

Impact Evaluation Research Assistant

Terms of Reference

February 2023

1. Summary

The Development Impact Evaluation department (DIME) is seeking to hire a Research Assistant to support impact evaluations with the World Food Programme. The consultant will be based in the HQ and work with the DIME team and external researchers, on all phases of the study, from research design to analysis. The consultants' main responsibility will be to assure data quality through acquisition, processing and analysis, and to uphold DIME's standards of reproducibility and transparency.

2. Background and objectives

Development Impact Evaluation (DIME)

A department of the World Bank's Development Economics Vice-Presidency, DIME's purpose is to increase the use of impact evaluation (IE) in the design and implementation of public policy and to develop institutional capacity and motivation for evidence-based policy.

DIME's work focuses on:

- Evaluating programmes at scale to answer policy-relevant questions
- Developing innovative data systems and data analytics tools for real-time decisions
- Using causal inference analysis to identify mechanisms to improve results
- Building capacity to strengthen country institutions for evidence-based policymaking.

DIME aims to overcome the challenge to identify true cause-and-effect relations in policy programmes. By linking researchers to policymakers and feeding results back into policies, DIME fosters systematic use of evidence, which informs adoption, mid-course corrections, and scale-up of policies. Through workshops and clinics with operational staff and government clients, joint research teams, active field coordination, as well as research products such as seminars, papers, and policy briefs, DIME builds capacity while forming a wider community of practice. DIME accompanies impact evaluations during their entire life-cycle. It starts with assessing demand, identifying research questions, as well as supporting project implementation, high quality data collection, analysis, and dissemination of results.

With a portfolio of more than 220 impact evaluations, DIME operates across all sectors in about 60 countries spanning the globe. The IEs test a variety of interventions and mechanisms to understand why policy succeeds or fails and how to improve policy design and implementation to obtain better results. By working proactively in collaboration with clients, DIME employs experimental methods to infer causality whenever possible (79% of the portfolio). 17% of DIME IEs utilize non-experimental methods, while 4% use a combination of the two.

DIME is structured into 4 units:

- DIME 1 “Economic Growth and Structural Transformation”
- DIME 2 “Gender, Economic Opportunity, and Fragility”
- DIME 3 “Governance and Institution Building”
- DIME 4 “Infrastructure and Climate Change”

More information can be found at <http://www.worldbank.org/dime>.

Project details

Impact evaluations with the World Food Programme

Can targeting women through public works improve women’s autonomy? While there is increasing interest in mainstreaming gender targeting across anti-poverty interventions, there is very little causal evidence on how it impacts women. We partnered with the WFP to evaluate this question with a unique design that identifies the impact of women working outside their houses. The impact of the intervention will be measured across a wide range of outcomes that include women’s agency, attitudes, perception of norms, time use, consumption, food security, locus of control, mental health, intimate partner violence and income. While the project evaluates the United Nations World Food Programme’s (WFP) flagship livelihoods program, it is comparable to a standard public/private works programs often found in the context of developing countries. An evaluation design was developed such that it can be implemented across multiple countries to understand the policy implications across contexts - what we call a window-based approach. The findings, therefore, are going to come from a meta-analysis of the data collected across countries. This novel approach to impact evaluations makes this a unique opportunity for the Research Assistant on multiple country contexts simultaneously.

The Research Assistant will be working closely with the following Principal Investigators: Florence Kondylis, John A. Loeser, Erin M. Kelley and Paul J. Christian along with the World Food Programme counter parts.

3. Tasks and deliverables

The consultant will report to the project Principal Investigators and other members of the Impact Evaluation team.

Duties for Research Assistants (RAs) include, but are not limited to:

- Work closely with Principal Investigators, Analysts, Research Assistants and Field Coordinators
- Write well-documented, reproducible code for data cleaning, descriptive statistics, regression analysis, data visualization, and any other analysis as per project needs; document all data work on the project’s GitHub repository
- Manage databases, integrating various data sources (for example, project monitoring data, administrative data from local government, and household survey data). This may require programming matching algorithms, using spatial data to create linkages, performing manual matching, and linking up with field staff for additional information on specific tasks
- Harmonizing survey instruments, databases and High frequency checks across the countries in the window

- Support primary data collection: participate in questionnaire design; program electronic questionnaires, design and run high frequency quality checks on raw data; liaise with field staff to resolve data issues and required clarifications
- Conduct literature review and syntheses, contribute to impact evaluation reports and policy briefs, support the development of grant applications, and other writing and editing tasks
- Prepare push-button replication files academic papers and related outputs
- Deliver training courses on data processing and analysis for government counterparts
- Participate in regular code review sessions with [DIME Analytics](#)

4. Requirements

- *Academic specialization:* A Master's degree in economics, public policy, statistics, computer science or related field with strong quantitative research skills is essential
- *Technical skills:* Advanced skills using R for data processing and analysis. Experience with survey programming in an ODK based platform.
- *Experience:* The candidate must have background in impact evaluation and econometric analysis, and experience working with raw household survey data. Field experience working on impact evaluations, and/or managing data collection, is preferred. Experience coding in a team environment and using GitHub is highly desirable. Knowledge about the relevant sectors is desirable
- *Capacity Building Skills:* Demonstrated ability and experience in designing and delivering training and capacity building activities or other teaching experience is a plus
- *Language:* Superior written and oral communications skills in English is essential.
- *Interpersonal skills:* Motivated self-starter, with demonstrated ability to work effectively and sensitively in teams

5. Intellectual Property

The World Bank shall, solely and exclusively, own all rights in and to any work created in connection with this agreement, including all data, documents, information, copyrights, patents, trademarks, trade secrets or other proprietary rights in and to the work. The consultant is not allowed to post or publish (electronically or in print) any project-related information without the explicit permission of the Impact Evaluation Team.

6. Selection Process

Qualified candidates should apply no later than March 15th, 2023. Applicants should send a zipped folder to tbalanrapu@worldbank.org containing the following: resume, a brief (maximum 1 page) statement of interest and a R script prepared by them that best indicates the level of experience in R. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.

The World Bank Group is committed to achieving diversity in terms of gender, nationality, culture and educational background. Individuals with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.