**Request for Proposal**

**Uganda RUSH project**

**16 December 2022**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Terms | Definitions |
| **the Alliance** | Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation |
| **AITS** | Agro-Input Traceability System |
| **DCIC** | Ministry’s Department of Crop Inspection and Certification |
| **Digital Solution** | SPS INSPECTION DIGITAL SOLUTION AT PACKING FACILITIES AND THE AIRPORT |
| **MAAIF** | Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries |
| **MTIC** | Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives |
| **NPPO** | National Plant Protection Organization |
| **RFP** | Request for Proposal |
| **SC** | Swisscontact |
| **SDCG** | System Development Consulting Group |
| **SLA** | Service Level Agreements |
| **SPS** | Sanitary and Phytosanitary |
| **StC** | Project Steering Committee |
| **UAT** | User Acceptance Tests |

# Introduction and Instructions

## Purpose of this Request for Proposal

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from **IT Companies with expertise in configuring low/no-code base solution on Cloud platforms**, with a view to meeting the high-quality requirements and project objectives established by the Alliance. This process will result in the selection of one IT Company who will then be invited to enter a contracting phase for a specific and detailed scope of work.

## About the Alliance Projects in Uganda

In July 2021, Uganda began implementing a 21-month project supporting the country to improve the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) inspection processes for horticulture exports mainly focusing on fruits and vegetables. The project is implemented by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation (the Alliance) in Uganda, in cooperation with Swisscontact and in partnership with Uganda’s Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) as well as different Umbrella private sector Associations. The project also harnesses the power of the private sector to improve inspection processes by integrating key private sector companies and institutions as project partners. These partners provide critical insights into SPS process improvement, and opportunities for self-regulation and allow the private sector to generate more self-reliant and collaborative mechanisms for problem-solving. The project’s overarching goal is to reduce the cost and time to export by reengineering the inspection process and improving the capacity of the horticulture sector stakeholders, both public and private to manage the process more efficiently.

For the purposes of inspection and plant health, the Ministry’s Department of Crop Inspection and Certification (DCIC) also doubles as the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO).

The project is anchored on three work streams through which it hopes to achieve its project mandate, and these are:

1. Process review and re-engineering to improve the manual SPS inspection process at the packhouse and Entebbe Airport.
2. Pursuit of more digitalization of the SPS inspection processes and introduction of risk-based SPS inspections.
3. Supporting stakeholder engagement and coordination via public-private dialogue and delivery of appropriate capacity-building interventions.

The current SPS inspection process is largely manual. All documentation required to comply with inspection requirements and to review SPS compliance, with the exception of the ePhyto certificate are manual and paper-based. This creates challenges including: the inability of the regulatory body (MAAIF) to store and review inspection records, delays in inspection due to detailed paper requirements and documentation and, lack of efficient data analysis and therefore, data-based decision-making.

The SPS inspection process, in its current form, can therefore be improved. The introduction of a focused digital solution is envisaged to:

* Create efficiencies in the process, through digitalization of documentation;
* Ensure real-time information sharing and data collection;
* Provide critical analysis for the regulator and exporters to make valuable decisions geared towards continually improving the inspection process and;
* Improving confidence in Uganda’s SPS inspection regime and processes.
* Provide learnings for the Agro-Input Traceability System (AITS) of the Ministry of Agriculture to which it is envisaged to be integrated to in future

The first and third workstreams have been completed, the current procurement process aims at identifying an IT company competent to support the project for the second workstream: “Pursuit of more digitalization of the SPS inspection processes and introduction of risk-based SPS inspections” by deploying an **SPS INSPECTION DIGITAL SOLUTION AT PACKING FACILITIES AND THE AIRPORT (the Digital Solution).**

### Project Overview

The following activities have been identified to deploy the **Digital Solution**.

| **#** | **Activity** |
| --- | --- |
| A1 | Proof of concept |
| A2 | Configuration / Development |
| A3 | User Acceptance testing |
| A4 | Deployment/Training |
| A5 | Maintenance and support |

*The project specifications for the* ***IT company*** *are described in Section 2.*

Estimated contract duration for the **IT company**:

* Overall deployment (Activity A1 – A4): from contract signature to May 2023
* Maintenance and support (Activity A5): 12 months, starting from the sign-off on the solution

## Procurement Key Activities and Dates

We have provided our best estimate of the timings of the RFP, however some changes may apply. We will notify bidders of any changes to the below dates and will always allow for sufficient time to respond to the RFP.

**RFP bidders are asked to submit their proposals by January 16th, 2023,in electronic format to** [**ug\_info@swisscontact.org**](mailto:ug_info@swisscontact.org)

**The below deadlines are fixed and will not change:**

**23.12.2022** Deadline to

1) confirm intention to bid, in writing to the nominated contact.

2) to submit questions relating to this RFP, in writing to the nominated contact. Please avoid pdf documents and submit questions in MS Word or MS Excel.

**The below dates are subject to change. Bidders will be notified of any changes to these dates.**

04.01.2023 Bidders receive responses to questions. All questions are collated, anonymized and shared with bidders.

09.01.2023*Virtual Q&A event – optional event subject to the content of questions received. Bidders will be notified if this event will take place.*

**16.01.2023** **Deadline to submit bid to the nominated contact. Please submit responses by the end of day in your location, not later than 5 pm.**

20.01.2023 Evaluation of supplier bids. Suppliers may be contacted to present their approach to the evaluation committee.

31.01.2023Supplier selection, negotiation and contract finalization.

**We currently estimate that the start date for the project will be the first of February 2023.**

## RFP Evaluation

The Alliance is looking for the most suitable IT Company and therefore will not simply select financially lowest bid or quotation, but rather use objective criteria to evaluate the best match for its demand. All RFP bidders’ information provided as part of the RFP will be treated as confidential. The Alliance’s criteria include, but are not limited to the following key factors:

* Company profile and past track record
* Implementation approach, with openness to flexibility and adaptability
* Maintenance and support service levels, with available resources based in Uganda
* Pricing, based on the Total Cost of Ownership

**The working language of the project will be English. Therefore, all experts which will interface with local authorities or private sector must speak and write fluently in English, which is reflected in the evaluation criteria.**

The Alliance will not disclose the detailed results of the selection and scoring process and reserves the sole right to decide whether a proposal complies with the requirements of the RFP and to accept, reject or negotiate modifications of RFP bidder’s proposals.

### Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria must be fulfilled in order to proceed to the evaluation stage. The criteria for the bidder to be eligible are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Criteria** | **Expected Documents** |
| 1 | The company must have been in operation for a minimum of 5 years | Tax clearance certificate |
| 2 | The Company must have at least 3 years of unqualified audit reports | Audited financial statements for the last 3 years |
| 3 | A proven track record of at least two IT projects with government. Special consideration will be given to companies with one at least successfully completed agriculture traceability assignment in the last three years. | Track record forms of projects with public administration (see annex) |

### Evaluation criteria

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EVALUATION CRITERIA** | | | |
| **Category** | | **Details** | **SCORING (%)** |
| **Company profile and past track record** | Profile | The evaluation will be based on the profile of the company, such as   * Management profile and experience (CVs) * Years of operation | **10** |
| Track record | Documentation of at least two (2) successfully implemented projects with government administration in developing countries, if possible, with similar scope of work or past experience delivering an agriculture traceability system.  Each track record shall include the contact persons as reference | **15** |
| **Implementation approach** | Technology | The evaluation will be based on the proposed technology and the related resources (i.e Cloud solution with analytics and integration features) | **15** |
| Planning | The evaluation will be based on the detailed proposed planning which should include   * Phasing of development process with clearly defined outcomes of each phase and related activities * Critical milestones * Resources assigned for each phase * Completion of the phase A4 by end of May 2023 | **15** |
| **Maintenance and support** | The details of maintenance and support services shall be clearly stated to ensure the expected SLA  The evaluation will reward proposals with maintenance and support performed by local resources in Uganda. | | **10** |
| **FINANCIAL PROPOSAL** | The evaluation is on the total cost of ownership, which include fixed and recurring costs   * Development costs (A1 – A4) * Cloud hosting and licences * Maintenance and support for 12 months (A5) | | **35** |

Note that the cost of IT equipment and procurement of training facilities and related direct expenses should not be included in the offer.

## Queries about the Procurement

Any questions about the procurement must be submitted by e-mail to [ug\_info@swisscontact.org](mailto:ug_info@swisscontact.org) by 23 December 2022. No other forms of communication or contact will be accepted.

The Alliance may organize a virtual Q&A event to respond to all the questions received, and comment on potential challenges with all interested RFP bidders.

## RFP bidder Instructions

For ease of response and evaluation, RFP bidders are required to complete and submit all components of this RFP.

* RFP submissions must be in English.
* Provided forms must not be altered without prior confirmation from the Alliance.
* Failure of an RFP bidder to provide the required information, make a satisfactory response to any question, or supply documentation referred to in responses, within the specified timescale, may mean that the RFP bidder will not be invited to participate further in the procurement.
* It is the RFP bidder’s responsibility to ensure that the proposal and all other required documents are received at the e-mail address named in this document by the closing date specified.
* RFP bidders need to address all information specified by this RFP. All questions must be answered completely. The Alliance reserves the right to verify any information contained in the RFP bidder submissions, and to request additional information after the RFP response has been received.
* Furthermore, the proposal must be accompanied by a covering letter, signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposed entity (see Proposal Submission Checklist)
* Bidders are expected to structure their response to each project according to the Proposal Submission Checklist (§ 1.7)
* The financial proposal shall include all costs associated with the services to be provided as outlined in the RFP and other directions specified in the RFP, including

1. Fees for development staff,
2. Expenses such as subsistence (per diem, housing), transportation (international and local, for mobilization and demobilization),
3. Any licence fee,
4. Any hosting fee,
5. Maintenance and support costs for 12 months after the UAT final acceptance.

* The bidding firm shall express their financial proposal including all taxes. The RFP bidders shall have to consider all local taxes (such as: value added or sales tax, social charges or income taxes) on non-resident Foreign Personnel, duties, fees, levies, corporate income tax.
* RFP bidders shall have to express the price of their services in US Dollars [USD].
* The proposal submitted by the RFP bidders must remain valid before final selection. During this period, the RFP bidder is expected to keep available the experts proposed for the assignment. The Alliance will make its best effort to complete negotiations within the stipulated time.

## Proposal Submission Checklist

Proposals must include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Document** | **Page limit or Form** |
| 1 | Cover letter signed by the director of the company | 1 page |
| 2 | RFP bidder information | Form 1 |
| 3 | Certificate of incorporation | 1 document |
| 4 | IT Certification from NITA-U *(applicable to businesses that are legally registered to do business in Uganda)* | 1 document |
| 5 | Registered or Notorized Powers of Attorney | 1 document |
| 6 | Tax Clearance Certificate | 1 document |
| 7 | 3 years of Audited reports TBD | 3 Audit reports |
| 8 | Company profile | 5 pages |
| 9 | Team composition | Form 2 |
| 10 | Track record of minimum 2 projects in collaboration with public administration | 1 Form 3 per project |
| 11 | Description of the methodology and work plan for performing the assignment. | 20 pages |
| 12 | Description of the Maintenance and support organisation | 10 pages |
| 13 | Financial proposal (in Excel format) | Form 4 |

## Points of contact

RFP bidders are not allowed to contact any Alliance or Swisscontact personnel, such as management or other local contacts, regarding this RFP. Any such communication may lead to the proposal received being rejected.

It is expected that the supplier also provides the Alliance with a single point of contact capable of answering questions related to this RFP on a global scale.

**Alliance Contact**

|  |
| --- |
| [**ug\_info@swisscontact.org**](mailto:ug_info@swisscontact.org) |

## Provided Information

This RFP contains information believed to be reliable at the date of issuance. The document is intended solely for the information of the party to whom it is issued. All proposals will become the property of the Alliance which reserves the right to use without limitations or liability for any ideas from the proposals.

The Alliance reserves the absolute right to:

* Accept or reject any or all proposals
* Negotiate with any, all or no RFP bidders
* Modify or cancel this RFP

It is the RFP bidder’s responsibility to:

* Properly understand and examine the RFP;
* Examine all other information available on reasonable inquiry relevant to the risks, contingencies and circumstances affecting its response,
* Satisfy itself as to the completeness, correctness and sufficiency of its response.

## Confidentiality

The Invitation document is confidential. The Alliance may update or revise the document or any part of it. The recipient acknowledges that any such revised or amended document shall be received subject to the same confidentiality undertaking. The Recipient will not disclose or discuss the contents of the document with any officer, employee, consultant, director, agent, or other person associated or affiliated in anyway with the Alliance or any of its customers or suppliers without the prior written consent of the Alliance.

## Cost of Responding

All costs and expenses incurred by RFP bidders in any way associated with the development, preparation, and submission of their responses to this RFP, including but not limited to attendance at meetings, discussions, presentations, demonstrations, etc. and providing any additional information required by the Alliance will be borne exclusively by the RFP bidder.

## RFP Errors

Each recipient should notify the Alliance of any error or discrepancy found in this document. Notification should be made to the contact found in proposal related details.

## Liability

This invitation is not an offer by the Alliance, but an invitation for responses. No contractual obligation on behalf of the Forum whatsoever exists from this process unless and until a formal contract is signed and executed by authorized people of the Forum and the select bidder.

# Specifications

## Project contract

The IT Company will be expected to execute with **Swisscontact** and the Department of Crop Inspection and Certification (DCIC) of the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF).

A contract will be signed between Swisscontact and the IT company.

The Swisscontact standard template for IT services will be delivered to the bidders having confirmed their interest to bid.

## Framework for delivery of services

The general activities to be performed by the **IT company** include:

* Configuring/Developing the **Digital Solution** (the Business Requirement Specifications are provided in Annex)
* Integrate into the **Digital Solution** the capability to notify the users by WhatsApp
* Integrate into the **Digital Solution** the capability/API tool for future system integration to MAAIF’s other Agriculture Inputs Traceability System (The AITS)
* Training the identified users on the **Digital Solution**
* Support and maintain the solution during 12 months:
  + Trouble shooting at both Applications level and User level
  + Assist the ICT focal person of the System Development working group in operating the solution
  + Solution updates such as installation of patches and bugs fixing

## Platform and Technology requirements

Several documents are annexed in this RFP to clarify the requirements, such as:

* The Business Requirements Specifications (UG-EIS-BRS-004); see annex 3.1.1
* SPS Export Inspection System - Initial Data definition document; see annex 3.1.2

The critical requirements are:

* Cloud computing/hosting
* Configuration of a Low / No code base system
* Access to and ownership of data at end of hosting contract arrangements to belong to the DCIC
* Mobile / Desktop User Interface
* Integration with WhatsApp
* API Tool for future integration
* In-built Business Intelligence (BI) tool

## Identified Users

The bidder response shall be developed for the following volume of users:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Stakeholder** | **User** | **Total** | **Functionality** | **Desktop/Mobile** |
| **1** | **Exporters** | Quality controllers | 50 | * Submit inspection requests * Upload key inspection documentation required * Update key export data * Update company profiles | Mobile (Tablet/Smartphone) and/or  Desktop |
| 2 | **DCIC / MAAIF** | Agricultural inspectors | 30 | * Approve inspection requests from exporters * Update inspection documentation and approve exports * Provide feedback to exporters * Update key inspection data * Update product coding in the solution and approve inspector profiles | Mobile (Tablet/Smartphone) |
| DCIC leadership | 5 | * Regular reviews of inspection data * Business Intelligence (BI) | Desktop |
| 3 | **F&V Exporters, sector associations, relevant Government Agencies and Departments** | Others | 5 | * Regular reviews of inspection data (depending on access rights)   *This type of user does not necessarily require a user access, if reports can be developed and sent automatically* | Desktop |

## Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The Activity A5 “Maintenance and support” has to be included for a duration of one year and shall respond to the requirements of the Service Level Agreement (see annex).Project Structure

The project structure envisaged includes different Stakeholders with the following competencies

### Project Steering Committee

This will oversee the project. This is essentially an oversight committee whose role is strategic in nature including managing system sustainability.

Composition:

* MAAIF 1 Assistant Commissioner, 1 Senior Agriculture Inspector, 1 IT Officer
* Swisscontact: Country Director- 1
* Private sector: Apex Sector Association representative- 1

Project Steering Committee responsibilities are:

* Overall strategic guidance
* Scope Management
* Review overall timeline and milestones
* Provide access to relevant stakeholders to the System Development Working Group, specifically for the discussion of interfaces with the AITS System of the Ministry of Agriculture

### System Development Working Group

This will serve as a system development consultative/technical group. Will participate in system development working meetings, provide required and relevant technical information that may not be included in the Business Systems requirements. They will meet regularly (preferably biweekly) and more so when the developer needs their inputs.

Composition:

* MAAIF: 1 IT officer, and 3 selected Agricultural Inspectors (AI)
* Private sector: 3 Packhouse/Export quality controllers’ representatives
* Ministry of Trade: 1 Trade representative
* Horticulture Exporters Associations: 2 Sector Associations representatives
* Swisscontact: Rush Project team: 2

System Development Working Group responsibilities are:

* Provide office space at the site during the testing phase.
* Make the necessary logistical arrangements for training.
* System development working/consultative meetings
* Meets regularly (at least bi-weekly or more frequently on demand) with the developer team to review progress and to act as feedback resource during development phase
* Work with the developer on key changes and user challenges, based on the testing results
* Provides additional information that may not be covered by the systems requirements
* Discuss future integration issues, solution integrity and sustainability

## Project Implementation Activities and Actions

The project implementation outcomes and activities shall be defined in the technical proposal in form of a workplan with clearly phased outcomes and activities. The workplan will become part of the contractual agreement.

# Annexes

## Technical documentation

### Business Requirements Specifications (BRS)

### SPS Export Inspection System - Initial Data definition document

### Draft Service Level Agreement (SLA)

## Submission Forms

### Form 1 – RFP bidder Information

### Form 2 - CV Template

### Form 3 - Track record template

### Form 4 - Financial proposal template