

**RFP 89981-Long Term Agreement (LTA) for a roster of consulting firms in relation to the  
provision of pre and post investment advisory services to  
UNCDF's investees and prospects.**

**PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE  
6 July 2022**

**A. ATTENDEES:** The following firms were represented during the pre-proposal conference:

1. Mercy Corps-Energy 4 Impact
2. Frankfurt School of Management
3. The Quixotic Project
4. Grant Thornton Kenya
5. Varcando Ltd
6. GreenMax Capital Advisors
7. AMSCO- Africa
8. STRATEGIA ADVISORS
9. Catalyst Off-Grid Advisors

**B. BACKGROUND**

1. A presentation on the key highlights of the RFP was provided by UNCDF Investment Specialist, TA Facility Manager, also giving an introduction on what UNCDF does and information on the UNCDF's Least Developed Country Investment Platform (LDCIP)/team.

As noted on the RFP,

- (i) The RFP seeks to engage firms that can advise the investees and pre-investees UNCDF is going to support in the form of advisory services and TA support. These are covered in a wide range of services, for instance digital finance, impact finance, strategic planning, market studies, governance, nature asset finance, green finance, best practices/standard monitoring and evaluation capacities, management of finance and liabilities, portfolio management, credit and risk management, renewable energy, audit, internal controls, accounting, procurement, logistics, value chain management, engineering, SOP designs, HR management, soft skills training (leadership, supervisory functions), technical skills training; knowledge transfer, knowledge management product, marketing communication (competence), MIS and ICT management, legal compliance, etc.
- (ii) RFP is divided into 4 lots, and bidders can bid in 1 or more lots:
  - Lot 001 - Food Security & Nutrition
  - Lot 002 - Nature asset, Green Economy, Blue Economy, Climate Finance & Renewable Energy
  - Lot 003 - Financial Inclusion and Innovation
  - Lot 004 - Local Infrastructure

- (iii) Geographical zones are identified and divided based on the regions UNCDF covers: East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, Asia, and Pacific

## C. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

2. Provided below are the questions raised for and during the pre-bid conference and response from the UNCDF team:

	Questions	Response
1	<p>If a firm has only been registered for a few months but top management has all the necessary experience i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a local and regional relevant track record working and/or operating in emerging markets/LDCs in the priority business segments and can provide,</li> <li>a minimum of three (3) past contracts indicating previous experience working in the preferred region/s over the past five (5) years,</li> <li>a minimum of 5 assignments in business advisory to the private sector (MSMEs, Financial Service Providers and/or infrastructure projects/companies) over the past 5 years</li> </ul> <p>Would the firm then be legible to put in an application knowing that this would imply that the firm cannot provide financial statements for the last 3 years.</p>	<p>The qualification of the firm must be distinguished from the qualifications of the individuals. The qualifications of the top management do not translate into corporate qualifications.</p>
2	<p>We have few questions in relation to the documents to be included in the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Financial statements</u>. Form B mentions the possibility of including unaudited financial statements while form D only mentions audited financial statements. We are not required by law to audit our statements. Can we include unaudited ones?</li> <li><u>Power of attorney</u>: Will you provide a template or shall we use ours?</li> </ul>	<p>If the company is not required that its financial statement be audited, it must provide an explanation in its offer why they cannot provide an audited financial statement. In addition to this justification, the company could include unaudited financial statements.</p> <p>Bidders can use their respective Power of Attorney templates.</p>
3	<p>Is there any indication about the financial offer, i.e., indication of budget for this procurement?</p>	<p>Consistent with the UN procurement policies, UNCDF does not give any indication of the cost estimate or budget for any of its procurement opportunities.</p>
4	<p>How will the technical compliance of the offer be evaluated?</p>	<p>Please refer to Section 4 of the RFP which explains how the offers will be evaluated: (i)</p>

		<p>what sets of criteria are going to be used to assess the compliance of the offers; (ii) the corresponding maximum obtainable points or how scores shall be given, (iii) how ranking will be done, etc.</p> <p>In addition, please note that this procurement will be using the combined evaluation method where technical responsiveness is given the weight of 70% and 30% for price. It is also important to note that a technical proposal must obtain a minimum score of 70 points (out of 100) to be considered technically responsive and be able to move forward to financial evaluation.</p>
5	Can you elaborate more on what comprises local infrastructure?	<p>By local infrastructure, we are not talking about big projects that DFIS and big banks will finance. These infrastructure projects are of a smaller scale, for instance electric buses in a city, water pumps in village, or maybe solar plants in a city—these are very small scale infra projects that could not qualify or be interesting to big players/financiers/investment firms because they are too small. UNCDF will be quite flexible in terms of the type of projects, but they must be small scale projects</p>
6	<p>As per RFP, a minimum of 25 and up to 40 LTA holders are targeted in total, that seems a lot of pre-selected firms, how many projects are you planning to award per year, per lot?</p> <p>How many call offs per lot per year?</p>	<p>UNCDF is not able to answer with full certainty on the number of projects because our pipeline is very dynamic. The current pipeline value is \$71 million but it is very dynamic and therefore we cannot promise that we are going to bid this number of projects; it all depends on the investment that will be made, and TA funding that will be received.</p> <p>In addition, it is important to emphasize that the nature of long-term agreements (LTA) normally for a duration of 3 years. LTAs are demand-driven framework agreements and exact commitment is not predictable at the moment and can only evolve in due time.</p> <p>The targeted number of firms to be engaged under the LTA is from 25 to 40 but in case we are not able to get these numbers, UNCDF will still proceed. The reason we indicated</p>

		these targets is we want to ensure that we have sufficient number of firms that can take on the requirements/demand without compromising project timelines. If demand over time shows that we do not have enough firms, then we reserve the right to open another selection process to be able to respond to the demand.
7	What is the average envelope size of support per company	There is no dedicated, or average support per company. As a general indicator, the TA envelope could be about 10% of the investment size, but this is not always respected. It can go higher depending on the need. Investment could go from a range of \$200,000 to \$3,000,000.
8	Are there other TORs aside from these TORs for these various lots? When will those TORs be shared?	The TORs for these lots are specifically for the framework agreements (LTAs). Once you have been vetted and pre-approved as firm/service provider for UNCDF, each time there is a need for a TA/advisory project, there will be specific TOR indicating the specific deliverables and timelines, and a call-off will be made for which you as pre-approved firm will submit specific proposals.
9	<p>How is fixed price established for each assignment? Is it lump sum budget or based on level of effort (LOE) and pre-agreed daily rate?</p> <p>How do we estimate cost per personnel or per consultant in our proposal if each project differs in terms of the expertise really required</p>	The call off is done through secondary competition. Given this, what we would like you to fix in your proposal is the daily fee. The lump sum offer for the entire specific work will be submitted only at the point of the secondary competition based on a specific TOR that will be released. You will be given enough time to make an offer using that specific call-off TOR. At this stage of the proposal, we would like you to fix only the daily fee of the pool of experts you want to roster for the LTA which is a framework agreement. You are free to indicate other fixed unit prices of other cost components as you may deem needed.
10	In the financial proposal there are separate budgets for personnel located in duty stations, does the project mandate ground staff to be based in the project locations	Please bear in mind that the RFP is meant for both international and local bidders. If bidders have ground staff located in duty stations, then the appropriate budget reflecting that can be proposed. If the bidder mandates in their approach that some staff should be on the ground, or if the TOR strictly requires it, then bidder can charge for it accordingly. It can be assumed that some

		<p>projects will require remote interventions and some may require local personnel on the site of the work. Inversely, some bidders are already in-country, and they have experts located in the duty stations.</p> <p>Please note if you have people on the ground closest to the project location/duty station, it can impact your financial proposal favorably. So, when you submit your offer, it would be good if you could roster experts who are located on the ground/ in possible project areas.</p>
11	Could you please comment on what would you like to see in the RFP section on “Comments on the TOR and approach”	Here, the bidder is being asked to comment to on the TOR, provide in their own words their understanding of the work, and provide any value-added considerations if the TOR is missing some elements. Bidders may also propose some other approach, additional work or different sequencing of activities, type of geographical samples, etc. that the bidder deems to offer better value and outcome.
12	Since Availability statement is not requested and there will be second competition for specific ToRs, is it possible to include the same expert CVs in two different lots	Yes, provided you do not see any conflict in terms of schedule and meeting deadlines. UNCDF is not stopping bidders from proposing the consultant more than once. But if there are delays at the contract implementation in the process, bidders will still be held accountable for the timely completion of work. bidders will be asked by UNCDF at some point to provide a confirmation that the timelines are not going to be compromised.
13	During secondary competition, how would UNCDF ensure not only 1 or 2 firms will win the call off/ assignment all the time? Or since it is still a competition, is this indeed likely to happen?	<p>The United Nations procurement rules are governed by fairness of competition. That fair treatment happens at the time of entry into the LTA and will continue at the time of secondary competition. This is also why we are sharing the SOP for the secondary competition so that LTA holders can understand how the process will be.</p> <p>It is not in the best interest of UNCDF to have only 1 or 2 firms constantly receiving the call-off contract as it implies concentrating risks on a limited number. The more companies getting the call-off, the lower the risk of the</p>

		<p>work not being completed and the wider the spread of UNCDF's risks.</p> <p>If the companies would like to be debriefed on why they did not get the call-off work, the companies can request UNCDF to make such debriefing, so that they can improve their strategy during the next secondary competition.</p> <p>Based on years of experience, UNCDF does not have cases of concentration of call-off award to just 1 or 2 firms. The UNCDF experience in secondary competitions is that not all LTA holders offer submit when invited to do so.</p>
14	On the tax matter, it is our understanding that UNCDF is exempt from VAT – it appears this applies to companies, would like to seek clarification if the same applies to IC as well; and will UNCDF issue tax exemption later?	<p>VAT exemption given to the UN varies on a per country basis. Some governments have given us blanket exemptions, some have not. The UN convention on taxes and privileges makes reference to direct taxes—VAT, however, is an indirect tax. Following this, some governments see VAT as excluded from the tax exemption coverage, some countries see it differently. If the work/assignment is in a country that give bidders that certificate of exemption for VAT, then the answer is yes. But if the work is in countries that do not grant those tax exemption privilege, then we cannot issue the certificate of exemption.</p> <p>In addition, it is important to note that UNCDF operates under the umbrella of UNDP in most countries. This is why we do not have the full operational privileges of a country office in some of the countries we operate in. We suggest that when you submit an offer to a secondary competition, you should give your price in two forms: VAT inclusive and VAT exclusive. UNCDF will then pick up the amount that is appropriate and relevant to the country where the work will be done.</p>
15	Are the consortium, JV partners, associates subject to the same qualifications and eligibility as the lead company?	Yes, please see Instruction to Bidders (ITB) section on consortium, JVs and associates in page 8, para 1.33 to 1.39; and Section 4 under Qualifications, page 21 to 22.

16	Are online submissions allowed or only hard copy submissions accepted?	Online submissions are actually preferred, not hard copies. For online submissions, we would prefer that you submit your offers as an attachment to the email. We discourage submissions by dropbox, links using a third-party cloud company where the integrity of the information and security of our devices could be compromised.
17	Please confirm: The financial Information from the Audit reports should be in USD? can we fill in the form in local currency.	They can be in the original currency of the audit report. We will handle the conversion ourselves using the UN operational rate of exchange at the time of the reporting.
18	Do you have any size limit to your email attachments?	The limit of every single transmission is 30 MB. We recommend that single transmissions be lower than that size.
19	<p>Please confirm in the LTA, do we specify the specific domains as per our area of expertise along with specific locations and focus areas?</p> <p>For each lot, we will need to specify the location (country or region) and then specify the focus areas and domain expertise?</p>	Yes, it is better that such mapping of expertise per location is done.