

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

5 March 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Subject: RFP for the final, end-of-programme evaluation of “Supporting Gender Equality in the Context of HIV/AIDS”**

1. You are requested to submit a proposal for professional evaluation services, as per enclosed Terms of Reference (TOR).
2. To enable you to submit a proposal, attached are:
  - i. Instructions to Offerors .....(Annex I)
  - ii. General Conditions of Contract..... (Annex II)-PDF
  - iii. Terms of Reference (TOR)..... (Annex III)
  - iv. Proposal Submission Form .....(Annex IV)
  - v. Financial Proposal .....(Annex V)
3. Your offer comprising of technical proposal and financial proposal, in **separate sealed envelopes**, should reach the following address no later than **11:59 pm EST on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014** at:

**Attention of: Diana Ranola**  
**Leadership and Governance Section**  
**220 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street,**  
**New York, NY 10017**  
**E-mail Option: [diana.ranola@unwomen.org](mailto:diana.ranola@unwomen.org)**

**In order to facilitate the submission of both Technical and Financial proposals, the submission duly stamped and signed can also be done electronically in PDF format and send to ([diana.ranola@unwomen.org](mailto:diana.ranola@unwomen.org)). Technical and Financial proposals should be sent as separate PDF files. If the Technical and Financial proposals are sent in the same PDF file, they will be rejected.**

4. If you request additional information, we would endeavor to provide information expeditiously, but any delay in providing such information will not be considered a reason for extending the submission date of your proposal.
5. You are requested to acknowledge receipt of this letter and to indicate whether or not you intend to submit a proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Tesmerelna Atsbeha  
Programme Specialist  
Leadership and Governance Section

## Annex I

### Instructions to Offerors

#### A. Introduction

##### 1. General

UN Women seeks a qualified firm/ institution or team of individual consultants to design and conduct a *Global Review of HIV/AIDS Treatment Access for Women*. The overall purpose of the Global Review is to increase understanding of the dynamics of ART coverage and access for women globally beyond the current indicators, identify key barriers to HIV care and treatment at household, community and health system levels and develop key findings which inform and provide recommendations for policy and programming. (See Terms of Reference).

##### 2. Cost of proposal

The Offeror shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the Proposal, UN Women will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation.

#### B. Solicitation Documents

##### 3. Contents of solicitation documents

Proposals must offer services for the total requirement. Proposals offering only part of the requirement will be rejected. The Offeror is expected to examine all corresponding instructions, forms, terms and specifications contained in the Solicitation Documents. Failure to comply with these documents will be at the Offeror's risk and may affect the evaluation of the Proposal.

##### 4. Clarification of solicitation documents

A prospective Offeror requiring any clarification of the Solicitation Documents may notify the procuring UN Women entity in writing at the organisation's mailing address or e-mail indicated in the RFP. The procuring UN Women entity will respond in writing to any request for clarification of the Solicitation Documents that it receives earlier than two weeks prior to the deadline for the submission of Proposals. Written copies of the organisation's response (including an explanation of the query but without identifying the source of inquiry) will be sent to all prospective Offerors that has received the Solicitation Documents.

##### 5. Amendments of solicitation documents

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Proposals, the procuring UN Women entity may, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective Offeror, modify the Solicitation Documents by amendment.

All prospective Offerors that have received the Solicitation Documents will be notified in writing of all amendments to the Solicitation Documents.

In order to afford prospective Offerors reasonable time in which to take the amendments into account in preparing their offers, the procuring UN Women entity may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals.

## C. Preparation of Proposals

### 6. Language of the proposal

The Proposals prepared by the Offeror and all correspondence and documents relating to the Proposal exchanged by the Offeror and the procuring UN Women entity shall be written in the **English language**. Any printed literature furnished by the Offeror may be written in another language so long as accompanied by an English translation of its pertinent passages in which case, for purposes of interpretation of the Proposal, the English translation shall govern.

### 7. Documents comprising the proposal

The Proposal shall comprise the following components:

- (a) Proposal submission form;
- (b) Technical Proposal, including a **statement of interest** with details of the experience of the company, references and prior relevant examples and how bidder's background fits the requisite competencies and skills, a **review approach and methodology**, **timeline** for reporting with milestones, **composition/qualifications of the team** and documentation to demonstrate that offeror meets all requirements (CVs of team leader and team members as well as 2 samples of work); and,
- (c) Financial Proposal completed in accordance with clauses 8 and 9.

### 8. Proposal form

The technical part of the Proposal should not contain any pricing information whatsoever on the services offered. Pricing information shall be separated and only contained in the Financial Proposal.

The Offeror shall structure the Technical part of its Proposal as follows:

#### (a) **Quality of Technical Proposal:**

The quality of the technical proposal refers to the quality of the proposed review approach and methodology, the statement of interest, and the work plan. (Please refer to the Terms of Reference (TOR) for additional information).

#### (b) **Team Composition:**

This section will specify the composition of the team and the division of tasks/responsibilities among different team members. The Team Leader and all team's experiences and qualifications should meet the criteria indicated in the TOR. This section should specify whether or not the proposed team is gender balanced and cross-culturally diverse.

The section should also describe the responsibilities during the review process and the general management approach towards a project of this kind. This should fully explain the Offeror's resources in

terms of personnel and facilities necessary for the performance of this requirement. It should describe the Offeror's current capabilities/facilities and any plans for their expansion.

## **9. Financial Proposal**

The Offeror shall indicate on an appropriate Financial Proposal, an example of which is contained in these Solicitation Documents, the prices of services it proposes to supply under the contract.

The Financial Proposal should be submitted using the template provided in Annex 5. In addition to the formula used for identifying the score of the financial proposals, they will be qualitatively assessed for feasibility and realism to cover the costs of technical proposal and ensure the quality required by the TOR.

## **10. Proposal currencies**

All prices shall be quoted in US dollars.

## **11. Period of validity of proposals**

Proposals shall remain valid for sixty (60) days after the date of Proposal submission prescribed by the procuring UN Women entity, pursuant to the deadline clause. A Proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected by the procuring UN Women entity on the grounds that it is non-responsive.

In exceptional circumstances, the procuring UN Women entity may solicit the Offeror's consent to an extension of the period of validity. The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing. An Offeror granting the request will not be required nor permitted to modify its Proposal.

## **12. Format and signing of proposals**

The Offeror shall prepare two copies of the Proposal, clearly marking one "Original Proposal" and the other "Copy of Proposal". In the event of any discrepancy between them, the original shall govern. The two copies of the Proposal shall be typed or written in indelible ink and shall be signed by the Offeror or a person or persons duly authorized to bind the Offeror to the contract. The latter authorization shall be indicated by written power-of-attorney accompanying the Proposal.

A Proposal shall contain no interlineations, erasures, or overwriting except, as necessary to correct errors made by the Offeror, in which case such corrections shall be initialed by the person or persons signing the Proposal.

## **13. Payment**

UN Women shall effect payments to the Contractor after acceptance by UN Women of the invoices submitted by the contractor, upon achievement of the corresponding milestones.

## **D. Submission of Proposals**

### **14. Sealing and marking of proposals**

The Offeror shall seal the Proposal in one outer and two inner envelopes, as detailed below.

(a) The outer envelope shall be:

- Addressed to:  
Diana Ranola  
Leadership and Governance Section  
UN Women  
220 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
**and,**
- marked with –

**“RFP: Global Review of HIV/AIDS Treatment Access for Women”**

- (b) Both inner envelopes shall indicate the name and address of the Offeror. The first inner envelope shall contain the information specified in [Clause 8 \(Proposal form\)](#) above, with the copies duly marked “Original” and “Copy”. The second inner envelope shall include the *Financial Proposal* duly identified as such.

Note: if the inner envelopes are not sealed and marked as per the instructions in this clause, the procuring UN Women entity will not assume responsibility for the Proposal’s misplacement or premature opening.

**15. Deadline for submission of proposals**

Proposals must be received by the procuring UN Women entity at the address specified under clause *Sealing and marking of Proposals* no later than **Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup> 2014, 11:59 pm EST**.

Alternatively, Offerors can submit duly stamped and signed Proposals electronically in PDF format and send to [diana.ranola@unwomen.org](mailto:diana.ranola@unwomen.org). Technical and Financial proposals should be sent as **separate** PDF files. If the Technical and Financial proposals are sent in the same PDF file, they will be rejected.

The procuring UN Women entity may, at its own discretion extend this deadline for the submission of Proposals by amending the solicitation documents in accordance with clause *Amendments of Solicitation Documents*, in which case all rights and obligations of the procuring UN Women entity and Offerors previously subject to the deadline will thereafter be subject to the deadline as extended.

**16. Late Proposals**

Any Proposal received by the procuring UN Women entity after the deadline for submission of proposals, pursuant to clause *Deadline for the submission of proposals*, will be rejected.

**17. Modification and withdrawal of Proposals**

The Offeror may withdraw its Proposal after the Proposal’s submission, provided that written notice of the withdrawal is received by the procuring UN Women entity prior to the deadline prescribed for submission of Proposals.

The Offeror’s withdrawal notice shall be prepared, sealed, marked, and dispatched in accordance with the provisions of clause *Deadline for Submission of Proposals*. The withdrawal notice may also be sent by e-mail or fax but followed by a signed confirmation copy.

No Proposal may be modified subsequent to the deadline for submission of proposals.

No Proposal may be withdrawn in the interval between the deadline for submission of proposals and the expiration of the period of proposal validity specified by the Offeror on the Proposal Submission Form.

## **E. Opening and Evaluation of Proposals**

### **18. Opening of proposals**

Proposals will be opened by the UN Women programme manager and will be reviewed by a Committee formed by the Head of the procuring UN Women entity.

### **19. Clarification of proposals**

To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of Proposals, the Purchaser may at its discretion, ask the Offeror for clarification of its Proposal. 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.

### **20. Preliminary examination**

The Purchaser 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.

Arithmetical errors will be rectified on the following basis: If there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total price that is obtained by multiplying the unit price and quantity, the unit price shall prevail and the total price shall be corrected. If the Offeror does not accept the correction of errors, its Proposal will be rejected. If there is a discrepancy between words and figures the amount in words will prevail.

Prior to the detailed evaluation, the Purchaser 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. The Purchaser's determination of a Proposal's responsiveness is based on the contents of the Proposal itself without recourse to extrinsic evidence.

A Proposal determined as not substantially responsive will be rejected by the Purchaser and may not subsequently be made responsive by the Offeror by correction of the non-conformity.

### **21. Evaluation and comparison of proposals**

A two-stage procedure is utilized in evaluating the proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal being opened and compared. The financial proposal of the Proposals will be opened only for submissions that passed the minimum technical score of 70% of the obtainable score of 700 points in the evaluation of the technical proposals.

The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of its responsiveness to the Term of Reference (TOR).

In the Second Stage, the financial proposal of all contractors, who have attained the minimum 70% score in the technical evaluation will be compared. The Technical Proposal is 70% of the overall

composite score and the Financial Proposal is 30%. The contract will be awarded to the bidder obtaining the highest score (combining both the technical and financial).

### ***Technical Evaluation Criteria***

Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Score Weight	Points Obtainable	Company / Other Entity				
				A	B	C	D	E
1.	<b>Quality of Technical Proposal</b> Review approach, proposed methodology, work plan, understanding of context	50%	350					
2.	<b>Team Composition</b> Qualifications of personnel/expertise of firm/organization submitting proposal	50%	350					
<b>Total</b>			<b>700</b>					

Evaluation forms for technical proposals follow on the next two pages. The obtainable number of points specified for each evaluation criterion indicates the relative significance or weight of the item in the overall evaluation process. The Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms are:

Form 1: Quality of Technical Proposal

Form 2: Team Composition

<b>Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 1</b>		Points obtainable	Company / Other Entity				
			A	B	C	D	E
<b>Review approach, methodology, and Contextual understanding</b>							
Proposed Work Plan and Approach							
1.1	Proposals overall quality, clarity and adherence to the RFP guidelines	50					
1.2	Extent to which the proposal presents a specific, relevant approach and clear methods for gathering and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data that are feasible and applicable in the timeframe and context of the review, and incorporates human rights and gender equality perspectives as well as innovative presentations for findings including meeting facilitation.	100					
1.3	Extent to which the timeframe and human resources indicated in the work plan are realistic and useful for the needs of the review.	60					
1.4	Extent to which the evaluation matrix clearly addresses the TOR, relating evaluation Questions with evaluation Criteria, with Indicators and with Means of Verification.	90					
1.5	Extent to which the statement of interest reflects contextual understanding of the thematic areas.	50					

<b>TOTAL PART 1</b>	<b>350</b>					
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Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 2			Points Obtainable	Company / Other Entity				
				A	B	C	D	E
Team Composition / Expertise								
Qualification of personnel / Expertise of Firm /Organization submitting Proposal								
2.1	Proven previous expertise in conducting high-level reviews and country-level studies.	50						
2.2	Experience and knowledge of gender equality and women’s empowerment, HIV/AIDS treatment program measurement and evaluation.	70						
2.3	Extent to which the team is gender-balanced and cross-culturally diverse.	30						
2.4	<b>Team Leader (for details refer to the TOR)</b>							
	General Qualification (Education and Languages)	45						
	Relevant professional experience (Previous experience or knowledge of the UN System and/or bilaterals, knowledge of gender equality and human rights issues, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS, knowledge of HIV/AIDS treatment programming processes.	70						
2.5	<b>Team members (for details refer to the TOR)</b>							
	General Qualification (Education and Languages)	35						
	Relevant professional experience (Previous experience or knowledge of the UN System and/or bilaterals, knowledge of gender equality and human rights issues, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS, knowledge of HIV/AIDS treatment programming processes.	50						
	<b>TOTAL PART 2</b>	<b>350</b>						
	<b>70% of 700 pts = 490 pts needed to pass technical.</b>							

The financial score is calculated as follows:

The lowest offer is awarded 350 points applying the following formula:  $p=y (x/z)$

P = points for the financial proposal being evaluated  
Y = maximum number of points for the financial proposal  
X = price of the lowest priced proposal  
Z = price of the proposal being evaluated

## F. Award of Contract

### 22. Award criteria, award of contract

The procuring UN Women entity reserves the right to accept or reject any Proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all Proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby

incurring any liability to the affected Offeror or any obligation to inform the affected Offeror or Offerors of the grounds for the Purchaser's action

Prior to expiration of the period of proposal validity, the procuring UN Women entity will award the contract to the qualified Offeror whose Proposal after being evaluated is considered to be the most responsive to the needs of the organization and activity concerned.

**23. Purchaser's right to vary requirements at time of award**

The Purchaser reserves the right at the time of award of contract to vary the quantity of services and goods specified in the RFP without any change in price or other terms and conditions.

**24. Signing of the contract**

Within 30 days of receipt of the contract the successful Offeror shall sign and date the contract and return it to the Purchaser.

Failure of the successful Offeror to comply with the requirement of Clause 24 shall constitute sufficient grounds for the annulment of the award and forfeiture of the Proposal security if any, in which event the Purchaser may make the award to the next lowest evaluated Offeror or call for new Proposals.

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## Annex V

### FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The Contractor (either Firm or individual consultants conforming a Team) is asked to prepare the Financial Proposal as a separate envelope from the rest of the RFP response as indicated in Section D paragraph 14 (b) of the Instruction to Offerors.

All prices/rates quoted must be exclusive of all taxes, since the UN Women is exempt from taxes as detailed in Section II, Clause 18.

The Financial Proposal must provide a detailed cost breakdown. Provide separate figures for each functional grouping or category.

Estimates for cost-reimbursable items, if any, such as travel, and per diems should be listed separately.

**The format shown on the following pages should be used in preparing the Financial Proposal. The format includes specific expenditures, which may or may not be required or applicable but are indicated to serve as examples.**

		<b>Financial Proposal: Request for Proposals for Services</b>			
<b>Description of Activity/Item</b>		<b>Number of Staff</b>	<b>Daily Rate</b>	<b>Time Effort in Days</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>				
1.1	<b>Review framework document:</b> includes the agreed upon review methodology, revised review question matrix, data collection tools and analysis methods, and work plan (with corresponding timeline). The framework document will also identify list of information sources, including key stakeholders.				
1.2	<b>Preliminary</b>				

	<b>Literature Review findings report:</b> For presentation at the Experts' meeting (including country study proposals)				
1.3	<b>Expert Meeting Report</b>				
1.4	<b>Power point presentation(s)</b> to each country at the close of each field visit. Presentations will outline preliminary findings, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations to key stakeholders.				
1.5	<b>PowerPoint Presentation</b> to global advisory group, and national partners on main findings/recommendations and proposed dissemination strategy;				
1.6	<b>Summaries:</b> 1-3 page summary sheets for the global review and for each study for external dissemination.				
1.7	<b>Draft &amp; Final Global Review Report</b>				
<b>2</b>	<b>Operational Costs</b>				
2.1	Travel				
2.2	Per Diem Allowances				
2.3	Communication				
2.4	Other expenses				