

# COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

MARCHE COMMUN



السوق المشتركة للشرق والجنوب  
الأفريقي

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### CBC BIZNET E-MARKET HUB UPGRADING - IT CONSULTING FIRMS

TENDER NO. EOI/CBC/BIZNET/ADM/07.08.2020/SS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The COMESA Business Council (CBC) is the recognized Business Member Organization, established as a private sector institution of COMESA. We represent the interests of business sectors at a regional level. The services provided go beyond advocacy, to actively promote business participation in regional integration, investment and global trade. This is done by facilitating the growth of strong business synergies, the development of business opportunities, business alliances, legislative and strategic advocacy.

More information can be obtained from the COMESA website [www.comesabusinesscouncil.org](http://www.comesabusinesscouncil.org).

#### 2. BACKGROUND

One of the CBC's flagships under Business Facilitation Services- is the BIZNET E-MARKET HUB portal. The BIZNET is an online portal which provides services such as business linkages, sourcing, business or trade flow analysis for regional and international companies looking for working partnerships within the region.

The BIZNET portal provides services such as business linkages, sourcing, business or trade flow analysis for regional and international companies looking for working partnerships within the region and has 34 sectors. Its aim is to;

- provide buyers with access to credible information on suppliers in the region and inform suppliers on the purchasing requirements of buyers such as products, quantities, documentations/records, quality and standards-certifications required,
- facilitate suppliers and buyers to buy, sell, market, feature products, get quotations and company profiles and network at a local and regional level.

BIZNET hosts more than 4000 subscribers who are readily available and drawn from more than 34 sectors. In the past 4 years the portal has been hosting data from 8 countries. Going forward the focus is on expanding the number of countries and upgrading the portal into a more efficient, user-friendly modern and dynamic portal.

#### 3. SCOPE

CBC wants to upgrade the existing BIZNET MARKET HUB portal (<http://biznet.comesabusinesscouncil.org/>) that is linked from the home page of CBC website with the following features:

- The portal is to be redesigned with appropriate CMS (Content Management System) that is relevant to business linkages.
- It will have a link to the main business linkages page with attractive business savvy design so that companies are interested to go through it.

- It will have a link to Market Intelligence landing page that we are in the process of developing it.
- It will have tutorials area for the users to easily navigate through the system with the help of YouTube tutorials.
- The main business linkages page shall have the list of companies registered in the system with the appropriate sectors and sub sectors for each member country (with the exception of contact details of the businesses like telephone numbers and email addresses).
- The main business linkages page should be both mobile and desktop friendly to be browsed and the users should be able to browse the information at ease with their business area of interest in their preferred countries.
- On the main business linkages page; when the user is interested to link up with a business, there should be a registration facility so that S/he leaves their contact details as well as business profiles. Then after the user shall be able to send messages to the company of their interest in business hook-ups where that message should also be delivered to email IDs of business facilitation for follow up to witness how business linkages are made using BIZNET. In addition to the message exchanges, there should be a payment platform that takes the two businesses linked to the level of payment modalities. We are planning to link it up to COMPAYSME integrated digital common payment scheme that is at the stage of business policy study.
- On the administration area, it should be possible to add, edit and remove the data inserted in the system such as countries, sectors, subsectors, company profiles and contact details as part of proof reading.
- On the administration area, it should be possible to import and export registration data into different formats (such as excel, csv, pdf etc) to link it up with the CRM module of the Sage ERP system. There should be importing and exporting feature for the company registration data so that we upload it once and export it for different reporting activities. The exporting feature shall be further drilled through sectors registration, country wide registration, successful business linkages (messages sent) met and successful payment modalities achieved.
- The BIZNET portal shall have web statistics report to show which pages browsed.
- The BIZNET portal shall be on the Search Engine Optimization (SEO.)
- The BIZNET portal shall have language translation feature on all pages to English, French and Arabic so that it is used widely in the region.
- There should be advertising blocks for companies to allow them to advertise on the portal with the rates displayed for them with pop up button.
- The BIZNET portal should be hosted under CBC's name in well-known hosting solutions like godaddy.com for three years.

#### **4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

The expected outputs are as follows;

- a) Hosting of the Biznet portal for three years.
- b) Report-Finalizing the requirements of Biznet portal.
- c) First Design demo modelling the requirements of Biznet portal.
- d) Refined Design demo incorporating the feedbacks.
- e) Training report- Trainings conducted on the use of the portal.
- f) Completion Report- Two months support after go-live.

## 5. PERFORMANCE PERIOD AND OUTPUTS

### 5.1 Duration of the Assignment

The duration of the assignment will be three months. This includes one-month period for the upgrade of the BIZNET portal and support services for two months on solving issues raised when using the portal and technical glitches

### 5.2 Payment Schedule

The fees for the implementation of BIZNET upgrading including hosting fees for three years is USD 6,000.

Payment Schedule				
No	Output	Verification Process	Indicative Man Days	Payment
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Finalizing the requirements of Biznet portal:</li><li>- Hosting of the Biznet portal for three years in well-known hosting solutions like godaddy.com</li></ul>	Meeting to refine the requirements- Report	2	10% of fees
2	First Design demo modelling the requirements of Biznet portal	Design is approved by Digital Services Manager & Business Development Officer with feedbacks	7	
4	Refined Design demo incorporating the feedbacks	Refined design is approved by Digital Services Manager & Business Development Officer	10	30% of the fees
5	Testing	Approval of the go-live process with support	3	-----
6	Trainings conducted on the use of the portal	Training Report	1	30% of the fees
7	Two months support on any technical glitches that came across	Completion Report	44	30% of the fees

## 6. EXPERTISE REQUIRED

The Project requires the services of a consulting firm with experience in web designing and developing online database portals. The required qualifications and competencies are highlighted below:

#### **(a) Core and Technical Competencies:**

- Full time web designers and online database portal developers with profound experience in the region
- In depth experience in designing online business linkage platforms that are interactive and easy to navigate
- Detail-oriented with a good eye for graphic design
- Strong knowledge of search engine optimization using CMS (Content Management Systems).
- Demonstrated Experience with creating an interface that can import and export data to and from online portals.
- Ability to provide post implementation support.
- Clearly demonstrated ability to work on time and deliver high quality outputs.

#### **(b) Qualifications**

The firm should have a key IT expert with the competences above and qualifications below to lead the implementation of the activity:

- Academic: At least a bachelor's degree in computer science, Information Technology, Web Designing, Graphics Designing or related field.
- Work Experience: Minimum 10 years relevant work experience in web designing and online database development.
- Demonstrated knowledge of developing business linkage portals using Content Management Systems (CMS).
- Demonstrated list of at least two complimentary or similar projects delivered in the past 4 years.

### **7. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The Bids should consist of Technical proposals that are aligned to the contract amount already provided for within these Terms of References. They will include the following:

- Firm profile including contacts: e-mail and telephone numbers
- Updated Consultant's CV for the expert who will take the lead on the assignment
- Copies of academic qualification of the Expert/s.
- Cover letter detailing their understanding of the task and highlighting experience and expertise in line with the above scope.

To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of Bids, CBC may ask the Bidder for clarification of its Bid. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing and no change in price or substance of the Proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted.

CBC will examine the Proposals to determine whether they are complete, whether any computational errors have been made, whether the documents have been properly signed, and whether the Proposals are generally in order.

Prior to the detailed evaluation, the Procurement Committee will determine the substantial responsiveness of each Proposal to the Request for Proposals (RFP). For purposes of these Clauses, a substantially responsive Proposal is one, which conforms to all the terms and conditions of the RFP without material deviations. COMESA's determination of a Proposal's responsiveness is based on the contents of the Proposal itself without recourse to extrinsic evidence.

In evaluating the relative merits of firm bidding for the project, the evaluation panel will consider:

- Understanding of the terms of reference and requirements of the assignment (10%),
- Demonstrated experience and sample of past assignments carried out in the field of study (40%),
- The quality of the proposed approach and methodology to be applied by the Consultant, including proposed Expert for the assignment (20%),
- The quality and relevant experience of individual staff/consultants proposed by the Consultant (20%).

## 8. REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT

The Firm will work under the overall management of the direct supervision of the CBC Digital Services Manager, under the overall management of the Chief Executive Officer.

- The Chief Executive Officer will provide quality assurance and ensure that the documentation produced is reviewed and approved.
- The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that the Consultant receives all relevant documentation with respect to CBC Guidelines, Rules and Regulations necessary for the execution of his/her tasks.

## 9. CONTRACT

A formal contract specifying the scope of the assignment shall be prepared and signed between the Secretariat and the firm prior to the beginning of the assignment. The contract shall also clearly spell out the responsibilities of the two parties.

The Parties to the contract shall have it signed within seven (7) days from the date of notification of contract award unless there is an administrative review request.

## 10. Submission of Applications

The bidder shall submit the proposal in **one external envelope containing inside two sealed envelopes** by the closing date set forth in point no. 9 through either email or physical delivery to:

**THE CHAIRMAN -PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE  
COMESA SECRETARIAT  
BEN BELLA ROAD  
P.O BOX 30051  
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA  
Tel: 260 211 229725 - 32  
Attention: Mr. Simatengo Simatengo**

Submission emails: [procurement@comesa.int](mailto:procurement@comesa.int), [ssimatengo@comesa.int](mailto:ssimatengo@comesa.int)

For physical/courier delivery, the outer envelope should be clearly marked in the top right-hand corner “EOI: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST CBC BIZNET E-MARKET HUB UPGRADING - IT CONSULTING FIRMS (EOI/CBC/BIZNET/ADM/07.08.2020/SS)

**DO NOT OPEN BEFORE 28 AUGUST 2020 at 15:00 hours LUSAKA TIME.**

**NOTE:** If the envelopes are not sealed and marked as per the instructions in this clause, COMESA will not assume responsibility for the proposal's misplacement or premature opening and may – at its discretion – reject the proposal.

This first internal sealed envelope, which will be clearly marked “TECHNICAL PROPOSAL” must contain two (2) hard copies of the technical proposal with one marked ‘original’ and the other marked ‘copy’. The second internal envelope, which will be clearly marked “FINANCIAL PROPOSAL”, should contain the original and copy of the financial proposal. The envelope containing the financial proposal will ONLY be opened if the technical offer attains the pass score of seventy per cent (70%).

In the event of any discrepancy between the original and the copy, the original shall govern.

#### **11. CLOSING DATE OF TENDER**

Tenders must be submitted to the COMESA Secretariat on or before **28 AUGUST 2020** at **15:00 hours LUSAKA TIME**.

#### **12. AWARD OF CONTRACTS**

COMESA reserves the right to wholly or partially reject or award these contracts to any bidder and has no obligation to award this tender to the lowest bidder