

**Pre-bidding Conference Minutes**  
**Provision of Travel Management Services to UN Agencies in Iraq and Jordan**  
**on Long Term Agreement basis (RFP-026/13)**  
**17 April 2013, 10:30**  
**UNDP Iraq Conference Room**

**Attendees:** Representatives of 5 companies from Jordan.

**Agenda:**

1. Description of the RFP document and process
2. Questions & Answers

**1. Description of the RFP document and process**

Purpose of the RFP: Identification and selection of one single qualified Travel Agency from the region with the purpose of entering into a Long Term Agreement for a period of one year with the option to extend for two additional years, subject to a satisfactory performance evaluation. The contracted Travel Agency shall serve the travel needs of three UN Agencies in Iraq and Jordan (provided in sub-section A of Section 3 (Terms of Reference) of the RFP document).

A detailed description of the RFP document was made, explaining the contents of each section. The procurement process was also described in detail, with explanations about the competitive, evaluation and contract award stages.

The following information and provisions of the solicitation document and process were highlighted:

- UNDP Iraq is the leading UN Agency for this procurement process and is acting on behalf of the other UN Agencies in Iraq and Jordan mentioned above. The process is conducted in accordance with UNDP procurement rules and regulations, and the contract shall be signed by UNDP Iraq on behalf of all participating UN Agencies.
- Given the level of effort (both financial and administrative) invested by UNDP Iraq into the current procurement process, Proposers are required to submit a Proposal Security (bank guarantee) in the amount of 5,000 USD together with their Technical Proposal. This will ensure that only companies with serious intentions submit their proposals under this competition and will safeguard UNDP against withdrawals of offers during the period of validity of the proposal, as well as against failure by the successful Proposer to sign the contract after UNDP has awarded it. The period of validity of the Proposal Security shall be of 150 days from the last day of Proposal submission.
- Clarification questions can be submitted to the designated email address indicated under p. 17 of the Data Sheet up to seven days prior to the deadline of the competition. UNDP will try to respond as promptly as possible to such requests and the answers will be shared with all Proposers which expressed their interest.
- Proposals should be submitted in hard copy only and the number of requested copies is two. The deadline of 5 May 2013, 16:00 (Jordan local time) is a strict one – proposals received after this deadline shall not be accepted.
- The evaluation method to be used is "lowest priced technically qualified" Proposer, which will be awarded the contract. A proposal shall be deemed technically qualified if it obtained minimum

*BSH*



70% of the total obtainable score in the technical evaluation. The technical and financial evaluation criteria are listed in every detail on pages 19-22 of the RFP document.

- Section 3 of the RFP document provides details on the requirements of UNDP, latest UNDP travel policy, as well as the UNDP travel production report for the past three years which shall serve as an indication of expected future business levels. However, it was noted that UNDP does not warrant that similar levels of business will be required, nor does UNDP guarantee any minimum quantity of services. It also lists the types of services required by UNDP, as well as minimum performance standards set by UNDP.
- UNDP Iraq will provide office space to the successful Proposer, which will be required to deploy one employee at UNDP Iraq location. UNDP will charge a monthly rent of 500 JOD. This should be taken into account when Proposers develop their financial proposals.
- Proposers are required to submit the documents listed under p.26 of the Data Sheet. The recommended list of documents is also presented in sub-section E of Section 3 (Terms of Reference) of the RFP document and can be used by Proposers as a guiding checklist for structuring the Proposal.
- Sections 4-8 are available online in Word format and should be used by Proposers in compiling proposals. It was emphasized that the Financial Proposal must be prepared as per Section 7 and must be presented in a separate sealed envelope.

## **2. Questions received during and after the Pre-bidding Conference**

**Q1:** Is the amount of the bank guarantee refundable? And is it the only form of providing a Proposal Security?

**A1:** UNDP will not cash these amounts and will return them to all Proposers once the contract with the winner is signed. As an alternative means, the Proposal Security can be provided in the form of a certified check addressed to UNDP Iraq. The Proposal Security may be forfeited by UNDP in the event that the Proposer withdraws its offer during the period of validity of the proposal or the successful Proposer fails to sign the contract after UNDP has awarded it, as detailed under Clause 15.4 of the Instruction to Proposers.

**Q2:** What is the time frame for the selected Proposer to take over the contract from the current contractor (if the selected Proposer is different from the current contractor)?

**A2:** Once UNDP Iraq obtains all required approvals for signing the contract with the selected Proposer, the starting date of the contract, as well as other contractual arrangements, will be discussed and negotiated with the selected Proposer. In order not to create any break in the provision of services to UNDP there may be a small overlap between the current contractor and the selected Proposer (if different from current contractor) for a smooth hand-over of business. The contract template is provided in Section 10 of the RFP document. Majority of clauses, especially General Conditions of Contract, are non-negotiable. Negotiations will be focused on technical and logistical things related to the contract execution.

**Q3:** What is the variation between the numbers listed in the UNDP Travel Production Report for 2010-2012 and the reality? We, as a Travel Agency under such a contract, would need to know the minimum guaranteed levels in order to obtain good deals from airlines.

**A3:** The figures are based on real expenditures of UNDP and the other UN Agencies involved during the past three years. While we cannot guarantee any minimum quantity of services required in the future, these figures should serve as a good reference of the level of business which can be expected.

**Q4:** What is meant by "Distribution of Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)"?

**A4:** This is a service mainly related to events organized by UNDP, which involves distribution of per diems to the participants. Depending on the location, where the event is conducted, such payments to individual participants would need to be made in cash. On confirmation of an event UNDP will pay the Travel Agency a per diem advance of 80% for distribution to participants based on the approved DSA distribution schedule provided by the events focal point, noting that the Travel Agency will be expected to pay 100% per diem to the participants subject to clearance upon submission of final invoice to UNDP.



It should be clarified that provision under Data Sheet clause no. 12 does not refer to advance payment made by UNDP to the selected Proposer (winner of the competition) upon signature of the Long Term Agreement (LTA). It rather refers to advance payments made during the period of validity of the LTA to cover 80% of the DSA amount envisaged for the participants in a certain event, for which the contractor's services are required. In any case, such advance payments shall not exceed 50,000 USD at one time.

The winner of the competition would still be required to present and Advance Payment Guarantee to UNDP in the amount of 50,000 USD upon signature of the LTA, which is a condition for determining the effectivity of the agreement.

**Q5:** The service fees indicated in the Financial Proposal should be a flat rate or a percentage?

**A5:** The service fees shall be a flat rate expressed in US Dollars.

**Q6:** What are service fees charged by the current contractor?

**A6:** This is confidential information governed by a contractual agreement between UNDP and the current contractor and for the purposes of this competitive process this information is not relevant. While establishing the services fees, Proposers should take into account, among others, the statistical data provided in the RFP document, the various requirements and quality level of services requested, as well as the local market conditions.

**Q7:** Is the deployment of an employee at UNDP Iraq premises optional or a mandatory requirement?

**A7:** It is mandatory to have one employee in the Amman Office for events management which requires a lot of consultation especially given the Iraq operating context, otherwise tickets can be issued through e-ticketing system.

**Q8:** Will UNDP provide the successful Proposer with a tax exemption certificate?

**A8:** Tax exemption can only be applied on the services provided by the contractor to UNDP. Such exemption is not transferrable to services provided by third parties (i.e. airlines, hotels etc.). UNDP will issue such a certificate to the successful Proposer.

**Q9:** What is the purpose of table with pass-on rates for the top UN destinations (page 34 of the RFP document)?

**A9:** The rates indicated by Proposers in that table will not be used in the financial evaluation. The information provided by Proposers will be used to assess their capability to provide best rates to the UN, as detailed under technical evaluation criterion 2.5. By analyzing the information provided by Proposers UNDP will be able to assess the level of professionalism and expertise of the Proposers and its staff, their knowledge of the market and how rates are structured, their ability to secure best rates for the requested destinations and pass them on to the UN.

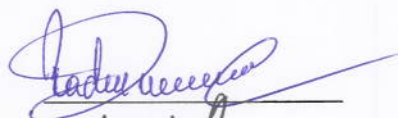
**Q10:** As per your solicitation to provide the service in Amman and Erbil, the UNDP will provide an office space in Amman, Jordan for a monthly fee. Will the UNDP provide the same in Erbil?

**A10:** Events management under UNDP Iraq is still centralized, that is, it is still handled in Amman necessitating deployment of one employee to attend to event cases. No in-plant is envisaged in the Erbil Office at this stage.

**Q11:** How do you pay your Employee in Erbil, would it be possible to wire transfer the per diem to their bank account if it's out of Iraq?

**A11:** Payments should be in the form of cash, required for accommodation, meals and incidentals during events. Other forms will not provide the much needed convenience to participants.

Prepared by: Radu Dusciac, Procurement Officer



25/04/2013

Cleared by: Hugo Barillas, Head of Procurement Unit



25/4/2013