDA GAIN Reports (Senegal)

- https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/search?f%5B0%5D=field_countries%3A278&f%5B1%5D=field_report_type%3A610

Guinea-Bissau

1. Instituto Nacional do Caju (INCAJU)

- <https://www.incaju.gov.gw/>
 - *Site sometimes offline or slow; annual stats often available as PDFs (“Relatórios anuais”).*

2. Ministry of Agriculture, Guinea-Bissau

- <https://www.governo.gw/ministerio/10/agricultura-e-desenvolvimento-rural>

3. African Cashew Alliance (ACA)

- Country profile: <https://www.africancashewalliance.com/en/country-profiles/guinea-bissau>

4. FAOSTAT (Guinea-Bissau cashew data)

- <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QCL>

5. USDA GAIN Reports (Guinea-Bissau)

- https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/search?f%5B0%5D=field_countries%3A103&f%5B1%5D=field_report_type%3A610

Regional & Comparative

1. African Cashew Alliance – Country Profiles Home

- <https://www.africancashewalliance.com/en/country-profiles>

2. FAOSTAT (global database, cashew)

- <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QCL>

3. African Cashew Initiative (GIZ)

- Archive for project reports, case studies: <https://www.comcashew.org/english/resources/>
 - *Older but detailed, often referenced in development circles.*