

## Expressions of Interest for Evaluation Team

### External Final Evaluation of the Multi-Country Sustainable Cotton Programme implemented by Cotton Connect in China, India and Pakistan

C&A Foundation seeks an Evaluation Team for undertaking an external, final evaluation of the - Sustainable Cotton Programme implemented by Cotton Connect in China, India and Pakistan from 2014 to 2017. **Complete proposals must be submitted by 16 June 2017.** More details are given below.

#### 1. Introduction

The purpose of the final evaluation is to assess the extent to which the programme implemented by Cotton Connect achieved its stated objectives as well as evaluate quality of the operations that were employed to meet programme objectives. The evaluation will assess the efficacy and effectiveness of the programme against agreed, planned and expected actions and objectives. The evaluation must answer two key questions: whether the programme achieved its stated objectives (outcome evaluation) and whether the service delivery and operations were of quality and consistent with programme design and objectives (process evaluation). Based on the findings, the evaluation will provide a set of recommendations that will inform efforts of the Foundation to scale production and uptake of sustainable cotton by farmers and the garment industry, respectively. The evaluation consultancy will outline the evaluation plan, review programme documents and recent findings from the baseline report of the impact evaluation<sup>1</sup> using a mixed methods approach, review the programme design, achievements and challenges to highlight important lessons for future strategic and programming decisions.

- . The overarching goals of the four year programme implemented by Cotton Connect are:
- Provision of technical support on organic farming practices to cotton farmers in India
  - Provision of access of smallholder farmers to drip irrigation in India
  - Organic cotton seed development in China and India
  - Catalysing the sustainable cotton sector through partnerships and organic trials
  - Moving farmers from REEL<sup>2</sup> to Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) standards in India, China and Pakistan

The Expressions of Interest presents the purpose and scope of the final evaluation; a brief description of the programme; the key questions for the evaluation; evaluation design and methodology; roles and responsibilities; evaluation process; deliverables; evaluation team qualifications and submission process. The evaluation is required to be completed and submitted to C&A Foundation no later than 1 November 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> Impact Evaluation of the Organic Cotton programme being implemented in India. The baseline report can be made available upon request.

<sup>2</sup> REEL stands for 'Responsible, Environment, Enhanced Livelihoods'.

## 2. The Cotton Connect Programme

The programme was designed to promote sustainable cotton production across multiple geographies through various interventions. As listed in the section above, the programme had several key components listed below to be implemented between 2014 and 2017 with a budget of USD 6.18 million.

- Provision of technical support (training and capacity building) to 23,000 cotton farmers in India on organic farming practices
- Farmer empowerment to create groups for making collective actions and holding annual farmer conventions and farmer fairs
- Managing revolving loan fund for drip irrigation unit access to smallholder farmers in Gujarat, India
- Development of organic cotton seed (supporting non-GMO seed breeding programmes in India and China) and seed champions
- Development of new technologies for supplementary premium payment to farmers, holistic farm approach and farmer business schools
- Catalysing the sector through organic roundtables and accelerator platforms
- Expansion of drip pool programme with new partners
- Helping convert farmers in India, China and Pakistan from REEL to BCI standards
- Organic Trials in China and Pakistan to pilot conversion of cotton farmers to organic.

Additional details will be provided to the evaluation team by Cotton Connect and C&A Foundation.

## 3. Scope of the Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation will cover the full operations of the Cotton Connect programme from 2014 to date implemented as part of the grant given for interventions in China, India and Pakistan.

The objective of the final evaluation is to evaluate the extent to which the programme achieved its stated objectives and to assess the quality of the programme process (components and activities). The evaluation is expected to employ a mixed methods approach to assess the quality of the service delivery and for the outcomes through a (re)construction and empirical testing of the programme's theory of change. The evaluation should assess the approach of the overall and country level programme (review the relevance, operational design and delivery components, selection of farmers, support provided, challenges and achievements) by involving both a results and process oriented approach for future strategic and programming decisions. The programme has monitoring data as well as the impact evaluation baseline data (for the India programme on organic cotton farmer training) which must be used in the evaluation. In addition, it is expected that the evaluation will document specific case studies (to be selected in consultation with the C&A Foundation Impact Team).

The evaluation is expected to respond to the following specific questions:

### Internal to C&A Foundation:

- Evaluate the programme quality and results of the different components of the Cotton Connect programme funded by C&A Foundation
- Summarise the key drivers and lessons learned to inform the further development of the strategy and implementation of similar programmes by C&A Foundation

- Interact with the beneficiaries and partners by documenting case studies to capture what worked, what did not work and how (process and results)

## External to Cotton Connect, Farmers and Interested Stakeholders:

- Assess results of the multi-country programme including changes in strategies; implementation modalities and capacities employed to meet the objective of the grant
- Summarise the key drivers and lessons learned to inform the further development of the strategy and implementation of similar programmes by C&A Foundation
- Evaluate quality of the programme operations and results of the programme on farmers, their respective areas of influence (in communities and households – to the extent possible) and key actors in the sustainable cotton landscape
- Provide evidence-based recommendation(s) in terms of what works and what does not work for promotion of sustainable cotton

**Evaluation Questions:** The specific process and outcome evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

### **Relevance:**

- To what extent are the programme strategies and objectives (overall and in each of the three countries) aligned to the C&A Foundation's past, current and future vision and mission as well as to the demand of sustainable cotton in the garment industry?
- To what extent was the programme successful in identifying the 'most appropriate' beneficiaries for the different interventions, partners that could co-implement and stakeholders to promote sustainable cotton?
- What specific, existing gaps were filled by the programme in promoting organic/sustainable cotton at the farmer and industry level – at the overall programme level and at the country level?

### **Efficiency:**

- To what extent have the programme methodology<sup>3</sup> and modalities been executed in an efficient manner? Were the programme targets achieved on time? Were the targets realistic given the scale of operations?
- Was the programme cost-effective at the country level and overall?
- Did the programme track outputs and outcomes in a credible, systematic manner? If yes, how? What mechanisms (formal or informal) had been put into practice to capture results, experiences and lessons?

### **Effectiveness:**

- What were the results of the different aspects of the programme? What explains the different outcomes within the varied components of the programme?
- What evidence emerges from the programme in promotion of sustainable cotton? Which of these strategies and processes can be replicated?

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<sup>3</sup> Was the cascade model for the organic cotton programme in India (four partner organizations in four Indian states) an appropriate way to promote organic cotton conversion among farmers? Did the programme differ across the states and why? Was performance at? Did the monitoring data help adjust programme design and delivery – how and why?

- What has been the positive and negative perceptions and evidence regarding the programme in terms of the processes followed? Did the programme sufficiently involve/engage with relevant actors and stakeholders? If so, how?

## Results (Outcomes) & Sustainability:

- To what extent did the programme achieve its objectives for:
  - C&A Foundation
  - Cotton Connect
  - Farmers and the garment industry?
- What external and internal factors as well as challenges and risks have influenced the programme delivery, successes and failures? And why?
- What unintended results (positive or negative) did the programme produce?
- What are the main factors that promoted and/or reduced the sustainability and results of the programme? To what extent are the initiatives likely to continue after programme completion?

## 4. Design and Methodology

**Design:** The evaluation design will be primarily based on the review of the existing documents, monitoring data, findings from the recent baseline study of the impact evaluation (India programme) and reconstruction of the programme theory with appropriate indicators. The programme theory will be empirically tested through review of and collection of quantitative data, and conducting qualitative fieldwork. The programme theory will establish a logical model of cause-effect linkages by exploring the delivery of results for the farmers. Reconstructing the programme theory will be a critical first part of the evaluation prior to conducting review of data and fieldwork and will be done through a combination of documentary review and interviews with C&A Foundation's Impact Team, Sustainable Cotton Programme Team, Cotton Connect, local implementing partners (where appropriate) and farmers.

**Methodology:** The evaluation will be required to employ a mixed-methodological approach to ensure that data can be sufficiently triangulated to deliver aggregate quantitative and qualitative judgments on the basis of a broad range of data (covering the different components of the grant with differing implementation periods); documents; existing monitoring data; baseline survey report from the impact evaluation, interviews and focus groups. In addition to this, the evaluation team will employ a rating system (in consultation with C&A Foundation's guidance) that rates the programme's overall performance.

The qualitative data (such as a sample of case studies) will be used to provide critical insight into the implementation and results of the programme internally and externally and why as well as how the programme has produced results or not. The qualitative data will be complemented with quantitative data from the monitoring data and/or survey of farmers as well as partners. The evaluation will follow, but is not restricted to, the below mentioned data collection methods:

<b>Portfolio and documentary review</b>	All <sup>4</sup> existing data <sup>5</sup> held by C&A Foundation and Cotton Connect on implementation modalities under the programme.
<b>Review of Monitoring and Baseline Data</b>	All monitoring data held by Cotton Connect (and local partners) as well as findings from the baseline report from the India impact evaluation.
<b>Semi-structured Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b>	Conducted with farmers, implementing partners, key stakeholders and with local communities. In addition, relevant Cotton Connect and C&A Foundation staff will be interviewed. Furthermore, in order to document what-works, the evaluation (if possible) should identify selected sample case studies on the success achieved by the programme.
<b>Sampling</b>	Include all components of the grant. Based on the portfolio analyses of the different components that have received assistance under the overall Cotton Connect programme, purposive sampling will be done for identification of the farmers and key stakeholders for surveys, interviews and case studies. Stakeholder Involvement is critical to the successful execution of the evaluation. The evaluation is expected to employ a participatory approach providing for meaningful involvement of implementing partners and where appropriate end-beneficiaries (farmers)

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### The Evaluation Specialist (the Evaluation Manager) is responsible for:

- Overall responsibility and accountability for day-to-day management and delivery of the evaluation
- Technical guidance for the evaluation consultants throughout the implementation of the evaluation up to and including participation/observation of field visits;
- Leadership of the evaluation draft report review process including collating comments and facilitating discussion and management response;
- Approval of all deliverables; and
- In all of these roles necessary support may be provided by other members of the C&A Foundation Impact Team.

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<sup>4</sup> The evaluation consultants will be given complete access to all documentary data held by C&A Foundation and Cotton Connect on the programme, including email communications, informal memos and documents.

<sup>5</sup> Such as programme and projects proposals, action plans; monitoring reports and any other memos and reports held by Cotton Connect and C&A Foundation.

**The Programme Manager (Sustainable Cotton) is responsible for:**

- Providing access to portfolio data, all documents, monitoring data and access to stakeholders (internal and external);
- Reviewing and commenting on drafts of the inception and evaluation report

**The Cotton Connect Team (Programme Lead and M&E Manager) is responsible for:**

- Facilitation and assistance to the evaluation consultants including access to programme and project data, all documents, and access to stakeholders in countries;
- Reviewing and commenting on drafts of the inception and evaluation report

**The Evaluation Team is responsible for:**

- Designing the evaluation approach and methodology;
- Conducting all necessary qualitative and quantitative assessments and fieldwork;
- Day-to-day management of the evaluation;
- Regular formal and informal reporting to the Evaluation Manager;
- Production of deliverables in accordance with the Terms of Reference and contractual arrangements.

The evaluation team will report to the Evaluation Manager – Evaluation Specialist on all issues related to the evaluation, contracts, fees and expenses, and deliverables. The contract will be with C&A Foundation, Switzerland.

## 8. Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be carried out in conformity with the principles and standards set out in the C&A Foundation minimum requirements and policy for Monitoring and Evaluation.<sup>6</sup>

The evaluator will prepare an evaluation inception report, budget and work-plan that will operationalise the Terms of Reference. The inception report will describe how the evaluation is to be carried out, bringing refinements, specificity and methodological elaboration to the Terms of Reference. It will be based on an initial documentary data collection, review of existing data and preliminary interviews and will also present a draft reconstruction of the programme theory. It will be approved by the Evaluation Specialist and Programme Manager and act as an agreement between the consultants and C&A Foundation on how the evaluation is to be conducted.

The inception report and work-plan will address the following elements: expectations of the evaluation; roles and responsibilities within the evaluation consulting team; elaboration of the evaluation methodology including qualitative and quantitative approaches; sampling; identification of case studies; draft programme theory model(s); evaluation data collection and analyses issues, including possible constraints; reporting timetable; outline of the final evaluation report; and evaluation matrix linking key questions<sup>7</sup>; methods and data sources etc.

**The evaluation country visits:** The team will sample an appropriate number of farmers (based on the different components of the grant) informed by initial data collection and portfolio review for case

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<sup>6</sup> To be provided to the consultants as an annex to the contract. It can also be provided upon request.

<sup>7</sup> Make relevant changes to and distil the evaluation questions, in consultation with the Evaluation Manager, as required.

studies. The consultants will brief the Evaluation Specialist at the conclusion of the initial visits to allow for any feedback and adjustments to be made.

The consultants will prepare the **evaluation report (along with an Executive Summary)** that describes the evaluation methodology, findings, recommendations and lessons as well as case studies. The consultants will develop an initial outline as part of the work-plan and inception report. The draft evaluation report will be circulated to relevant C&A Foundation staff for review and comments prior to finalization.

The timeline for the evaluation is from June to October 2017. The key activities and timetable for this evaluation is set out below:

<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Selection and contracting of consultancy	26 June 2017	C&A Foundation (Evaluation Specialist)
Inception report preparation (including initial data collection / programme theory reconstruction)	20 July 2017	Evaluation Team
Completion of documentary and monitoring data review, interviews and fieldwork	30 August 2017	Evaluation Team
Draft Report for comment	30 September 2017	Evaluation Team
Final Report	30 October 2017	Evaluation Team
Preparation and copy-editing of the report	November 2017	C&A Foundation (Evaluation Specialist)
Board presentation	December 2017	C&A Foundation (Evaluation Specialist)
Dissemination of the evaluation	January 2018 onwards	C&A Foundation (Communications Team)

## 9. Deliverables

The consultants will prepare the following deliverables in accordance with the C&A Foundation M&E Policy.

- Evaluation Inception report and work-plan
- Evaluation Draft Report
- Evaluation Final Report (including an executive summary and annexes)

All reports are to be submitted electronically to the Evaluation Specialist, C&A Foundation. The evaluation inception report and work-plan is to be submitted within four (4) weeks of signing the contract. The consultant will submit the draft evaluation report for review by the C&A Foundation. The final evaluation report, excluding annexes, should be no longer than 40 pages with an executive summary of no more than 3 pages.

## 10. Audience and Dissemination

The main audience for the evaluation will be C&A Foundation, Cotton Connect and the local implementing partners. The evaluation will be a critical learning input into the programming for Sustainable Cotton at C&A Foundation.

The final evaluation report will be published and disseminated through the website of C&A Foundation, and via social media channels, as appropriate and necessary. Learning products including a lessons note will be developed after the completion of the evaluation.

## 11. Profile of Evaluation Team

The Evaluation Team (Lead Evaluator and team members) will be required to have the following experience:

- Substantial experience in conducting evaluations of agriculture in developing countries such as India, China and Pakistan;
- Programmatic / strategic evaluation experience to inform further development of operations;
- Additional experience is expected in:
  - Methods for evaluating technical capacity building in agriculture and uptake by policy/stakeholders;
  - Theory-based evaluation designs;
  - Qualitative and quantitative methods;
- A good understanding of the agriculture sector and evaluations in social enterprise is required;
- Excellent analytical skills with experience in mixed methods, process-oriented evaluation, outcome evaluation, conducting interviews, surveys, interpreting data and information
- Fluency in English (spoken and written) is essential.
  - An ability to work in Chinese, Urdu and Hindi is essential.

The expected level of effort for the evaluation is approximately 80 - 90 working days.

Team members can complement or add to the expertise of the Principal Evaluator. It is expected that some of the main team members will be geographically located in South Asia to cover the three countries. A large share (about 80% of the programme) was implemented in India, followed by China (15%) and Pakistan (5%). Please include a paragraph detailing the structure and share of responsibility of different team members.

## 12. Expression of Interest Requirements

**Submission of Expressions of Interest:** The following information and documents must be



provided as part of the proposal:

## **a. Proposed Evaluation Methodology**

The application will provide a short overview of the proposed evaluation design and methodology, including a proposed timeline/schedule as well as a budget.

## **b. Proposed Evaluation Team and their Qualifications**

Please include the following information in the proposal:

- Detailed CVs for Principal Evaluator and any other team member(s)
- Contact details of three references
- Daily rate for your last 3 assignments
- Two examples of evaluation reports recently completed. If possible, at least one of the reports should be relevant, or similar to, the subject of this evaluation
- Confirmation of availability of the Principal Evaluator and/or the team members from June 2017

**Complete proposals must be submitted by email to [s.mull@candafoundation.org](mailto:s.mull@candafoundation.org) by 16 June 2017.** Please indicate “*EOI: Evaluation of the Cotton Connect Programme*” in the subject line of your email message. There will be telephone and/or face-to-face interviews with the applicants of the shortlisted proposals. Only applicants of shortlisted proposals will be contacted. For any questions, please email Ms. Savi Mull ([s.mull@candafoundation.org](mailto:s.mull@candafoundation.org)).