COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CONSULTANCY TO CARRY OUT SOIL TESTING SERVICES**

**FOR**

**THE**

***“ENHANCED MARKET ACCESS OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (FFV)******PROJECT***

**Tender Ref: CS/ADM/RSO/FED/039-044)**

**Closing Date: 3RD OCTOBER 2023**

1. **BACKGROUND**
	1. **Introduction**

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with COMESA for a Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) project under the Regional Enterprise Competitiveness and Access to Markets Programme (RECAMP) financed under the 11th European Union Development Fund (11th EDF) in July 2022. 11th EDF RECAMP TAF is being implemented in Uganda under the project "***Enhanced Market Access of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (FFV) Through Application of Systems Approaches to Pest Risk Management Tools in Production Chains***."

The initiative seeks to increase compliance with international sanitary and phytosanitary requirements for fresh fruit and vegetable production chains to promote and sustain market access.

* 1. **The Objectives and Expected Results of the Uganda RECAMP**

**The overall objective of the Ugandan project is:** *"To improve market access of fruits and vegetables through enhanced systems for pest risk management and marketing for increased income and food security in Uganda and beyond."*

**The specific objectives are:**

1. *Enhance technical expertise at production and other control points through the improvement of pest management practices and conformity assessment system through training of stakeholders on the Systems Approach - ISPM 14 and establishing demonstration fields for hands-on skills training for producers of FFVs and extension staff.*
2. *ii. Marketing and Business Skilling. To enhance the capacity of the farmers to market their fruits and vegetables through developing the Uganda Export Marketing Strategy for FFVs through market study assessment opportunities to increase fruit and vegetable exports to both new and current markets with improved SPS compliance.*
3. *iii. Enhance Pest Surveillance and Risk Analysis. To improve the surveillance systems for quarantine pests by carrying out surveys on the major quarantine pests especially FCM, Fruit fly, and PVY which are becoming a stumbling block to Uganda's trade in high-risk commodities.*
4. *iv. Enhance communication and coordination among stakeholders (Private and Public). Establish various communication channels that will be used to cascade existing and new regulations in a coordinated manner for the benefit of all stakeholders.*

**Expected Results:**

Four key results are expected to be achieved:

1. *The technical abilities of the stakeholders are improved to produce produce/products of export quality.*
2. *The system for risk analysis and pest surveillance has been improved to track the state of pests.*
3. *The stakeholders' marketing and business abilities are improved to take advantage of the various market prospects.*
4. *The FFV stakeholders are better at coordinating and communicating with one another.*
5. **OBJECTIVES OF CONSULTANCY**

The main goal of the consultancy is to conduct soil testing at the ten (10) demonstration plots in the chosen districts of Luwero, Mukono, Kayunga, Buikwe, Mityana, Masaka, Mubende, Gomba, Mpigi and Butambala.

The consultancy's particular goals are as follows:

1. to assess the soil properties at the demonstration locations, including their cationic exchange capacity, pH, organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium;
2. To identify the types of soi and nutrient compositionl at the demonstration sites;
3. (c) To provide practical advice on what kind of fertilizers and other soil treatments should be used to ensure optimum outcomes on crop productivity.

**4**. **SCOPE OF WORKS**

The consultant (s) will be accountable to COMESA Coordinating Ministry (MTIC)- Project Coordinator and collaborate closely with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAAIF)- Project Officer (Technical Officer).

The following tasks are expected of the consultant(s):

1. Collect the samples from the demonstration sites with the Project Officer's and Coordinator's assistance.
2. Prepare the findings after conducting the required analysis on the samples.
3. Share the detailed soil testing report with key outcomes and recommendations thereto in collaboration with the Project Officer and Coordinator.
4. **DELIVERABLES**

The following are the anticipated outputs:

1. First meeting with the project coordinator and project officer, followed by the submission of a report to the coordinator.
2. Soil sample collection report that has been approved by the demonstration garden's host.
3. Report on a soil analysis.
4. Final meeting with the project coordinator and project officer, followed by submission of a report in English to the project coordinator in hard copy and electronically, with all figures, tables, and maps contained within the text.
5. **TIMEFRAME**

The Soil Testing Exercise is scheduled to take place within fifteen (15) days of the date the Consulting Contract is signed.

In relation to the following time frames, the consultant(s) will be required to produce a detailed report:

1. Initial meeting report within two (02) days of the contract signing;
2. The soil sample collection procedure is expected to be finished in five (05) working days.
3. The soil analysis result is expected within five (05) days after the sample collection exercise's conclusion.
4. The final meeting report must be provided to the Project Coordinator within three (3) days after receiving the soil analysis reports.

1. **REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULTANTS**

The consultants should have the following requirements:

1. A firm or company with a multidisciplinary staff that includes at least one person with a master’s degree in Soil Science.
2. At least two (02) years of proven soil analysis experience.
3. A legally registered soil analysis laboratory or facility, or proof of association with an approved soil analysis laboratory or facility.
4. Excellent knowledge and comprehension of soil sampling, analysis, and reporting methodologies.
5. **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

The following should be in the consulting proposal:

1. Introduction of the Consultants' profiles and relevant experience.
2. Technical proposal for attaining all planned goals within the timeframe specified.
3. Financial proposal detailing the number of working days necessary and the consultant rate.
4. A completed soil analysis report sample.
5. **PAYMENT STRUCTURE**

30% will be paid after the submission of the Initial meeting report to the Project Coordinator.

70% will be paid after the final report is submitted.

1. **INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS**
2. **Eligibility to Tender**

This tender is open to all competent companies that have demonstrated and has the capacity and competence in the subject matter, Company should have at least 5 years of proven experience performing in similar capacity upon inception duly registered, domiciled and operating in Uganda.

1. **Cost of Tender**

The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the bid. COMESA will, in no case, be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct and outcome of the tender.

1. **Bid Currencies/Bid Prices**

All prices shall be quoted in United States Dollars ($USD)$.

1. **Tender Prices**

The tenderer shall indicate on the appropriate price schedule the unit prices and breakdown for all costs to be incurred and total tender price of the services it proposes to provide under the contract.

Prices indicated on the price schedule shall be the cost of the services quoted exclusive of all taxes in Zambia.

1. **Price Variation**

Prices quoted by the tenderer shall be fixed during the term of the contract. Quoted rates should include all overheads and profits. The rate should be firm for the entire contract period. There will be no price variation after signing of the contract. Currency exchange fluctuations will be a non-factor.

1. **Period of validity of Bids**

The Bids shall remain valid for ninety (90) days after the closing date of tender submission.

In exceptional circumstances and prior to the expiry of the original tender validity period, the contracting authority may solicit the tenderers’ consent to an extension of the period of validity.

The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing.

1. **AMENDMENTS OF BID DOCUMENTS**

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Bids, COMESA, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective Bidder, may modify the Bidding Documents by issuing an addendum.

All addenda shall be posted on the COMESA website <http://www.comesa.int>. All bidders wishing to be notified of any addenda should provide to COMESA the bidder’s name and email address.

In order to afford prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendments into account in preparing their offers, COMESA may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of bids.

1. **FORMAT AND SELLING OF BIDS**

The Bidder shall prepare copies of the technical bid and financial bid in two separate emails, clearly marking one as “Technical Proposal “and the other as “Financial Proposal” with a password for the financial proposal, we shall only request for the password to the Financial Proposal if the bidder’s technical proposal scores 70 and above.

The tenders should be emailed to procurement@comesa.int and tenders@comesa.int not later than **3rd October 2023** at 15:00 hrs. Lusaka time and should be marked “**CONSULTANCY TO CARRY OUT SOIL TESTING SERVICES IN UGANDA”** DO NOT OPEN BEFORE **3rd October 2023** at 15:00hrs Lusaka time.

1. **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology, schedule and design should be stated and presented clearly.

Each Proposal shall be evaluated by a selection committee utilizing several criteria, as specified in the table below:

**Table 1: Criteria for Overall Technical Evaluation**

| **Criteria** | **%** |
| --- | --- |
| **T1** | **A firm or company with a multidisciplinary staff that includes at least one person with a master’s degree in Soil Science;** | **20** |
| **T2** | ***At least two (02) years of proven soil analysis experience*** | **15** |
| **T3** | **A legally registered soil analysis laboratory or facility, or proof of association with an approved soil analysis laboratory or facility** | **40** |
| **T4** | **Excellent knowledge and comprehension of soil sampling, analysis, and reporting methodologies;** | **25** |
|  | **Total** | **100** |
|  |  |  |

However, this will be subject to the bidder attaining a pass score 70% of the obtainable score of 100 points in the evaluation of the technical proposals.

The weighting of quality and price will be applied as follows:

Score for Proposal ***=*** ({Lowest price } x20)+ ({Total quality score of Proposal} x80)

 Price of Tender 100

 The bidder who will have the highest ranked combined proposal will be selected.

Note that the deadline for submitting questions is 22nd September 2023 at 12:00 hrs. Lusaka Time.

1. **OWNERSHIP OF TENDERS**

COMESA retains ownership of all tenders received under this invitation to tender.

1. **NEGOTIATION AND FINALIZATION**

After the selection of the best bid and notification to the selected company, COMESA will commence negotiations with the company for purposes of concluding an agreement for the provision of the services.

1. **AWARD OF CONTRACT**

Prior to expiration of the period of bid validity, the Procurement Committee will award the contract to the qualified Bidder whose Bid has been evaluated to be the most responsive to the needs of the organization and activity concerned.

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 highest ranked bidder.

COMESA also reserves the right to annul the Bid process and reject all Bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder(s).

1. **CANCELLATION OF THE TENDER**

In the event of cancellation of the tender, bidders will be notified in writing of the cancellation by the contracting Authority and informed of the reasons for cancellation.

 If the tender is cancelled before the outer envelope of any bid has been opened, the

 unopened and sealed envelopes will be returned to the bidders.

1. **SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT**

Within 14 days of receipt of the contract the successful Bidder shall sign and date the contract and return it to the COMESA Secretariat.

1. **PERIOD OF EXECUTION**

The period of execution of the contract starts from the date of the signing of the contract and will be for a duration of one hundred fifty (150) days.

1. **ETHICAL CONDUCT AND FRAUDULENT PRACTICES**

COMESA requires that Tenderers observe the highest standard of ethics during the selection and execution of such contracts. For this provision, the Purchaser defines the terms set forth below as follows:

1. “Corrupt practice” means the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of an officer of the Purchaser in the tendering process; and
2. “Fraudulent practice” means a misrepresentation of facts to influence the tendering process to the detriment of the Purchaser.
3. COMESA will reject a proposal for award if it determines that a Tenderer has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities in competing for the contract in question.
4. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information relating to evaluation of bids and recommendations concerning awards, shall NOT be disclosed to the Bidders who submitted the bids or to other persons not officially concerned with the process, until the winning firm has been notified that it has been awarded the contract.

1. **TECHNICAL QUERIES**

For any technical queries related to terms of reference, kindly contact the Procurement Unit on the following email: procurement@comesa.int and copy ssimatengo@comesa.int and smwesigwa@comesa.int not later than **22nd  September 2023** at 12:00hrs Lusaka time