

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION FOR SERVICES

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Support for the integration of digitalisation in the management and operation of cold rooms in the state of Odisha, India, for more efficient, transparent, and traceable monitoring

BASE Foundation is seeking services for an India-based organization to support the on-ground activities linked with the implementation and operation of a digital management system in at least 25 cold rooms across the state of Odisha, India.

The objective of this consultancy is to support the integration of the Coldtivate mobile app, developed by BASE, in cold room operations, to increase efficiency, transparency, and traceability. The app functions as a digital inventory management system and provides real-time information on the remaining shelf-life of stored crops, thus advising cooling users on how to control storage of products to minimise food loss, and on when to sell the produce to maximise market value.

The consultant will support the identification and assessment of cold room units in the region, guide site selection, and establish a robust governance structure at each selected location to ensure the efficient operation of the cold storage using digital tools. Additionally, the local consultant is expected to conduct training and awareness programs for potential cold room users like farmers, traders, and local communities, covering the benefits of cold storage, procedures for utilising the cold rooms, and the use of digital tools for monitoring their produce. A gender-sensitive/GEDSI approach to training is required to ensure inclusive participation of all community members.

Proposals should be submitted electronically before **EoB CET December 5th, 2025**. The quote submission details are outlined in Section 3 below.

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1. Context

1.1 Background on BASE Foundation

The [BASE Foundation](#) is a Swiss non-profit organisation and a specialised partner of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Since 2001, BASE has been turning climate ambition into action by developing, testing, and scaling innovative business models, financing strategies, and digital tools which foster systemic market transformation and shift stakeholder behaviour and investment practices towards more sustainable and climate-aligned finance and operations.

1.2 Project background and objectives

In January 2021 BASE and Empa (Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology) were awarded funding by data.org for the creation, implementation and deployment of an open source, data-science-based mobile application that uses machine learning and physics-based food modelling to help smallholder farmers access sustainable cold storage. Together with a pay-per-use servitization business model, the Your Virtual Cold Chain Assistant (Your VCCA, www.yourvcca.org) project aims to cut postharvest food loss and increase the income of marginal farmers in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMIC). To this end, BASE and Empa have partnered with local technology providers, i.e. companies managing and operating solar-powered refrigerated containers, which function as refrigerated walk-in rooms for farmers to safely store their produce to prevent food spoilage and preserve crop quality to get a higher price when selling the produce. These organizations generally own, maintain, and operate the cold rooms, and farmers pay a small fee per day and crate stored, without the need of any upfront investment to buy the equipment. The solution has been rolled out across 30+ cold rooms in India, Nigeria, Iraq, and Guinea-Bissau, with support from various donors including GIZ, REPIC, and ClimateWorks Foundation. For more information about the context of the project, we recommend watching these project videos: [India](#), [Nigeria](#).

The mobile application, named [Coldtivate](#), is free to download and can be used on Android and on iOS. The app can be used by cooling users and by organizations offering cold storage to digitally manage the inventory inside of cold rooms, remotely monitor temperature, revenue, and occupancy, predict the remaining quality of the produce stored in the rooms, and forecast market prices for multiple crops across India. Coldtivate also includes a digital marketplace, currently available for Nigerian users, for interested buyers to purchase stored produce directly from the app. This feature is yet to be deployed in India.

In November 2025, BASE was awarded by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) a 14-months grant to scale the adoption of Coldtivate in at least 25

solar-powered cold rooms across the state of Odisha, India. As part of this project, we are looking for a local consultant that can support with the implementation of the following activities:

1. Map the distribution of operational solar-powered cold rooms across multiple districts in Odisha;
2. Run a feasibility assessment to identify cold rooms suitable for the introduction of Coldtivate;
3. Establish a robust governance structure that includes digital inventory management with Coldtivate and the integration of market linkage activities;
4. Deliver Coldtivate training and organize awareness raising events with the local communities;
5. Assist in data collection to evaluate the benefits of cold storage, with an emphasis on understanding how digitalization can enhance access to cooling;
6. Support project sustainability by facilitating BASE's interaction with relevant stakeholders at national or subnational level.

More information about the envisioned activities is presented in Section 2.1.

1.3 Team composition and gaps

BASE's project team is based in Switzerland and brings extensive experience in designing and managing Your VCCA initiatives in collaboration with local stakeholders in South Asia. However, we recognize that the success of this project depends heavily on close and continuous engagement with the cold room management teams and local farming communities.

To ensure that the implementation is contextually grounded and responsive to local needs and priorities, we are seeking an **India-based consultant** with demonstrated experience in working directly with farmer communities. The consultant will play a key role in facilitating field-level interactions, monitoring progress, and ensuring that project activities remain aligned with local realities.

This local expertise will complement our team's technical and strategic capacities, bridging any gaps related to on-the-ground implementation and cultural context.

2. Scope of work

2.1 Objective

BASE is looking for a talented and experienced consultant or team of consultants that can support the integration of digitalisation in the management and operation of cold rooms in the state of Odisha, India, for more efficient, transparent, and traceable monitoring.

Project activities are planned to be structured across the following activities:

- **Activity 1: Map distribution of operational solar-powered cold rooms across multiple districts in Odisha.** The state of Odisha has developed a series of initiatives with the aim of boosting agricultural cold storage including a financial assistance scheme for cold room investments and support to revitalise stranded cooling assets across the state. Furthermore, District Administrations of Odisha are actively promoting small-scale cold storage facilities by supporting the capital investment costs required for the installation of at least one cold room per subdivision. BASE seeks to leverage this momentum to systematically map operational solar-powered cold rooms across the state, ensuring that the project aligns with existing infrastructure and local priorities.
- **Activity 2: Run a feasibility assessment to identify cold rooms suitable for the introduction of Coldtivate.** Based on the mapping completed as part of Activity 1, the consultant(s) is expected to run a feasibility assessment to identify at least 25 cold rooms suitable for the introduction of Coldtivate. The assessment should take into account factors including cold room user base, connectivity and network at location, cold room operators digital literacy and interest in upscale record-keeping, and engagement of District Administration to maximize project sustainability.
- **Activity 3: Establish a robust governance structure that includes digital inventory management with Coldtivate and the integration of market linkage activities.** At each selected cold room, liaise with organizations responsible for cold room management and operations - such as farmer cooperatives, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), women Self-Help Groups (SHG), or members of the local communities and micro-entrepreneurs - to establish a robust governance structure that includes digital inventory management with Coldtivate and the integration of market linkage activities. These aspects are crucial to improve operational efficiency and ensure wide room adoption.

- **Activity 4: Deliver Coldtivate training and organize awareness raising events with the local community.** Throughout the course of the project, the consultant(s) is tasked with delivering Coldtivate training and organising awareness raising events among smallholder farmers, cold room users, and buyers, with the goal of onboarding users on the application, informing them about the benefits of cold storage for preservation of fresh fruits and vegetables, and collecting user feedback to improve the app usability and adoption.
- **Activity 5: Assist in data collection to evaluate the benefits of cold storage, with an emphasis on understanding how digitalization can enhance access to cooling.** The consultant(s) will assist in collecting data, using Coldtivate or alternative tools, on cold room utilization and impact, to evaluate the benefits of cold storage and understand how digitalization can enhance access to cooling. This includes collecting information on existing users—their cold room usage and the resulting benefits; on new users—the baseline levels of postharvest loss and income, and changes after using the cold room; and for both groups—changes in cold room utilisation following the introduction and use of Coldtivate.
- **Activity 6: Support project sustainability by facilitating BASE interaction with relevant stakeholders at national or subnational level.** To explore the potential for scaling up the adoption of Coldtivate beyond the 25 cold rooms targeted under this project, the consultants should facilitate interactions between the BASE team and relevant stakeholders at the national and subnational levels to identify pathways for sustaining and expanding the initiative beyond the project period.

The scope of work does not include the ownership or management of solar-powered cold rooms. The consultant will play the role of ecosystem builder for the integration of digitalisation at the cold rooms, without being directly responsible for management and operations at cold rooms.

BASE is seeking services for the period **December 2025 - December 2026 (13 months)**, aligned with the project timeline.

2.2 Coldtivate app

The Coldtivate app is a central component of this intervention, and the selected consultant will be expected to deliver training on its use to cold room operators and farmer communities. As such, bidders should have a strong familiarity with the application and are encouraged to review it prior to submitting their quotation. To support this, we have developed a set of onboarding

and training resources, freely accessible through the [Your VCCA Onboarding Kit](#) (free sign-up required). We strongly encourage all bidders to explore this material when preparing their proposals. Bidders are also encouraged to freely download the application on Google Play and Apple Store and create their test cooling company, to explore the app first-hand.

2.3 Timeline

Below we present a tentative timeline to clarify project priorities and expected workload distribution. As such, the table is only intended to serve as an indication and will be refined upon project initiation.

Activity	Completion date
Activity 1: Map distribution of operational solar-powered cold rooms across multiple districts in Odisha.	By 31 December 2025
Activity 2: Run a feasibility assessment to identify cold rooms suitable for the introduction of Coldtivate.	By 31 January 2026
Activity 3: Establish a robust governance structure that includes digital inventory management with Coldtivate and the integration of market linkage activities.	By 31 March 2026
Activity 4: Deliver Coldtivate training and organize awareness raising events with the local community.	By 31 October 2026
Activity 5: Assist in data collection to evaluate the benefits of cold storage, with an emphasis on understanding how digitalization can enhance access to cooling.	By 30 November 2026
Activity 6: Support project sustainability by facilitating BASE interaction with relevant stakeholders at national or subnational level.	By 30 December 2026

2.4 Minimal requirements

Interested bidders must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. **Location:** The consultant must be based in India, with preference given to candidates located (or with strong operational presence) in Odisha.
2. **Community Experience:** Demonstrated experience working directly with farmer communities, including facilitating engagement, training, or capacity-building activities.
3. **Technical Knowledge (advantageous):** Experience with managing projects focusing on cold storage or cooling technologies is considered an asset.
4. **Facilitation Skills:** Ability to act as facilitators and ecosystem builders at cold room sites, supporting knowledge sharing and adoption of best practices.
5. **Stakeholder Liaison:** Ability to liaise effectively with local authorities, including District Administration officials and other relevant government stakeholders is considered an asset.

3. Submission of quotation and evaluation criteria

Quotations should be submitted in English before the deadline specified below.

Please include the following information:

- Consultant's Organisation:
 - Briefly describe your background / the background of your consulting firm / organisation;
 - Provide a brief description or profile of the key team personnel that would be working in the project and the sub consultant(s) that your consulting firm proposes to engage for this assignment. Describe their role.
- Consultant's Experience: Provide work samples and past experiences of consultant(s) in similar or related projects, where possible.
- Comments and suggestions to this Request for Quotation: Present and justify any modifications to the RfQ your consulting firm would like to propose, if there are any, to perform the assignment better and more effectively (e.g. deleting some activity that you find unnecessary, adding others or proposing a different phasing of the activities). Such suggestions should be concise and incorporated in your Proposal.
- Description of Approach, Methodology, Work Plan and Budget overview: It is suggested that you include the following sections:
 - technical approach or methodology
 - work plan
 - budget allocated to the latter. Please provide a budget estimate for all involved team members and sub-contractors, travel costs, and training expenses, and how these relate to the activities listed in section 2.1.

Questions and clarifications:

Please send your questions to Roberta Evangelista, roberta.evangelista@energy-base.org and Simran Singh, simran.singh@energy-base.org.

Please send quotes via email to:

Roberta Evangelista, roberta.evangelista@energy-base.org and Simran Singh, simran.singh@energy-base.org.

Deadline for submission: **EoB CET December 5th, 2025.**

Quotes will be evaluated and selected based on the principle of best value for money. This includes quality/suitability as well as price criteria.

1. Quality and suitability of the proposal including:
 - Demonstrated understanding of the objectives and scope.
 - Suitability and quality of the approach on the proposed scope of work.
 - Relevance of company experience.
2. Price (the cost of additional suggested activities will be considered separately)

BASE may consider other value for money sub-criteria in the evaluation of proposals.

Further information:

The consultant is expected to collect any missing information from the BASE team and clarify the work structure and work plan for the development of the activities during the kick-off meeting and execution phase.

It is encouraged that the consultant suggests additional activities deemed necessary to reach the objectives.

The proposal must include the time frame of the implementation of the different activities.

All elements should be developed in consultation with the project team (led by BASE) and should be aligned with other project activities mentioned above.