

Republic of South Sudan
Universal Service And Access Fund Secretariat

Office of the Secretary General

Date: 13th January 2020

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) NOTICE.

Assessment on Communication Service Infrastructure, Access and Usage

The Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF or the Fund), is an Independent Government entity established in accordance with provisions of the National Communication Act, 2012, and is mandated to develop and deploy communication services to cover the entire population of South Sudan, with special attention to rural and underserved areas and populations with the view to ensure universal service and access.

In response to this mandate, the Fund Secretariat wishes to engage an independent and competent consulting firm/ team to carry out a comprehensive assessment on communication service, infrastructure deployment, access and usage of the infrastructure and related resources by households, businesses and government entities at a national level.

The terms of reference for this consultancy can be obtained from the Fund Secretariat, located on the 2nd Floor of Ministry of Telecommunications and Postal Service Building Complex, Gumbo.

Applications are only opened to consulting firms/ teams who meet the specific pre-qualification requirements.

Interested firms/ teams MUST submit their application titled: Proposal_for_USAF_Study, via the Fund mailbox at the address usaf@nca.gov.ss, with blind copies to llaku@nca.gov.ss and lemisco2002@gmail.com.

The closing date for submissions is **Sunday, 26th January 2020 at 23:59.**

The Fund Secretariat cannot answer any queries to this RFP five (5) days or less prior to the submission dateline.

The Fund reserves the right to accept or reject the application.



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS FUND SECRETARIAT

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Assessment of Communication Service Infrastructure, Access and Usage

1.0 Background

The Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF or the Fund), is an Independent Government entity established in accordance with provisions of the National Communication Act, 2012, to develop and deploy communication services to cover the entire population of South Sudan, with special attention to rural and underserved areas and populations with the view to ensure universal service and access.

The Communications sector itself comprises of among others telecommunications, broadcasting, postal services, data communication and infrastructure.

In execution of its mandate, the Fund is committed to:

- focus the attention of communications service providers towards rural population and encourage expanded levels of communication penetration;
- improve broadband penetration in the country;
- promote increased use of advanced tools and equipment while encouraging the utilization of e-applications and e-services for both rural and urban areas of South Sudan; and
- promote advancement in research and development within the field of communication and promote the use of advanced technologies.

In response to this mandate, the Fund seeks to engage an independent and competent consulting firm/ team to carry out a comprehensive assessment on communication service, infrastructure deployment, access and usage of the

infrastructure and related resources by households, businesses and government entities at a national level as per these terms of reference.

2.0 Objective of the Study

The general purpose of the study is many folds:

- i. to conduct a country level assessment of the communication/ ICT service, infrastructure deployment, access and usage of the ICT infrastructure and related resources by households, businesses and government entities and the gaps in infrastructure and service across all the states in South Sudan; and
- ii. to design an initial set of priority projects for voice and broadband internet coverage and support the Fund in identifying the areas for the deployment of these projects.

More specifically the assessment seeks to identify and measure the extent of access and usage of the ICT infrastructure and related resources by households, businesses and government entities through generation of internationally comparable ICT statistics.

It also seeks to:

- i. identify critical gaps in the communication service, coverage, network access, usage and recommend interventions; and
- ii. identify and prioritise on the Fund initial projects and provide a benchmark upon which future improvements in the Fund projects will be measured.

3.0 Tasks to be performed

The consulting firm/ team shall be expected to conduct a comprehensive assessment and an objective analysis of the data collected. To achieve this, the consultant shall:

- i. undertake a comprehensive review of a number of documents not limited to, the USAF Policy, Legislation and benchmark across the region on USAF;
- ii. employ both primary and secondary information collection mechanisms;
- iii. design an acceptable, sound and reliable assessment methodology, which entails a geographically representative sample and enables inference on the views of the key stakeholders at various levels;
- iv. design and propose access and usage assessment score tool;
- v. recruit and equip research assistants and staff with the requisite skills;
- vi. collect, clean and process the data collected in this assignment;
- vii. synthesize and analyse data collected;
- viii. conduct workshop(s), for the review and validation of the outputs of the assignment; and
- ix. produce reports inception report, progress & final reports including cleaned datasets in both soft and hard form to the Fund.

Note:

The final report should cover all the study requirements outlined above in section 2 “Objective of the study” and outputs associated with the tasks in section “4.0 Outputs and deliverables”. The following outline is recommended for this report:

- Executive Summary.
- Main Report
 - Introduction
 - Findings of the situational analysis
 - Proposed USAF priority projects
 - Recommendations including the proposed USAF initial projects

- Annexes: containing all tools used, evidence collected, all analysis supporting the information contained in the main report and lessons learnt during the execution of the assignment.

4.0 Outputs and deliverables

The following deliverables will be provided by the consultant in correspondence with the objectives and tasks outlined in section 2 and 3 above:

- i. an Inception Report which shall include details of the methodology to be used, the proposed work plan, preliminary findings and proposal of consultations to be made;
- ii. monthly progress reports on the implementation of the study;
- iii. a draft final report;
- iv. a detailed final assessment report incorporating comments received from the Fund and the stakeholder validation workshop;
- v. cleaned datasets;
- vi. all reports must be submitted in English language in hard copy as well as in electronic form using the MS Office word format;
- vii. a comprehensive methodology and analysis techniques to enable the Fund replicate the study in subsequent years; and
- viii. knowledge transfer during and throughout the research process.

5.0 Timelines

The study duration has been defined as four (4) months effective from the date of the contract.

The payment schedule is as follows:

- i. 35% upon approval of the inception report;
- ii. 30% upon submission of the draft final report;
- iii. 35% upon approval of the final report.

6.0 Requirements

Interested firms/ teams who meet the specific requirements for pre-qualification are required to submit the following:

- ✓ work plan of how the assignment will be conducted;
- ✓ a stakeholder(s) consultation plan;
- ✓ an explanation of why the firm/ team is the most suited to conduct the study. This should be accompanied by the firm's/ team's profile with relevant past experience of similar or closely related projects undertaken and their referees;
- ✓ CVs of the lead consultants; and
- ✓ estimated budget.

Note:

The specific requirements for pre-qualification include:

- i. the firm/ team must be in existence for the last three (3) years; and
- ii. the firm/ team must have a valid business license in South Sudan or its country of origin.

7.0 Assessment criteria

The selection of the consulting firm/ team for this study shall include:

- ✓ team quality;
- ✓ value for money;
- ✓ ability to deliver against the timelines; and
- ✓ knowledge of the subject and experience in similar projects.

In this vain, the following criteria shall be used:

- academic and professional competencies of individual professional personnel proposed by the consulting firm/ team for the assignment in fields related to ICT development and socio-economic analysis. Postgraduate degrees are preferred;
- demonstrated experience in undertaking nationally representative studies in the communication sector;
- demonstrated experience of a minimum of 8 years in policy development and strategic planning in the communication sector;
- sound understanding and application of policy concepts, methodologies and tools. Should be fully conversant with the principles and working methods of project cycle management;
- demonstrated expert understanding of universal service in developing countries with working knowledge in countries or economies similar to South Sudan; and
- the responsiveness and quality of the proposed approach and methodology to be applied by the consultant/ team.

8.0 Reporting

The consultant/ team shall report to the Fund Research and Projects team, who shall be responsible for monitoring the progress made and quality assuring the expected deliverables including tools used during the contract implementation period.

9.0 Copyright and disclosure

All data collected, field tools and other deliverables of the study shall remain the property of the Fund during and after the contract implementation period. As such, under no circumstance whatsoever shall the firm or its team members disclose or reproduce it without the prior written consent of the Fund. Non-disclosure agreements shall be entered into as deemed appropriate.