International Consulting Firm to develop digital Platform for Private Sector Development in Guinea-Bissau

UNDP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Location:	Guinea Bissau
Type of Contract:	Consulting firm/Cabinet
Language Required:	French/or Portuguese(Required) English (Optional)
Starting Date (Date when the selected candidate is expected to start)	Immediately
Expected Duration of Assignment:	3 months (70 working days) in Bissau

Background

Guinea-Bissau (GNB) has a history of political and institutional fragility. The economy of Guinea-Bissau is poorly diversified and is highly dependent on agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, providing up to 47 percent of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product), with cashew nut as the primary crop. The macroeconomic context of Guinea-Bissau is characterized by low levels of economic growth in recent years, with the country experiencing negative GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth of minus 1.7% in 2012, to a GDP growth of 4.6% in 2019[1] amounting to around 1.35 billion US (UNITED STATES) dollars[2]. The participation of youth and women in formal economic activities is extremely low considering that youth, young women, represent 72% of the unemployed population in the country. In addition to the lack of economic opportunities, social and cultural norms continue to limit their participation to the informal sector, thus perpetuating and increasing inequality and depriving the country of the potential productivity of a substantial portion of its human resources.

A critical challenge for the private sector in Guinea-Bissau is the fact that the various entrepreneurs and partners active in developing this sector tend to work in silos. Opportunities for meetings, idea sharing, and collaboration are limited. Each company operates alone, even though most face similar challenges, and efforts to work together are lacking. Although associations exist, most are simply not effective in promoting regular meetings to share ideas, seek opportunities for collaboration or network. In addition, learning, which should be an ongoing process, is not prioritized and opportunities are limited.

The Guinean private sector really needs to find new ways to address some of these challenges, especially given the limited resources and the fact that the institutions to promote the private sector in the country do not have the capacity to facilitate and promote engagement, collaboration and learning among national, sub-regional and international businesses.

It is in this context that appears the idea of building and maintaining a Digital Platform that offers these services to the private sector in Guinea-Bissau; a portal to connect companies and public and private service providers; an

online platform, where businesses and entrepreneurs can meet, dialogue, share ideas, acquire, and sell products with digital services available on the web and on mobile devices to promote interaction between the various stakeholders.

The platform's functionalities should offer a tool for enhanced integration of companies within the innovation community and startup ecosystems of Guinea-Bissau. It should provide an effective digital marketplace for entrepreneurs with projects that seek capital and investment to develop / expand their businesses on the one hand and investors with capital on the other. The platform should act as an interface for integrating various existing and future financing mechanisms, including public funds for financing entrepreneurship aligned with one or more SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

The aim is to develop a link between the potential of projects identified via the platform as well as financing and investment mechanisms to promote the "matching" process among the diverse platform users and the broader innovation community. It is intended to develop a functionality that allows, from information collected from users through forms, to present projects through the platform in a standardized fashion that (subject to informed consent) will be accessible to certain designated user profiles.

The objective is to facilitate access to specific information by certain users (investors and financiers) about projects, which can be submitted to the platform through forms created for this purpose, and the respective promotion of these projects directly on the platform, to give substance to the ambition for a more comprehensive platform for innovation, startups, and dialogue between the public and private sectors.

Duties and Responsibilities

Objectives and the Scope of the Assignment

The main objective is to develop a dynamic digital platform, where companies and entrepreneurs can connect, share ideas, find relevant services, buy, and sell products, business opportunities, training and entrepreneurship.

To be precise, it is expected that the platform:

I.   Be a source of financial and sector information, with statistics, reports, and guides;
II.   Promote collaboration between companies and entrepreneurs;
III.   Promote collaboration between national and international partners in the development of the private sector;
IV.   Facilitate learning for members and the public;
V.   Promotes networking and facilitates the sharing of ideas;
VI.   Promote business and investment opportunities in Guinea-Bissau, and attract sub-regional and international investors;
VII.   Provide opportunities for joint business development;
VIII. Be an academy for entrepreneurs;
IX.   Create a digital database of entrepreneurs and (prospective) investors, especially impact investors, sustainable finance entities, ESG (environmental, social, governance) funds, and CSR organizations
X.   Establish a digital marketplace between the demand side (entrepreneurs) and supply side (investors) for credit and finance;
XI.   Offer a portal for submission of applications for funding schemes, a database for collection, treatment; and analysis of data, and a corresponding back-office space for evaluation and selection processes;
XII.   Digital platform should be both Web based and Mobile Application as well;

A set of functionalities should be available on the platform to attract businesses and entrepreneurs on the one hand, but also service providers, purchase and sale of products and academia on the other, so that interaction is beneficial to all, generating more interest, more interaction and consequently more participation.

In indicative terms:

I. Networking Area, with forums, chats, Focus groups, etc;
II. Market Information, with access to markets, trade, sectors, etc;
III. Business services, licensing, legal support, consulting;
IV. Access to Finance, existing funding programmes, risk capital;
V. Capacity Building, offering training, e-resources, financial literacy;
VI. The platform should have a "public website" that allows the registration and login of users;
VII. have the platform's description and FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and useful links. Users should have the
VIII. possibility to create a profile and access the services and functionalities of the site based on the different user types (e.g., investors, entrepreneurs, public entities, etc.)

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Dynamic and responsive website that allows:
   - Present content in the form of Single Pages, Blogs;
   - Availability of public and restricted access information;
   - CMS for content management (Texts, images, Vidéos, documents);

2. Module for registration and login users;
3. Forum;
4. E-learning module;
5. Networking and experience exchange module;
6. Business and Services Directory module;
7. Projects ready for investment module;
8. Module for the acquisition and sale of products;
9. National and international job offers module;
10. Back-office module;
11. Database for collecting and storing data for interactive marketplace;
12. Module of availability of indicators or Module of statistics of companies and the financial sector;

The platform should combine in an appealing and harmonious way the different modules and functions. The management of users must be centralized and shared by the different modules of the platform.

Specifically, it is expected that tabs called "Companies" and "Projects" will be housed within an "Investment opportunities" menu, with the following main characteristics:

- Have a format with fields for designation, description, contacts, photo, and it is possible to attach documents (Excel, Pdf or Ppt files) and video (to attach a project pitch, for example), to best promote projects with the platform community;

- Information to populate this "Projects" menu must be collected continuously on the platform, namely through a form created for this purpose (currently existing functionality), through an initiative parameterized in the system for this purpose;
- A process for validating the information collected in the forms, like the validation of news submitted by users, must be implemented to allow the validation of this content by the administration of the platform, before being made available online on the platform;
- These "Companies" and "Projects" menus should only be accessible to users with a designated profile (namely investors or financiers). A review of the typology of user profiles throughout the agile project cycle and their access should be promoted for greater coherence;
- Users who submitted projects in this way should be able to review and update the information provided, through their personal area on the platform;
- Users with access to the "Projects" menu should be able to interact with the project promoter (user who uploaded the project), post comments or ask for friendship and start a chat with him/her;
- These project pages must be fed systematically through a database integrated into the platform that captures project submission information for funding calls or other volunteer submission mechanisms
- A role must be established that allows users to manage their information and opt out of having project information publicly available
- Users must be able to select which information is visible and which remains hidden from public view and edit their information using their user profiles at any time
- Projects should be presented in a visually appealing manner to potential investors from a wide range of sources (public and private, domestic, and foreign, including ESG funds, sustainable finance, and CSR), especially from diaspora communities
- Project files must mention whether the project is a beneficiary of an open funding call for proposals established by the Innovation Hub or any other form of public guarantee or training measure that offers guarantees to investors
- All projects selected by the relevant selection committee(s) must be made available on the platform through this system
- Projects must be categorized according to the SDGs and/or relevant sectors

The solutions to implement this scope must be presented and developed in an agile way by the developer in close coordination with the project promoters.

Tasks of the consultant

The main task of the consultant:

1. System requirements gathering
2. Domain registration and web hosting
3. Creation of the platform's brand
4. Development of the online platform
5. Meetings with project stakeholders.
6. Liaison with other project partners.
7. Design of the solution
8. Testing of the platform

9. Platform Implementation
10. Promotion of the platform
11. Final project report

Deliverables

The scope described above is expected to be developed iteratively (agile) with constant interaction between the development team (developer) and the product team (product owner), the latter to be designated at the beginning of the project, including members of the UNDP Strategic and Economic Cluster, the Accelerator Lab, for validation of the various deliverable's cycles (product iterations).

1. Submission and approval of the outline and the workplan (to include the demo layout and functional features Bi-weekly delivery cycles (maximum) with demonstration and validation of functional features (working software) until reaching the final agreed scope of the project must be maintained)
2. Submission, presentation and approval of the platform specification requirements and solution design (Bi-weekly and incremental deliveries of functional features (working software & Biweekly demonstrations of the features delivered by the developer;
3.) Development and Approval of the definitive version of the software after testing and training of the technical team responsible Bi-weekly validations by the product team (testing and validation of functionalities and submission of final report);

The expected results are as follows:

I. Compliance with the project's activity schedule;
II. Acquisition, by the contractor, of an IS developed according to the requirements presented and that functions correctly;
III. Development and a user manual;
IV. Training of the technicians to use the IS;

Terms of Payment:

- 20% upon submission of the outline and the workplan
- 30% to be paid after the presentation and approval of the platform specification requirements and solution design.
- 50% after the approval of the definitive version of the project after testing and training of the technical team responsible.

Competencies

Core

- Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN's values and ethical standards
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism
- Ability to work with a multi-cultural and diverse team

Technical/Functional

- Excellent analytical skills
- Excellent quantitative skills
- Excellent communication skills
- Results driven, ability to work under pressure and to meet required deadlines
- Good understanding and practice of capacity development
- Cultural sensitivity

Required Skills

FIRM PROFILE:

- International and national companies can apply;
- Minimum composition of 4 technicians:
- Two technicians with a social science, economics, development, systems enghineering, or similar background, minimum Bachelor's level (Master's preferred) with 12 years of experience (cumulativel);
- Two technicians in Information Systems Development with 8 years of experience (cumulative);
- 1 Technician must have conducted at least one similar consultation or have participated actively (give proof)
- Proven experience in Information Systems
- Knowledge of programming and planification are desirable

Education

- Project lead should have a relevant degree in software engineering, computer science, or related areas; Master's degree preferred.

Experience

- The firm must have more than 3 years (cumulative) of experience in Information Systems Development
- Experience in Project Management with Multidisciplinary Teams
- Strong leadership skills

Language

Excellent written and spoken English or French and Portuguese. Application procedure

The application package contains two files (one financial proposal and one technical proposal).

Financial proposal

The contract must be a fixed-price contract, including all costs associated with its delivery. For the evaluation of the financial proposal, it should include a breakdown of the total amount associated with the execution of the above products, including professional fees of the proposed personnel, and any other cost associated with implementing the project, communication costs, subcontracted services, and travel.

Technical proposal

The evaluation of the technical proposal will be based on three main aspects

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form	Score Weight
2. Technical Proposal	75% of overall
1 Expertise of Firm / Organization submitting Proposal	
2 Technical Offer, including proposed Work Plan, Methodological Approach, and portfolio or examples of pertinent prior work	
3 Personnel	
Total	

Evaluation Criteria for the Best Offer

The final evaluation will be based on the following criteria with the corresponding points

Evaluation Criteria for the selection of the best offer	Score Weight	Points Obtainable
1. **Financial Proposal**		**300pts**
1.1 Presentation of budget in line with activities/work plan		
1.2 Total cost		
2. **Technical Proposal**		**700/1000pts**
2.1 Expertise of Firm / Organization submitting Proposal		300pts
2.1.1 Less than 3 years in IT platforms / digital solutions		
2.1.2 Has at least 3 years in IT platforms / digital solutions		
2.1.3 More than 5 years in IT platforms / digital solutions		
2.2 Technical Offer, including proposed Work Plan, Methodological Approach, and portfolio or examples of pertinent prior work		400pts
2.2.1 Proposed Work Plan and Approach		
2.2.2 Methodological Approach		

2.2.3	Portfolio or examples of pertinent prior work		
	2.3 Personnel		
2.3.1	Minimum composition of 4 technicians with more than 20 years (cumulative) experience in Information Systems Development;		
2.3.2	Minimum composition of 4 technicians: • 2 technicians with a social science, economics, development, systems engineering, or similar background, minimum Bachelor's level (Master's preferred) with 12 years of experience (cumulativel); • 2 technicians in Information Systems Development with 8 years of experience (cumulative); • 1 Technician must have conducted at least one similar consultation or have participated actively (give proof) • Proven experience in		300pts
Total			1000pts

The contract will be awarded to the applicant who receives the highest combined score.