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THE DIGITAL MALAWI PROGRAM PHASE I: DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS PROJECT

CREDIT NUMBER: 60500MW

MINUTES OF PRE-BID MEETING FOR THE UPGRADE AND INSTALLATION OF LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN) IN SELECTED GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS (LILONGWE AND SALIMA)

DATE OF THE MEETING: TUESDAY, 6TH OCTOBER 2020

VENUE: VIRTUAL THROUGH ZOOM PLATFORM

TIME: 10:00AM

PRESENT:

Name	Organization	Address
For the Client:		
Victor Funsani	The PPPC	Box 937, Blantyre
Isaac Chimutu	The PPPC	Box 937, Blantyre
Eddah Lijoni	The PPPC	Box 937, Blantyre
Prof. Jonas Amoapim	E-Government - Consultant	
Alinafe Mbendera	LAN Consultant	
Alice Gondwe	The PPPC	Box 937, Blantyre
Clemence Mvonye	The PPPC	Box 937, Blantyre
For the Service Providers:		
Eng. Davie Huwa	RACCELS	Box 31488, Blantyre 3

Mark Chirwa	IT Infrastructure Consultant	
Joel Mlauzi	Oranux Consulting Limited	Box 31121, Blantyre
Mohamad Khalifeh	Tecomsa of Tomorrow Technology	Lebanon
John Max Tambala	Godka Technology ICT Networks (2009) Limited	Box 31552, Lilongwe
Lester T. Tandwe	Twenty Third Century Systems	Box 2012, Blantyre
Bruce Mawarire	E-Tech Systems	
Raphael Msowoya	Computech Business Services	
Weston Chilapondwa	CMC Technologies	
L. Kamanga	Bintel Analytics	Malawi
Walusungu Gondwe	Amtrak Technologies	India
Sandeep Yadav	Computer Automation	Box 31613, Blantyre
Emmanuel Mbuzi	Computer Automation	Box 31613, Blantyre
Steven Mwawa	Computer Automation	Box 31613, Blantyre

Minute LAN1/10/2020: Opening Remarks

The Chairperson apologized to the members for the delay in starting the meeting. It was communicated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the bid document which was issued on 25th September 2020. Bidders were advised that the proposed assignment shall be wireless based, covering Government buildings at Capital Hill in Lilongwe and Salima. The meeting therefore intends to clarify some of the issues which are technical in nature, as well as to safeguard issues.

The Chairman then introduced the team from the Client side as above.

Minute LAN2/10/2020: Self Introductions

Introductions were made as above.

Minute LAN3/10/2020: Bidding Procedures

Service Providers were taken through the bidding document and the sections were summarized as follows:

a) Part 1: Bidding Procedures

The part comprised of six sections and bidders were advised to understand the sections. The sections were briefly analysed as follows:

1. **Section I: Instructions to Bidders**
The section instructs the bidders on the preparation of their bids. The section is more detailed, and bidders were advised to understand the instructions and follow them.
2. **Section II: Bid Data Sheet**
The section provides more information and clarifications on Section I. Bidders were advised to read Section II together with Section I
3. **Section III: Evaluation and Qualification Criteria**
The Section provides information on how they will be evaluated. Bidders were advised to understand the Section and provide necessary information that meet the requirements. Responsive bids will be accepted for further evaluation and comparison of prices
4. **Section IV: Bidding Forms**
Bidders were advised to complete the forms provided when preparing their bids.
5. **Section V: Eligible Countries**
The Section provides eligible source countries. ITB 4.8 provides more details
6. **Fraud and Corruption**
Bidders were advised to take note of the section as any appearance of fraud and corruption will result in the disqualification of the bidder.

b) **Part II: Employers Requirements**

Bidders were advised that the requirements of the proposed assignment were detailed in this Section. Bidders should prepare their bid in responding to the technical requirements presented in Part II.

c) **Part III: Conditions of the Contract and Contract Forms**

Bidders were advised that this part provided General Conditions and Special Conditions of the Contract. The Special Conditions of the Contract should be read together with the General Conditions of the Contract. The Special Conditions will be finalized after identifying the successful bidder. Contract forms are also provided for the bidders' information.

Minute LAN4/10/2020: Technical Issues in the Bidding Document.

Bidders were reminded that there are eight (8) Lots in the Bid Document. Lot 1 and Lot 2 covers core network, controllers, desktop USB adaptors and network infrastructure (servers). The LAN is expected to be wireless hence the need for adaptors. Bidders were advised that the Project intends to build a Campus Wi-Fi at Capital Hill.

Lot 3 to Lot 8 covers wireless installation. Bidders were advised that the drawings for the buildings are provided to assist in planning. Bidders are encouraged to visit the sites at their own cost to assess the actual requirements.

- **Brief on Safeguard Requirements**

Bidders were informed of the need to understand the sections in the bidding document that covers the environmental and social management plan (ESMP). The documents are supposed to be submitted together with the bids. Bidders were encouraged to visit the sites as part of the bid preparation so that is made and come up with major assessment of the impact that were not considered. The ESMPs are required by both the World Bank and the Government of Malawi.

Bidders were informed that the document is legal in nature as it shall form part of the contract. It is therefore necessary that the measures to be included should cover issues of the environment, safety, noise, community safety as well as social issues. Social aspects cover issues of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and gender abuse. Bidders were advised to cost the implementation of the ESMPs.

Bidders were advised to include grievance redress mechanisms in their bid. The mechanisms shall be used to correct issues that may negatively impact on the Project. Bidders were also advised to focus on the declaration clauses.

Minute LAN5/10/2020: Questions and Answers

Question 1

Bidders sought confirmation on the scope of works as it has been indicated that it is all wireless considering that Capital Hill has an existing LAN.

Response 1

It was confirmed that the scope of work is indeed wireless. Bidders were reminded that the assignment intends to build a new campus Wi-Fi in all Government buildings. If there will be any need to put Ethernet connections in some offices, bidders shall be informed by way of an addendum.

Question 2

It has been noticed that in Lots 1 and 2, there are bills of quantities but from Lot 3 to Lot 8, bills of quantities are not provided. Please advise if these will be required in the coverage area

Response 2

For the Wi-Fi network, bills of quantities were deliberately removed to allow bidders work on their own assessment based on their proposed equipment. Describing the actual numbers could limit the coverage area. Bidders are expected to propose solutions that can cover the area both indoor and outdoor.

Question 3

Bidders observed that there could be lack of uniformity and could result in providing unnecessary costs. With the presence of a Consultant who was trusted in developing and designing the network, bills of quantities were supposed to be provided to avoid a situation where some bidders have access to privileged information.

Response 3

The concern was noted. However, bidders were encouraged to visit all the sites and assess the requirements. In such a way, bidders shall be able to come up of a solution that can cover the site.

Question 4

Bidders wanted to know if the original copies of the network diagrams could be shared

Response 4

It was communicated that as the original copies of the network diagrams were not available. The assignment at hand is trying to build a new network which will eventually replace the current network. For Salima, some buildings have no network.

Question 5

Bidders wanted to know if arrangements are put in place on contact persons during the site visits.

Response 5

They were assured of the availability of people on all the sites who will be able to guide the bidders. The main contact however is the Chief Director in the Ministry of Information and the LAN Consultant.

Question 6

Bidders wanted to know if written questions will be accepted after the pre-bid meeting.

Response 6

Written questions shall be accepted after the pre-bid meeting as provided for in ITB 8.1. Bidders were advised to visit the PPC and PPDA Websites where clarifications shall be uploaded.

Question 7

Bidders expressed dissatisfaction on the approach of the assignment, that the focus is on building a wireless network. The concern was that this is an enterprise infrastructure for the Government. Every technology has its own advantages. The cabled network in Government buildings is in a very bad state and could have taken advantage of the assignment to solve the problems and have a solid LAN. Most of the times, wireless networks come in as a complementary to provide mobility advantage. Bidders suggested that a solid cable network should be considered in Government buildings as the primary network and the wireless network should only complement the primary network.

Response 7

Bidders were advised that the focus should be building a Campus Wi-Fi that will be linked to the fiber backbone which is available in most of the buildings. Bills of quantities shall be provided as an attachment to the minutes if deemed necessary

Question 8

Bidders wanted to know the spread of Government buildings at Salima Boma for the purposes of planning and costing for the site visit

Response 8

It was communicated that most of the buildings are within the radius of 7 to 10 kilometres. GIS coordinates were also inserted in the Bidding Documents for reference.

Minute LAN6/10/2020: Closing Remarks.

The Chairperson thanked the bidders for their active participation and advised them to seek clarification where necessary. Bidders were advised to visit the PPC Website as most of the communications shall be posted on the Website.


Victor Funsani
Chairperson


Clemence Mvonye
Secretary