

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

from National and/or International Civil Society Organizations/Non-Government Organizations to assist in the delivery of free Wi-Fi services in select public places in the Philippines

BACKGROUND

The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Republic of the Philippines have engaged in a partnership to accelerate the roll-out of the Free Wi-Fi Internet Access in Public Places Project. The project, also known as Free Wi-Fi For All, was conceptualized because almost fifty-nine percent (59%) of the population and seventy-two percent (72%) of the households still have no access to the internet. To bridge the digital divide, Republic Act No. 10929 (Free Internet Access in Public Places Act of 2017) was passed to increase internet accessibility by providing free internet services to unserved and underserved communities across the country.

Under the DICT-UNDP engagement, UNDP applies its National Acceleration Modality (NAM) to the project's procurement process and its partnership agreement instruments to ensure the project's viability and sustainability. The project targets the expansion of internet access for up to 6,000 public sites, including public schools, municipal halls, barangay halls, health centers, among others.

The Free Wi-Fi For All project allows communities, government facilities, and businesses to take advantage of opportunities via the internet and facilitates the delivery of public services—thus, accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

OBJECTIVE

Through this Request for Information (RFI), UNDP invites national and/or international Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) particularly independent nonprofit organizations for potential partnership. The intention is to assist UNDP in advancing the provision of internet access and expanding internet coverage in the targeted locations.

This RFI seeks partners who can provide a fully-managed internet connectivity service, including free Wi-Fi hotspots in remote schools and priority public places in the Philippines.

To ensure that the collaboration results in the project's vision, interested parties should have the characteristics, experience, and expertise noted below, including:

- a) The partner should have demonstrated commitment to improving social and economic development outcomes through information and communications technology (ICT) solutions

and services that serve the remotest areas in the country. The organization should have the capacity to implement and oversee:

- Network infrastructure deployment
 - Wired and wireless broadband service delivery
 - Different approaches to wired or wireless broadband service (for example, wireless mesh technologies, satellite-based internet access, among others)
 - Innovative business models concerning continued broadband service and consumer access
 - Managed services
 - Systems integration
 - Network security
 - Data privacy
 - Application development
- b) The partner should have demonstrated experience to foster empowerment among the local government, technology users, and the communities involved in the project by capacitating them in the deployment, management, and operations of the physical infrastructure that supports internet connectivity.
- c) The partner should have ICT advocacy on any of the following areas: education, good governance, climate change adaptation and/or disaster risk reduction, and delivery of services.

EXPECTED SERVICES/FUNCTIONS

The partner CSOs/NGOs are expected to undertake the following services and functions as Responsible Parties (RPs):

- a) **Delivery of Service-** Provide a turn-key, fully managed internet Wi-Fi service in selected public areas. The public areas may be chosen by the selected partner, provided that the sites do not currently have comprehensive internet access. The technical specifications and sites will require approval from UNDP/DICT.
- b) **Operation and Maintenance-** Operate and maintain free Wi-Fi services in designated sites with a minimum bandwidth speed of 2mbps per site for three (3) years.
- c) **Communications-** To roll out a communications plan jointly with DICT and UNDP which will ensure the Service Set Identifier (SSID), captive portal, and landing pages have the Free Wi-Fi For All names and logos.
- d) **Governance engagement, capacity-building, and technology transfer-** If feasible, mobilize local labor in the deployment and construction of Wi-Fi, orient the technology users on the

management and operations of the physical infrastructure, and engage the local government to identify security measures for possible theft and vandalism.

- e) Sustainability- The deployment should contribute to environmental sustainability and should model at the minimum sustainability mechanism for confirmed service beyond the project life.
- f) Cost-effectiveness- the deployment should demonstrate value-adding features/services beyond a traditional commercial model (i.e., cost-sharing between partners, sustainability mechanisms, community engagements, and so forth).

REQUIREMENTS

Apart from the required qualities above, interested partners should have:

- A proven track record in one or more of the areas identified above.
- A proven track record of experience in the development of technology and building infrastructure for middle and last mile networks.
- A proven track record of building last mile infrastructure in a challenging geography similar to the Philippines, which would include overcoming issues such as lack of cable infrastructure, remote sites in upland areas and far-flung islands, typhoons, earthquakes and floods.
- A proven track record of delivery and maintenance of high levels of quality for broadband service.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The partners can select public sites for implementation based on their presence and existing network.

INFORMATION REQUESTED

Interested parties are requested to fill out two forms: (i) Request for Information (RFI) questionnaire, and (ii) Capacity Assessment Checklist (CACHE) questionnaire. The first form will provide us with an overview of your organization, and the latter will give a more detailed description of your organization's capacity.

Please attach the necessary supporting documents where relevant or requested. Interested international NGOs should provide information and documentation such as permits, licenses, partner agreements, or detailed plans to acquire necessary permitting confirming their ability to operate in the Philippines.

Please note that attachments should be provided to support your answers, whenever applicable. More importantly, please respond to each question directly and clearly, and refrain from providing information that is not relevant.

RFI ASSUMPTIONS

The project is open to all technologies and service delivery business models that would be able to meet or exceed the project's requirements.

All documentations submitted in response to this RFI will be reviewed by a Review Committee. If copyrighted material is included in the submissions, please provide a copyright waiver authorizing the committee to make copies for review purposes.

After completion of the RFI and CACHE assessments, UNDP will reach out to the qualified NGOs/CSOs for a "Call for Proposal" (CFP). This CFP can be based on the geographic locations/ technology offer / deployed solutions and capacity of the NGOs/CSOs.

Interested partners can provide a proposal for any, or all, segments of the solution (i.e., last mile infrastructure, middle mile infrastructure, backhaul, access points, management software, consumer devices) to best provide a robust picture of the range of deployment options, but is required to establish free public Wi-Fi sites.

The Review Committee may request to hold a presentation and/or meeting with the interested CSOs/NGOs. Organizations responding to this RFI are requested to designate a single contact for the purposes of communicating further information and clarification regarding the RFI. The contact name and details shall be provided to the Review Committee.

CLARIFICATIONS ON THE RFI

Interested parties may request clarifications on any aspect of the RFI by writing to Alka Aneja / Marie Kristel Aberilla at procurement.ph@undp.org

SUBMISSION AND CLOSING DATE

- Interested parties are requested to respond to the RFI questionnaire and CACHE form after downloading the templates from eTendering Sites. The responses to the RFI questionnaire and CACHE form must be submitted online at the Attachment section of the e-tendering site. All supporting documents and forms should be uploaded along with the filled in forms.
- In case of any technical issues related to eTendering system, kindly write to procurement.ph@undp.org
- Closing date of submission of information and forms is **15 January 2020**. Late submissions will not be considered for evaluation.