



Pre-bidding Conference Minutes
RfP "Provision of Consultancy Services to Strengthen the Capacities
of target Communities from Right Bank Security Zone (2 LOTs)"

RfP15/00997

18 May 2015, 11:00
Le Roi Conference Room, 2nd floor

Introduction:

The Pre-bidding conference was opened by Mr. Viorel Albu, SCBM Project Manager, who introduced himself, the Program team and representatives of the UNDP Country Office Procurement Unit. The meeting was attended by 6 companies that expressed their interest to participate at the Pre-bidding conference.

At the beginning Mr. Albu made a brief introduction about the Program, its scope and objectives, as well as underlined its main achievements that are related to the scope of the present Request for Proposal (further "RFP"). Mr. Albu, also, stressed out there are 2 LOTs divided based on territorial criterion, 13 localities for each LOT, and all are part of 8 districts from the Security Zone situated on the right bank of the Nistru river. The territory where the assessment shall be undertaken and projects shall be realized comprises 26 localities that did not benefited from UNDP/SCBM support during the previous program implementation. After a thorough assessment of the needs it is expected that 10 infrastructure projects will be selected, including a range of capacity development activities that will be implemented.

The meeting continued with clarifications to RfP instructions, by briefing on each section of the RfP, including submission requirements and methods, rules and regulations to be applied in the process of evaluation. Mr. Albu stressed out that evaluation process is strictly prescribed, thereby each proposer may evaluate its chances based on evaluation criteria announced in the RfP document.

Also, Mr. Albu encouraged potential Offerors to pay attention to the documents required under Section 2: Instruction to Bidders, as well as requirements to the methodology under Section 3: Terms of Reference while filling in the application forms and compiling the proposals.

A very important issue pointed out by the UNDP Procurement Unit representatives was to provide password protected Financial Proposal when submitted electronically (listed in point 3 of the Data Sheet, Section 2) and, when required, to provide it as quick as possible in order to avoid delaying the evaluation process.

Questions and Answers:

Q1. Is there any limit to the team of experts to be involved in the development of the assignment?

Answer: No, there are no such limits, however the composition of the experts' team shall be reasonable and corresponding to the task. In case the proposed team of experts will be too large it will impact the financial proposal which consequently will minimize the chances to be selected.

The most important issue on the experts' team is to provide qualified team of experts and to stick to it when the contract will be awarded. The team of experts will be listed in the contract and any changes on it will influence good cooperation between UNDP and contractor.

Q2. Is it possible that the same expert is involved in the development of activities under both LOTS?

Answer: Yes, the same expert may be involved in implementing the activities under both LOTS. However, based on the proposed methodology it will be evaluated whether that is realistic or not. Still, if such a case occurs, the company has to provide detailed work plan and a plan of human resources management in order to avoid such cases when a person in the same day has to cover two or more localities situated far one from another. For instance, a Task Manager or an Accountant may be same person for both LOTS, which is realistic.

Q3. Under RfP it is announced that no advanced will be paid upon contract signature, consequently what is the amount of the total contract that will be involved for providing the 1st deliverable?

Answer: The weigh for installments and their periodicity is subject to discussion with the winner candidate(s). Even though, considering the previous experience, usually upon agreement on the work plan and delivery of the 1st deliverables there are paid around 20% of the contract value.

Further, Mr. Albu briefed on the scope of work. Referring to the point E of the Section 3 Terms of References he mentioned that there are clearly described the stages of work and companies are asked to pay particular attention to them, because based on the 1st stage product/report the 2nd stage activities will be implemented. Also, it was underlined that it will be very important that the project ideas and development expectations of the working group and community are correlated, or at least there are found compromises. During previous stage of the SCBM Programme this implementation was one of the weak points when the initiative submitted by the LPA did not meet the community expectations. Thereby, the 1st Stage of implementation shall be developed in close cooperation with the listed communities, in a participatory manner. Such activities shall result in a report with conclusion and recommendations for improvement. Moreover, during 1st Stage the company shall help communities to identify at least 2 project ideas related to infrastructure development, out of which the 1st idea is the main and the 2nd is alternate. These ideas shall be filled in and submitted in a special format developed with the support of the contractor. Further, project ideas will be evaluated against a certain evaluation criteria and only 10 infrastructure projects will be selected (but not more than 1 project per community). By this selection process, the 1st Stage will be concluded. Once selected, the attention will be addressed to these 10 projects from 10 selected communities (ideally there shall be selected 5 projects per LOT). If it happens that in 1 LOT more than 5 projects will be selected, than they will be re-distributed between LOTS (in case more than 1 company is selected, such as to ensure equal number of communities to work with). It is planed that before end of July 2015 the 1st Stage will be finalized. The 2nd Stage of implementation, which will have approximately 2 years long, will be focused on implementing activities specifically in these 10 communities. It will start with point "e" under *KEY DELIVERABLES AND INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME* of the Section 3 Terms of References. If within the 1st Stage the communities' needs had to be assessed, than the 2nd has as scope to assess capacity gaps of these communities and to focus on capacity development activities. For instance if a building of a hospital was renovated but it was identified that management system is weak, then management capacities shall be also increased, such as to ensure having high quality services provided in a nice building. It is important to be mentioned, that many of activities listed in the Action Plan formulated and provided during the 2nd Stage will be developed by the selected company(ies).

Q4. Is it mandatory that infrastructure ideas submitted by the communities shall include their own contribution to the development of the respective infrastructure project?

Answer: While selecting the infrastructure project ideas, there will be a criterion related to the contribution of the community. However, this criterion is not mandatory, is not eliminative and is not an eligibility criterion. This means that the projects which do not include the own community contribution will be evaluated same as those which do have.

Q5. You are considering June and July months for assessment and selection of project ideas. Given that in mid-June local election will take place and consequently in early July there is low probability to have LPA nominated, which is crucial for taking a decision on any kind of financial contribution, don't you think these issues will affect the deadlines, particularly will delay them?

Answer: At this stage community expectations are more important for us than LPAs, thereby, it is expect that the selected company will interact with a working group that will consist mainly from community representatives. It is known that LPAs will have a leading role that will gather the most relevant community actors, however the LPAs should not impose its ideas. It is planned that by end of June the company(ies) which will undertake this assignment will be selected already, thus we expect that by that time the most of mayors will be in place.

In this context, it is worth to mention that it may be possible that not all of 26 communities will express their interest to cooperate with the SCBM Programme. Thereby, in order to inspect the situation, there were undertaken a series of visits to these communities and they were asked to fill in and to submit a form for expression of interest. This form is asking not only for general information about the applicant but also looking to find out what infrastructure projects were developed in the past 3 years, if any, and what was their weight. The information collected will be provided to the company(ies) which will be selected.

Q6. Will it be the responsibility of the selected company(ies) to form the working group?

Answer: In some cases, the form of expression of interest already contains the information about the initiative group, or contact person(s). It might also happen that the LPA will lack capacities or interest in consisting such a group, thereby the selected company(ies) will hold also the role to support the process of forming such group(s).

Q7. Will it be the responsibility of the selected company(ies) to elaborate the submission form for the communities?

Answer: There are some templates of similar survey forms used within the previous stages of the SCBM Programme. Still, due to the fact that there was no yet taken a decision on the fact will it be also used now or another one shall be developed, it is recommended that the Offerors shall consider their own capacities to elaborate such a form.

Q8. Do you expect that under the 2nd Stage of the assignment implementation the communities with experience will be considered for cooperation?

Answer: The infrastructure development possibilities to the communities that have experience working with the SCBM Programme will be provided at a later stage and this will be subject to another competition. However, it is highly recommended that the potential of these communities is involved for

eventual cooperation with the newly selected communities.

Q9. Do you plan to disseminate the findings of the Needs Assessment Report to the communities-beneficiaries?

Answer: It will be decided together with the selected company(ies), if necessary, then yes, it will be disseminated.

Additional clarifications: at this stage it is known what are our clear expectation from the 1st Stage of the assignment implementation, while the 2nd Stage will result mainly from the findings of the Report which is the product of the 1st Stage.

Q10. Considering that the submission form for communities does include community profile, does this mean that the company(ies) should develop a strategic development plan and to amend the one approved within the community?

Answer: No, it is not required to make strategic development plan for the community when proceeding with the needs assessment. However, before going to the community, or during the period when working with them, the company(ies) should consider the existing Strategic Development Plan of the community. In case, during the 2nd Stage of implementation, the company(ies) identifies(y) a stringent need to develop the Strategic Development Plan for a certain community and this issue is justified enough, than yes, this may be considered as a capacity development activity. Still, it is more important to empower the community to use efficiently the infrastructure developed, to develop such capacities as to be able to make use of the opportunities offered by other donors, to develop confidence building activities with other communities, both from left and right banks of Nistru river. Also, the company(ies) are encouraged to avoid developing useless papers/reports/products, but instead to develop tangible activities that will have positive impact, by this ensuring efficient use of resources.

Additional clarifications: regarding 2nd Stage of the assignment implementation it is important to be mentioned that most of the activities proposed to be developed (e.g. training programmes) will be undertaken by the selected company(ies). This refers only to those activities when the selected company(ies) has(have) its(their) own capacities. In case of specific services (e.g. trainings for personnel providing social services etc.) specialized companies will be contracted by UNDP directly. Moreover, these 10 selected communities will have an opportunity to participate within a competition of small grants, thereby it is expected that the selected company(ies) will provide support to the communities in developing project proposals (at least 2 per community). The above mentioned project proposals shall be linked to the infrastructure project developed in the region, as well as to the confidence building process, establishing links with left bank projects, having as a main objective to impact positively the community development.

Q11. In case there was identified a need to organize a study visit for the mayors, are the costs related to this visit supported by the selected company(ies)?

Answer: No, if such a need will arise and it will be decided in favour of it, most probably, it will be organized commonly for more mayors and the UNDP Programme will support the costs. In case of similar activities – they will be developed by the UNDP directly.

Q12. Shall we considered in our proposals the financial resources for activities related to cooperation with communities from the left bank of Nistru river?

Answer: At this stage, it is expected that the Offerors will provide an action plan only and will estimate the consultancy costs to support the communities in implementing their action plans during the next several years. Any other concrete activities will be determined during the 2nd Stage of contract implementation. In case the company may estimate at this moment any capacity building activities which shall be implemented in communities and may estimate their costs it is welcomed. Please, ensure that all costs related to your travel to communities and any other similar will be included in your financial proposals.

Q13. The products required under deliverables shall developed in English? Romanian? or Russian?

Answer: The products, which shall be developed and submitted in English language, are clearly stipulated in the deliverable table. Any other products that are not listed in the table may be developed in Romanian, preferably, and if necessary the UNDP will ensure their translation.

Q14. The RfP document stipulates that Proposals may be submitted in any of 3 languages: English, Romanian or Russian, still, which is the most recommended?

Answer: The most recommended language for submitting Proposals is English, this will quicken submission for approval to the Regional UNDP office, if necessary.

The most important is to exclude copying the information from ToR and inserting it into Proposal, when such cases are met it is difficult to evaluate the added value of the company to the Proposal.

Q15. Taking into account recent currency fluctuations what is the most appropriate currency for the Financial Proposal?

Answer: Due to the fact the proposed assignment is for a long term (2 years) it is recommended to provide Financial Proposals in US dollars. The contract will be also signed in US dollars, while the payments will be made in MDL coming from UN rate of exchange on the day of payment. Also, please, consider that the main activities will be implemented in 2015, while in 2016 and 2017 the activities will be related to monitoring and coaching communities in implementing their action plans.

Note: Any other information concerning communities where the SCBM Programme previously developed infrastructure projects may be identified following the link

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