

80790 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR THE LONG-TERM AGREEMENT (LTA) FOR "ADVISORY SOLUTIONS IN RELATION TO DIGITAL SERVICES INCLUDING: ENABLING POLICY AND REGULATION, OPEN DIGITAL PAYMENT ECOSYSTEMS, INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AND. EMPOWERED CUSTOMERS.

Questions received by 31 august 2021:

Q1, Form B requests statements of satisfactory performance from the top 5 clients (in terms of value) from the last 3 years. As our organization works in many areas other than financial health, should this be the top 5 clients in the area of interest, or overall?

Form B refers to the overall performance of bidders. All high valued clients may be provided if desired, but please highlight only those in the areas of interest. Separating them from the ones unrelated to the area of interest would be ideal.

Q2, Form D requests statements of satisfactory performance from the top 3 clients or more. Should these be the same as are provided in form B?

Form D refers to regional experience for each region selected in the technical proposal. In this case, please complete at the least 3 for every region of interest. Bidders may repeat references as long as these are valid for the geographical region requested.

Q.3. Section 6 requests the bidder fill out the 'returnable bidding forms', however I am not able to make edits to the forms with the PDF document downloaded. Can you please share the editable version of the forms?

Thank you, you can also download the documents in word version from the procurement notice site where all such links have been provided.

Q.4 Is there a length requirement/minimum/maximum length for form E. Format of Technical Proposal?

There is no minimum nor maximum length requirement for form E.

Q.5. Is a team of exactly 10 members (with 2 team leads, 4 specialists and 4 junior specialists) mandatory to be proposed for each region?

The minimum 10-member team requirements apply to the lots. Bidders must present and clearly define a core team per each lot. You may choose to also propose as many team members per region as the bidders see fit, but bidders do not need to present 10 per region. Team members may be quoted in more than one region provided that they have availability and capacity to work in more than one region. The advantage of having a good number of experts in the roster is that, if the bidder is successful, it will then have a good amount of pre-approved experts when called off multiple times under the LTA.

Q.6. The scoring criteria for section 3 (Management structure and Key personnel) provides scores against qualifications and skills and experience for an individual at each level. When 10 team members are proposed, will these scores be divided according to team members proposed?

The scoring criteria for section 3 is not to be understood as an individual score. The score refers to the category namely team lead, specialist, and junior specialist. For example, the evaluators will review the 2 CVs proposed for the team lead category and will provide an overall score for team leads. Keep in mind that the experts that will be proposed shall be treated as rosters of pre-approved experts that can be engaged during any call-off.

Q.7. Additionally, if bidder 1 proposes a team of 10 in one region and bidder 2 proposes a team of 30 in 3 regions. In such a scenario how will the scores be assigned to make a comparison across bidders?

For each lot the qualifications of key personnel proposed (Team leader, Specialist, Junior staff) will be evaluated on the basis of the 10 CVs presented as the core team. You may add other CVs for reference. The regional distribution allows UNCDF to assess the 3.2. composition and structure of the team proposed.

Q.8. In the section - BREAKDOWN OF THE CRITERIA FOR SCORING THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL, sections 1.8 on pages 24 and 46, the exact criteria are not clear and there is no score mentioned against them. In the same section, 1.8, the Lots on pages 32/33 and 39 are missing

Please disregard. This used to be a criterion in the standard template form for Bidder's qualification, capacity, and experience.

Q.9 We would like to seek clarity that the financial proposal developed as per representative scope in Form H will only be used for financial comparison across bidders?

That is correct. Form H will be used to understand how the bidders structure projects.

Q.10 We would also like to clarify that the details of the names and fees in the first part of the financial proposal are for contractual purposes for secondary call-offs and not for financial comparison or evaluation?

The individual fees of the experts shall be treated as fixed costs during the life of the LTA and no modification on the individual fees shall be allowed for the life of the LTA. The fees from the section *Breakdown of costs for the core team proposed* will be used as bases for the contract. The Price of the case sample proposed will be used as the basis of the financial evaluation.

Q.11. We would like to clarify that only fee rates are to be provided for each team member proposed for financial evaluation of the LTAs. In other words, no per-diems or other expenses that might be required during the secondary call-off submissions should be included at this stage - please confirm.

This is correct. Once the contract has been awarded, other incidental expenses maybe quoted separately for each project call-off as per the SoP provided. However, individual fees of the experts shall remain the same for the life of the LTA and cannot be modified.

Q.12. However, the above contradicts the statement on section 11, Instructions to Bidders, on page 7 of the RPF, that states – "Any output and activities described in the Technical Proposal but not priced in the Financial Proposal, shall be assumed to be included in the prices of other activities or items, as well as in the final total price." Please rectify this statement with the previous question.

This statement is part of the standard template for one-time work but does not apply to this RFP which is intended for an LTA callable on demand.

Q.13. Point 14.4 of Section 2 mentions that all entities that comprise the JV, Consortium or Association shall be subject to the eligibility and qualification assessment by UNDP. Does this mean, in the case of a JV, Consortium or Association, partner firm(s) also has/have to submit eligibility related forms which is Form B, along with Form B of Lead Firm?

That is correct - all entities that will be involved would have to comply with the criteria of form B

Q.14. What are the objectives of the main TOR beyond "finding high quality contractors that provide technical expertise in inclusive innovation methodologies and techniques..."? What are the problems / issues to solve? Can we refer to the sample TOR objectives in order to deliver more specific solutions to a problem?

The aim of the LTA is to provide a wide array or broad scope of services that can be categorized in a general manner but will be made more specific only during the specific call-offs. Please refer to the descriptions provided in Section 5 d. the TOR Scope of Services per lot for the list of indicative activities and outputs.

Q. 14 Although they are similar in nature, there is a discrepancy between the steps indicated in the main TOR & sample TOR. Are we supposed to deliver 2 different technical and financial proposals? Or do they have to be connected to each other?

The main TOR is the TOR that describes the broad scope of work under the LTA with a duration of 3 years. The Sample TOR is one example of how a single call-off may look like, which can be required at any time and multiple times during the life of the LTA. There could be other TORs during the call-offs, but what was provided is a demonstration of how the call-off TOR will likely be structured.

All bidders are expected to deliver one technical and one financial proposal per lot applied to. In the case of the financial proposal, the bidders must provide the breakdown of costs as well as a financial proposal based on the sample TOR. No second technical proposal is required.

Q. 16. Are all the steps in the list linear, sequential, and interlinked? Or are they separated and isolated?

The TORs describe indicative activities and outputs per lot which may be interlinked or standalone. Technical proposals must be able to describe what is the expertise of the bidder with respect to the areas required.

Q. 17. What are the differences between point number 2 "*Design, testing, and roll-out of innovation challenges with start-ups and corporates*" vs. point number 3 "*Design, testing, and roll-out of innovation labs in UNCDF countries*?" Who are the key identified partners in step 3?

Point 2 only refers to technical assistance within the framework of a challenge which is a one-off activity for start-ups and corporates whereas point 3 refers to innovation labs which are longer term projects and may have several iterations (i.e. cohorts) and include a wider scope of actors (government institutions, NGOs and other entities involved in the provision of digital financial services) not listed in 2.

Q. 18 Regarding point number 2, can you specify what 'innovation challenges' are in your own terms?

Innovation challenge refers to a method of tapping into the collective knowledge or intelligence of the open public, with the objective of achieving a desired outcome or solving a problem or issue, by an entity that would typically perform this function by itself, or by outsourcing it to another entity. The need to source the knowledge publicly arises from the following realities: (a) the recognition of the reality that not one entity can possibly possess all the knowledge and solutions to a variety of problems; and (b) a learning and dynamic organization continuously desires to generate fresh, new, and innovative ideas and solutions, outside of the usual way of conducting business that an entity may have been accustomed to.

These projects are not fixed turnkey implementations and can be multifaceted.

Please refer to relevant webpages of UNCDF on the subject for examples

<https://www.uncdf.org/finlab/innovation-challenges>

Q. 19 Regarding point number 3, can you specify what a 'lab' is in your own terms?

Labs are referred as such because, like a laboratory, they are intended to model a new capability to make breakthroughs on the future of development, and may be designed, for instance, to close the gap between the current practices in an accelerated pace of change.

These projects are not fixed turnkey implementations and can be multifaceted.

Please refer to relevant webpages of UNCDF on the subject for examples

<https://www.uncdf.org/finlab>

Q20. Are we required to be able to deliver all of the indicated elements in point number 4?

Bidders have to present a proposal covering the scope and most common assignments requested in each lot. For Lot 3 (Inclusive Innovation) this includes point 4, bidders must demonstrate that they have the capacity to provide Technical assistance to UNCDF partners during ideation, prototyping, piloting, and commercial phases. Not covering all required assignments in a lot would be disadvantageous to a proposal but shall not immediately result to rejection of bids.

Q.21 Are we going to be automatically excluded if the current team structure could not deliver some parts of the point number 4?

Bid rejection is not automatic in this case and would depend on the full review and findings of the technical evaluation. Kindly also note that in the RFP, we have this clause that states, *“Provided that a Proposal is substantially responsive, UNCDF may waive any non-conformities or omissions in the Proposal that, in the opinion of UNCDF, do not constitute a material deviation.”*

Q.22. Will it be enough to put a system in place to find the right experts or do you require us to have all of the expertise in house?

The RFP allows several subcontracting options including joint ventures. Experts are not necessarily required to be only in-house. However please note that the expert pool is part of the evaluations, and any subcontracting or joint ventures must be fully disclosed during the proposal submission. Kindly refer to the RFP section 15 of Instructions to Bidders. Be mindful also that experts proposed and evaluated to be acceptable shall remain as pre-approved roster of experts that will be locked into the LTA for 3 years, regardless of whether they are in-house or from other partners.

Q23, do you only require fees and the number of days needed to deliver the mentioned elements or do you require a more detailed description of approach and methodology?

Only fees are required but bidders are welcome to supplement these with other information. A detailed description of approach and methodology would be advantageous if the quality is one that will demonstrate the expertise of the bidder.

Q24: Would UNCDF invite bidders to combine efforts to address specific call outs across one or multiple lots/regions?

UNCDF does not have a preference. Bidders are welcome to apply individually or in joint ventures provided that the RFP rules for joint venture and subcontracting are complied. If the question refers to whether or not UNCDF will call-off multiple LTA holders to conduct a given work, that cannot be determined at this stage.

Q25 Is there are maximum number of lots that a bidder can be considered for?

No, bidders can apply to any combination, or all 4 lots.

Q26: The call mentioned a minimum of 3 bidders per lot. Does this consider differences by region?

The secondary competition aims to obtain three offers are the minimum, regardless of where or what region the work will be done.

Q27: Should bidders be able to deliver all services under each lot?

Yes, bidders have to present a proposal covering the scope and most common assignments requested in each lot. When the bidder succeeds in the LTA, they are even more expected to deliver on call-off work, if they desire to be called-off again or avoid termination of the LTA.

Q28: Should bidders indicate what services within a specific lot are better aligned with their capabilities?

Yes, please do so in the Technical Proposal. If the bidder does not feel qualified to do some of the work, they are free to decide to not express interest in those lots.

Q29: Is there a list of prioritized countries across the preferred regions?

Please refer to TOR section h.

Q30: Under lot 1, is there bandwidth to undertake primary research activities to understand how regulators can better design appropriate policies to catalyze uptake of DS as part of regulatory assessments and diagnostics?

Yes, under activities 1 and 2. Please note that the outputs are indicative.

Q31 In lot 2 Open Digital Payment Ecosystems: Where does advisory support end, and technical support begin? For example, could UNCDF envision a scenario in which bidders help ecosystem players develop APIs, digital ID solutions or open platforms for selected partners as part of project implementation?

This nuance is driven by the programmatic agenda. The technical support to partners starts when UNCDF signs a technical assistance or grant agreement with a partner. For instance, UNCDF may request applications from bidders to develop APIs and digital IDs and once a project is concrete request the support of the bidders.

Q32. In lot 2 Open Digital Payment Ecosystems: For the supply side analysis of anonymized customer and transaction level data of (digital) financial service providers would UNCDF provide access to the data sources or data partners in each country?

If UNCDF has access to the data and has obtained the agreements of intellectual property owner to share it, then the answer is yes.

Q33. In lot 3 for Inclusive Innovation: Would training the ecosystem on the innovative inclusive solutions that select partners have developed be an activity envisioned under this lot?

The possibility exists but we cannot confirm nor deny this, as the assignment will be driven by the demand of the country programmes.

Q.34. in lot 3 would bidders be expected to design and/or host any dashboards/visualizations that capture the performance of the developed innovations, or would these be done by the partners?

Same as above as the assignment will be driven by the demand of the country programmes, the capacity of the partners, and all other factors.

Q35: In lot 3 The lot mentions innovation labs. Would it be possible to know which regions and/or countries these are situated?

We do not have the level of specificity at this stage. Please refer to TOR section h for the countries where UNCDF operates.

Q36: Would it be correct to assume that bidders would provide advisory services to help select partners to design, test and scale innovative solutions as opposed to providing technical support?

Lot 3 requires Design, testing and roll-out of innovation labs as well as Technical assistance to UNCDF partners during ideation, prototyping, piloting, and commercial phases:

Q37 for Lot 004. Empowered Customers.Q1: Where does advisory support end, and technical support begin? For example, could UNCDF envision a scenario in which bidders help ecosystem players develop UX/UI interphases, systems to monitor learning outcomes?

This nuance is driven by the programmatic agenda. The technical support to partners starts when UNCDF signs a technical assistance or grant agreement with a partner. The scenario is possible but we cannot confirm nor deny the programmatic demand for it.

Q38 In lot 4: How is the second service, providing advisory and support to government institutions and regulators different from the activities in Lot 001?

The interaction with government institutions in Lot 4 refers specifically to customer literacy and digital literacy. Lot 001 is broader in scope.

Q39 At what time is the pre-proposal conference taking place. 15H CET or 12:AM?
15h00 CET.

Q40. Do you confirm that the technical proposal has to be password protected?

No. Only the financial proposal shall be password protected.

Q41. It is indicated that “A minimum of three (3) past contracts indicating previous experience working in the preferred region/s over the past five (5) years” is required while it is mentioned on page 74 that we should only “list only previous similar assignments successfully completed in the last 3 years.” Could you please clarify?

Thank you for your comment. Please use 3 years as the reference time, but if there are more relevant contracts to demonstrate track record, bidders are free to share their contracts from the last 5 years.

Q42, A list of countries is indicated on page 66. Should we only consider this list of countries to indicate our “previous relevant experience” on page 72?

The list in page 66 refers to those countries where UNCDF expects bidders to work. Bidders may use this list or list other similar relevant countries in the region as they see fit.

Q43. Could you specify “Please list only previous similar assignments successfully completed in the last 3 years”: could we mention a project that started before but ended in the last three years (for instance one project that started in 2015 and ended in 2020)?

Yes, this is possible. However, kindly ensure that you will clearly specify beginning and end date.

Q42. It is mentioned: “SECTION 2A: Bidder’s Comments and Suggestions on the Terms of Reference “. Should this section be included within the activity 2.1 listed before?

This section only applies to comments and suggestions on the Terms of Reference, or additional services that will be rendered beyond the requirements of the TOR, if any.

Q43. Can one expert be included in different regions?

Yes, provided that the expert is available to work in both regions.

Q43. Can one expert be included in various lots if we apply for several lots?

Yes, provided that the expert has proven capacity for both lots.

Q44. Pp77 Here, could you confirm that we need to propose a methodology for the TOR (form H)?
There is no need to provide a methodology for the cases in section H.

Q45. Could you confirm that this form F should be used to provide the budget for the TOR from the form H?

The prices from form F shall be used in the proposal from section H.

Q46, this title is “Form H: Sample Terms of Reference to be used in the financial proposal”. Can you confirm that this section should also be used to craft the section 2 “Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan “(page 77)

No, the example is there to allow bidders to inform their proposal. You are not obliged to link it to the global technical proposal or to write a separate sample proposal.

Q47, (Section 2 - Instruction to bidders) As per our experience, depending on the specific scopes of work and/or country contexts we could see the need to partner with a specific firm that brings complementary expertise (such as market research firm, UX design firm etc.). Would UNCDF expect a JV formed each time or we can feel free to showcase these kinds of partners depending on the RFP?

UNCDF understands that JVs are possible but they should be constituted before the presentation of the proposal, and not during the call-off. Kindly bear in mind that the LTA will only be issued to a specific company, and anybody else that the company brings to the call-off engagements shall be the responsibility of the company who signed the LTA. Having said that, kindly be also mindful that experts that will be engaged during the call-off must be only those that were pre-approved in the LTA, all of which will be evaluated and approved based on the Technical Proposal that bidders will submit.

Q48 (Section 3 – BDS) Are the bidders required to provide a password for the TECHNICAL proposal too?

This is only obligatory for the financial proposal.

Q49 (Section 4 – Evaluation criteria) Is this technical evaluation criteria “A minimum of three (3) past contracts indicating previous experience working in the preferred region/s over the past five (5) years” not inconsistent with Subsections 1.6 and 1.7 of each Lot regarding Bidder’s qualification, capacity, and experience: 1.6 requests at least 6 project references and 1.7 requests at least 5 project references? (Section 4 – Evaluation criteria)

See our response in Question No. 41. Section 4 specifies the minimum of 3 contracts as part of the non-discretionary “Pass” or “Fail” criteria. In the technical proposal bidders also have to make project references demonstrating your expertise in all the areas requested. These will be part of the scoring.

Q50 Will projects whose value is under US\$ 80,000 not be considered?

See answer to Question no. 21.

Q51 Will showcasing projects under US\$ 80000 be disqualifying? No.

See answer to Question No. 21.

Q52 Should bidders provide project references both for 1.6 and 1.7 for Lot 002 (page 32), for Lot 003 (page 39), and for Lot 004 (page 46)? Please provide references for all lots you wish to apply for.

Q53 A subsection 1.8 is missing on page 32 and page 39, an omission? Please disregard this as this is an omission.

Q54 Subsections 1.6 and 1.7 stipulate that bidders have to provide respectively at least 6 and 5 project references. Will bidders who do not fulfill the number of required references be disqualified or will they only lose marks? See answer to question no. 21.

Q55. Subsections 2.3 and 2.4 are missing on page 39, an omission? This is a typographical error. Please disregard.

Q56. Would you please provide a concrete example of how this calculation method will be applied? Page 52: “UNCDF will award 300 points to lowest priced offer (LPO) other proposals will be scored proportionally: $LPO / \text{Price of the Offer Being Reviewed} \times 100$ ”

If the LPO is 90,000 USD that would get 30 points. Further proposals would be benchmark against the LPO. I.e., 150,000 USD would render 18 points using the formula provided.

Q 57. Are we allowed to propose an expert to more than one Lot if he/she has the required qualification and experience/expertise, whether team leader, specialist, or junior specialist? (e.g., to propose the same resource as team leader for Lot 2 and Lot 3).

Yes, as long as the expert has the skills to deliver on both assignments.

Q 58. Why is Togo classified in the Pacific region (location) and not in West Africa (page 66)?

This is a typographical error. Please consider it replaced with the term “Africa”.