Frequently Asked Questions for ICF-Colombia Technical Assistance Programme

# Context, Background and Related Work

**1. Q: Why has the UK Government chosen to support Colombia’s TAP?**

**A:** The UK Government is developing a major new Technical Assistance Programme to support

middle-income countries in delivering their Paris commitments, meeting demand by utilising

international low carbon skills and expertise where appropriate.

We will provide targeted support in line with areas of greatest need, which align with the UK’s

distinct climate expertise. Research suggests this may include the following themes:

1. Diffusion of non-conventional renewable energy sources to ensure an affordable, resilient, and low emissions energy system.
2. Addressing key policy, finance and technical barriers to scale up the energy efficiency market.
3. Financial and non-financial incentives (existing and new) and better access to innovative finance instruments, combined with a more comprehensive and coherent policy and regulatory framework, to accelerate the deployment of low emission vehicles.
4. Improving energy access through decentralised renewable energy generation models in areas that complement other UK forests and land use programmes[[1]](#footnote-1).
5. Sustainable tourism and scientific research as a strategy to protect forests, ensure sustainable rural development and consolidation of peace in areas that have been affected by conflict.

Crosscutting themes are:

1. Implementation of Colombia’s Green Growth Policy to consolidate long-term GHG emission reduction and sustainable economic development.
2. Improved understanding of investment opportunities and risks in green growth and support implementation of Colombia’s roadmap to establish a green bond market.
3. Operationalisation of Colombia’s MRV system for mitigation action, including a transparent registry, to track progress and ensure NDC implementation.

**2. Q: How is the ICF Colombia TAP Programme different to the Prosperity Fund?**

**A:** The ICF Colombia TAP Programme builds on the success of the low-carbon Prosperity Fund work

the UK has already implemented in Colombia in recent years. Given the close strategic alignment

between Colombia and the UK, the time is now right to establish a dedicated programme for this

topic. In practical terms there will be some differences in the application and project monitoring

processes, though these are unlikely to be significant. Colombia’s Prosperity Fund and Technical

Assistance Programme will support complementary activities.

**3. Q: Regarding other funding opportunities such as the Prosperity Fund might there be some projects with complementary features that could attract both programmes?**

**A:** Perhaps. We are currently working with the Prosperity Fund to ensure complementarity.

# Strategy and Themes

**4. Q: Could you provide specific information about the three types of projects? (Year 1, skill-share and early transition activity projects)?**

**A:** Based on their type, projects can have the following ranges of funding. All concept bids (for all projects) should clearly state and justify the budget required; the budget ultimately awarded will be at the discretion of the TAP team, dependent upon the scale and likely outcomes of the project.

* Year 1 projects should require funding from the ICF of between £250,000 - £500,000 (indicative), for up to one year of activity from the point of signing the grant agreement. The total project budget may exceed the amount requested from the ICF with co-funding and exceed the timescale of one year, if the activity applied for is an initial phase or component within a larger multi-year project. Year 1 projects should aim to deliver activities between November 2018 and November 2019.
* Skill share projects should require funding from the ICF of between £25,000 - £100,000 (indicative), for up to one year of activity from the point of signing the grant agreement. Skill share projects should aim to facilitate skill sharing between Colombian, UK or international experts (public and private) to share technical knowledge and embed good practice in an identified policy area of specific need. Skill sharing could range from short-term deployments, thematic conferences, and long-term secondments depending on need.
* Early transition activity projects should require funding from the ICF of between £25,000 - £100,000 (indicative), for up to six months of activity from the point of signing the grant agreement. Early transition activity projects will be delivered between October 2018 and March 2019 and shall aim to support the new administration’s transition period. Like project proposal full bids, early transition activities must comply with eligibility and selection criteria.

All projects must be compatible with Official Development Assistance (ODA) criteria and must demonstrate how they will support the economic development and welfare of eligible developing countries.

**5. Q: Can you share any of the urgent priorities of the government for their requirements during the transition process?**

**A:** The Embassy in Bogotá has had a meeting with the transitional team. However, the transition team is very busy in the primary stages of forming a government. We are really interested in having more conversations about how to best target our work.

**6. Q: Is there a chance my project could be in-scope even if it does not explicitly fit under one of the themes in the strategy?**

**A:** Yes. It is important to note that this C4P is not limited to activities that fall under this initial

prioritisation of sectors. However, implementers must provide strong evidence to justify the

consideration of other sectors. All proposals should comply with ICF TAP objectives:

* Contribute to the reduction of Colombia’s emissions and poverty reduction by improving the capacity and capability of key institutions (national, subnational, non-state).
* Support demand-led technical assistance that prioritises implementation and helps raise climate ambition, by addressing barriers, constraints and areas of opportunity at different levels of government based on the country’s political and economic context and sectoral priorities.

Please consider that initial prioritisation of themes for IFC TAP activities considered results of extensive research commissioned by ICF/BEIS and carried out by an independent third party, as well as experience from previous collaboration between Colombia and UK on climate change and understanding of other international cooperation models and activities in Colombia through ongoing engagement and initial coordination.

**7. Q: Does each proposed project need to cover all the themes?**

**A:** Projects do not need to cover all the ICF TAP themes. We expect bids for all themes, including proposals with synergies and complementarity among themes.

**8. Q: Taking into account that the themes have some overlap, is it possible for a proposal to relate to different themes?**

**A**: Yes. Implementers are encouraged to explore synergies and complementarities among different ICF TAP themes where relevant.

**9. Q: Can an organisation apply more than once? Can the same organization present two projects with the same theme for two different areas? / Can we apply with more than one proposal of different project types (eg. skill sharing and Year 1 project)?**

**A:** Yes. Each organisation can be the lead implementer in more than one application. However, the

organisation must guarantee team capacity delivery for each proposal. Implementers are also encouraged to explore synergies and complementarities among their proposals.

**10. Q: There is a line in the strategy about sustainable tourism and scientific research. To what extent are they linked together? Can you have one without the other? Is there a bonus if the two are linked together?**

**A:** There is no requirement to link scientific research to eco-tourism.

**11. Q: Are you specifically interested in green bonds with regards to finance?**

**A:** We are thinking about the finance system as a whole and not solely green bonds**.**

**12. Q: Must crosscutting themes like MRV be related also to energy, or can they be related to other sectors such AFOLU?**

**A:** Colombia has a national MRV system that takes into account all sectors. There are challenges to implement related regulation, including on a public registry for private and public mitigation action. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) and the Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM) currently face key barriers to improve the quality of the technical inputs that they prepare for this system, the National Communications and BUR’s submitted to the UNFCCC. At the project level, measurement mechanisms can improve to have more certainty around the potential mitigation impacts of projects.

**13. Q: Do you have an example of how we can link our bid to a UK programme?**

**A:** It is not a mandatory requirement to do this (except for skill share projects). There is lots of work from DFID in Africa that would work as a good example.

**14. Q: Where can I find the previous and current cooperation between COL and UK?**

**A:** Colombia and the UK have a long history of cooperation in different areas, dating back many years. To discuss previous cooperation on a specific topic, please contact the ICF TAP team.

**15. Q: What is the balance between capacity building and actual action?**

**A:** The TAP is designed to focus on both.

**16. Q: Do you have more detail on the rapid response funds? Will there be opportunities in Colombia arising from this fund?**

**A:** The rapid response funds are still under development and we will share more information on these in due course.

# Application Process

## Selection Criteria and Eligibility

**17. Q: What are the main criteria to select projects to fund?**

**A:** Bids will be assessed on the following selection criteria: strategic fit; potential for transformational impact; value for money; additionality; and deliverability. Please refer to sections

2.1. and 2.2 in the ICF Colombia TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines.

**18. Q: Are all five criteria weighted equally?**

**A:** No, the first two criteria (strategic fit and potential for transformational impact) will each be

weighted 1.5 times each of the other three.

**18. Q: How do you assess the benefits for the UK when assessing bids?**

**A:** We hope to foster two-way exchange and sharing of best practice between Colombian

organisations and those from other countries, including the UK, during project implementation.

**19. Q: Is having an international partner a requirement?**

**A:** No. Technical Assistance projects allow exchange of expertise and best practice among Colombian

and international stakeholders. Strong engagement and support of the host government or other

key beneficiaries and stakeholders is essential. The Grant Agreement will only be signed with one

implementing partner, which must be nominated as the lead implementer either national or

international.

**20. Q: I have received funding from the Embassy before, will it impact my application?**

**A:** This will not have any direct impact on your application, though each applicant’s track record in

successful project delivery is likely to be considered under the ‘deliverability’ assessment criteria.

**21. Q: What are the eligibility criteria for types of organisations? Can any organisation type apply?**

**A:** Any type of organisation can apply, provided it has a legal status. Please refer to Sections 2.2. and 2.3 of the ICF TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines, available in the British Embassy Colombia website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-forproposals-for-colombias-technical-assistance-programme>

Being a commercial organisation does not exclude you from receiving a grant. The reason we have chosen grants is because we have chosen to focus on outputs. We have given grants to commercial organisations in the past. This is an issue that will evolve as the programme evolves as we will have to consider multiple factors.

**22. Q: Will the programme only support major participants, or will there be opportunities for smaller participants too?**

**A:** Our call for bids is an open and transparent process and welcomes all organisations for innovative

ideas, as long as those ideas suit our strategic priorities and can deliver high impact. When assessing

bids we will balance all factors when considering implementers.

**23. Q: How strict is the “one year” timeline for activity? Can bidders still refer to longer- or shorter-term activities, and does this affect how we talk about transformational change in the bid? A:** In terms of the assessment we are focusing on the activities proposed between November 2018 and November 2019, and anything beyond that is indicative of the potential continuity of the bid. TAP will be a multi-year initiative, so it has scope for the one-off and the multi-year. We do however want to be able to score the transformational impact within the single year. The fact that it can have impact beyond the single year is a positive, but we still need to see potential evidence of transformational change happening within the year.

Implementers could also argue as part of their concept bids why shorter timeframes should be considered. In some cases shorter projects may offer a better balance of value for money and potential for transformational impact. Please refer to section 2 in the ICF Colombia TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines for particular details.

**24. Q: Will ICF TAP support only new projects or could there be support to existing projects (e.g. at**

**implementation stage)?**

**A:** Projects may operate with co-funding from other projects at implementation stage.

Implementers must demonstrate how the funding from the ICF TAP is additional and necessary, and not duplicative. The funding portion received from the ICF TAP must be for activities with distinct, measurable outcomes.

Moreover, value for money and additionality must be demonstrated in project proposals. Proposals must make clear how they will ensure an efficient allocation of resources for maximum effect, and that the project would not take place without funding from the ICF TAP team. Proposals should also demonstrate how projects are adding value to, and not duplicating, existing activity.

**25. Q: What kind of activities can be funded? Is it possible to invest in equipment (CAPEX) or engineering studies?**

**A:** The ICF TAP resources are for technical assistance only. This does not include CAPEX.

**26. Q: Can research be part of the project?**

**A:** Yes, it can, as long as it complies with ICF TAP objectives and one or more of its themes. However, there is a specific fund (Newton Fund) aimed at supporting research which might be more relevant.

**27. Q: Can a project be a consultancy? For example, the development and analysis of financial incentives?**

**A:** ICF TAP could support projects delivered through consultancies. Take into account that consultancies must comply with ICF TAP objectives:

* Contribute to the reduction of Colombia’s emissions and poverty reduction by improving the capacity and capability of key institutions (national, subnational, non-state).
* Support demand-led technical assistance that prioritises implementation and helps raise climate ambition, by addressing barriers, constraints and areas of opportunity at different levels of government based on the country’s political and economic context and sectoral priorities.

**28. Q: Do you take CVs into account through the selection criteria? Is there a specific format you prefer for the CV and what if we cannot easily provide CVs?**

**A:** We are looking for a 1-page CV for each key member of the delivery team as part of the deliverability criteria. The CVs themselves are not specifically scored, and any format is acceptable.

**29. Q: What do you mean by providing evidence of additionality and no duplication of activities funded by other UK Programmes across priority sectors and amongst other international cooperation agencies?**

**A:** Your question relates to requirements on co-funding, value for money and additionality.

* Co-funding: Projects may operate with co-funding from other stakeholders. Implementers must demonstrate how the funding from the ICF is additional and necessary, and not duplicative. The funding portion received from the ICF must be for activities with distinct, measurable outcomes.
* Value for money and additionality: Proposals must make clear how they will ensure an efficient allocation of resources for maximum effect, and that the project would not take place without funding from the ICF team. Proposals should also demonstrate how projects are adding value to, and not duplicating, existing activity, e.g. by providing evidence that the proposed project would not go ahead, or not go ahead at sufficient scale to achieve desired demonstration effect/critical mass, in the absence of funding from the ICF TAP.

**30. Q: Can you provide a list of municipalities that are covered by your forest programs?**

**A:** For more information on specific municipalities, please get in touch with the ICF TAP team.

**31. Q: Since this call for proposals is heavily focused on energy, are you expecting that projects implement non-conventional energies in a scale bigger than pilot projects? Are design and demonstrative activities the ones expected?**

**A:** The call for proposals goes beyond energy. Please refer to objectives and themes of the ICF TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines, available in the British Embassy Colombia website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-for-proposals-for-colombias-technical-assistanceprogramme>

On pilot projects/scale, implementers should provide evidence that the proposed project would not go ahead, or not go ahead at sufficient scale to achieve desired demonstration effect/critical mass, in the absence of funding from the ICF TAP (see answer 28).

ICF TAP will also consider potential for transformational impact, including for projects: how well the project effects, catalyse further change. Indicators for this are:

* Improved political will and local ownership
* Increased capacity and capability
* Innovation
* Evidence of effectiveness is shared
* Leverage – that the activities incentivise others to act
* Replicability
* Scale that interventions have: sufficient reach to achieve reform
* Sustainability beyond the support provided by the ICF

**32. Q: Must the proponent be legally established in Colombia?**

**A:** No. Implementers could be national or international.

**33. Q: Are there further UK requirements for ODA criteria, or do we use the OCDE ones listed in the guidelines?**

**A:** All projects must be compatible with Official Development Assistance (ODA) criteria and must demonstrate how they will support the economic development and welfare of eligible developing countries. See the following link for more detail on ODA compatibility applicable to the UK:

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm>

**34. Q: Does the organization have to demonstrate experience in the proposal presented?**

**A:** Yes.

**35. Q: Must the proposal be in English?**

**A:** Concept proposals must be submitted in English only.

## Stakeholder Engagement

**36. Q: Does the applicant need to engage with the British Embassy in Colombia?**

**A:** We encourage consultation. The more understanding between parties the better. We have developed the strategies through extensive consultation and believe them to be in line with government priorities.

**37. Q: Must local stakeholders be involved in the process?**

A: One of the principles of TA is that it must be country driven and it should be clear who the local beneficiary is.

**38. Q: What do you understand as key institutions?**

**A:** national, subnational, non-state actors that have significant influence to promote the

implementation of Colombia’s climate change and green growth policies, in line with its Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement, as well as ICF TAP objectives and themes.

TAP places equal importance to national, subnational and non-state actors/stakeholders.

**39. Q: Are letters of commitment from the government and local partners expected to support the "strong involvement" of such entities? / Is there a model for the letter of support?**

**A:** No, hence we do not have a template. If you have obtained one, it would be useful to include, but it will not directly result in extra points. However, strong engagement and support of the host government or other key beneficiaries and stakeholders is essential. Proposals must demonstrate alignment with the objectives and thematic areas that the TAP aims to support. The bid should also explain how the project has sufficient buy-in from Colombian stakeholders to deliver the expected outcomes.

**40. Q: What would happen if you agree your proposals with the transition team and they then choose to change their priorities? Or would it be best to liaise with the Ministries themselves?**

**A:** If you have concerns please get in touch with the ICF TAP team in London or the British Embassy.

**41. Q: Is it necessary/compulsory to have British partners to participate?**

**A:** No. Technical Assistance projects allow exchange of expertise and best practice among Colombian and international stakeholders. Strong engagement and support of the host government or other key beneficiaries and stakeholders is essential. The Grant Agreement will only be signed with one implementing partner, which must be nominated as the lead implementer either national or international.

## Funding

**42. Q: Why does the fund only support one-year projects?**

**A:** The UK’s Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth, Claire Perry, recently approved funding

for early activities in three countries, including Colombia. Subject to evaluation and assessment of

these early activities there may then also be scope for longer term activity. We are very excited to

commence this programme with the current call for proposals.

**43. Q: How big is the fund? / How many projects will be supported this year?**

**A:** The fund is £2 million. The indicative scale of support for each project will vary depending on its

type (multi-year, skill share or early activity project). Please refer to the section 2.1 in the ICF

Colombia TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines (funding range) for indicative purposes. We

will decide the number of projects according to the proposals received.

**44. Q: How much funding is available for next year?**

**A:** Subject to evaluation and assessment of early activities there will be scope for longer term

activities and further funding for activities up to 2021.

**45. Would budget money be assigned free of local taxes? Is the amount net of taxes?**

**Answer:** All project costs need to be reflected in the budget, including local taxes.

**46. Should the budget in the proposal be in euros?**

**Answer:** Budgets should be UK Pounds (GBP).

**47. Q: Are overheads covered?**

**A:** There is a 5% indicative cap on administrative costs. Administration costs apply equally to all types of organisations.

**48. Q: Should salary information be included in the indicative budget, and will you be providing guidance on appropriate levels for day rates?**

**A:** Yes. This relates to administration costs. Implementers must incorporate salaries and other type of administrative costs into the original project budget. Please refer to section 2.3 of the ICF TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines, available in the British Embassy Colombia website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-for-proposals-for-colombias-technical-assistanceprogramme>

**49. Is there any rule about the amount of the counterpart (e.g. matching contribution)?**

Answer: ICF TAP projects do not require matching contributions/counterpart.

Projects may operate with co-funding from other stakeholders. Implementers must demonstrate how the funding from the ICF is additional and necessary, and not duplicative. The funding portion received from the ICF must be for activities with distinct, measurable outcomes.

**50. Q: Is co-funding a requirement?**

**A:** No. Demonstrating co-funding could, however, be one way to demonstrate value for money and

potential for transformational impact, which are two of the five assessment criteria.

## Timing and Process

**51. Q: Why have I been getting “undeliverable” messages when I try to email the** [**ICF.Colombia@beis.gov.uk**](mailto:ICF.Colombia@beis.gov.uk) **email address?**

A: There were some technical difficulties with the email address when it was first set up; these have now been resolved and your email will be picked up by the team.

**52. Q: If you are not in a position to bid right now, will there be further opportunities?**

**A:** We know there is going to be huge competition and we want to work with people over a sustained period. We have a limited number of individuals who are working with us in the Embassy and therefore we will need to be selective. We are hoping to have another competitive call next year.

**53. Q: Is there flexibility with regard to the timings and budgeting?**

**A:** The best advice would be to come and talk to us about the specificities of your idea. There should be potential for flexibility.

**54. Q: When will we know the result of first round applications?**

**A:** Please refer to the different deadlines posted on the official website.

**55. Q: Will unsuccessful applications also be notified?**

**A:** We will inform all applicants of the result via email. If you have not received notification by the

established date (please refer to the different deadlines posted on the official website), get in touch

with the Colombia TAP Team.

**56. Q: Who will the scoring panel consist of?**

**A:** Full project proposals bid will be assessed by a Programme Board consisting of senior officials

from UK Government in Colombia and in London and independent external experts, ensuring no

conflict of interest.

**57. Q: How much room is there for changes between the concept bid and the full proposal stages? Must the costs and partners stay the same?**

**A:** There is flexibility, but you cannot digress massively.

**58. Q: How many projects do you intend to take forward?**

**A:** This is unknown as we are unsure of how many bids we will receive. We are acutely aware of individuals’ time constraints and are keen to not waste anyone’s time. Any bid which makes the shortlist will have a real chance of going forward.

**59. Q: For DFID programmes, once a bid goes live, suppliers aren’t allowed to speak to individuals in the Embassy for transparency reasons. Is this true for this programme?**

**A:** We don’t have the same constraints because this is a grant rather than under the procurement process. There is potential for this to change over time.

**60. Q: How long will the full proposal need to be (Prosperity Fund is 60 pages)?**

**A:** The full document won’t be more than 20 pages. We have a template which we will put online as soon as we can.

**61. Q: Before submitting a concept bid, do I need to have ICF TAP team approval?**

**A:** No.

**62. Q: Can you provide the general grant agreement form to see its contents?**

**A:** We expect to publish the Grant Agreement as soon as possible in the British Embassy Colombia website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-for-proposals-for-colombias-technical-assistanceprogramme>

**63. Q: Once the programmes are running, how much involvement do you anticipate BEIS having?**

**A:** If you believe we can help you to deliver more effectively we are happy to support you. We would be keen to be involved in the first few key meetings as it would help us to understand how we can best work with you. Visibility is important to us, but we don’t want to crowd you.

**64. Q: What level of confidentiality will be put in place after the project ends? Will the details of implementation be published?**

**A:** We would like to publish the results of some ICF TAP projects, to contribute to the global evidence base on ways to tackle climate change. For successful projects, confidentiality issues can be discussed upon signing of the grant agreement documentation.

**65. Q: For monitoring and evaluation, do you have any type of guidelines?**

**A:** BEIS ICF places a strong emphasis on project level monitoring, which forms a key part of monitoring and evaluation of the whole ICF TAP. Full proposals will need to build on the details provided in the ICF TAP Call for Proposals Strategy and Guidelines and include:

* The main activities that will be conducted using ICF TAP funding during the project, when they will be conducted and who will be conducted them;
* The tangible outputs/deliverables that will be produced as a direct result of the project activities, and how production/delivery of these will be measured and tracked;
* The intended skill, knowledge and/or understanding (e.g. the capacity) that recipients will receive as a result of outputs/deliverables, and details of how the project will measure improvement in this capacity;
* The expected actions that recipients will take having developed the skills/knowledge/understanding intended of the project. These are actions that will be undertaken during the lifetime of the project or within the first few months after project completion. Proposals will also need to detail how the project will measure whether these actions are taken;
* The intended outcomes resulting from these actions being taken. These should link to the theme(s) that the project is working on.

Project implementers will be responsible for monitoring progress against these steps and reporting progress in their quarterly reports. As well as progress against these milestones, quarterly reports should also detail any changes to planned activities/deliverables, reasons for these changes and key lessons learnt from the quarter of work in order to provide learning that can be fed back to other and future projects.

Where we deem it necessary (because of, for example, cost, risk or strategic interest across the TAP) the ICF TAP team, through its Monitoring and Evaluation Partner, will undertake a formal evaluation. This may be conducted at any point during a project or after it has been completed.

1. ICF Forest and Land Use programmes (Amazon Vision, BioCarbon Fund, Sustainable Cattle-ranching programme,

   Partnerships for Forests) focus on the promotion of sustainable production landscapes and the sustainable use of natural

   resources, while reducing deforestation. Given that many of these areas are located in remote places of Colombia, access

   to public services (including energy) are limited, preventing them from advancing effective sustainable development

   models. Hence, guaranteeing energy access in areas such as Amazonas, Orinoquia and Pacific regions is essential to enable

   the necessary conditions to achieve sustainable development. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)