

**Transcription of pre-proposal conference
February 15, 2024**

1. Hosting costs, should they be included in our proposals or would it be provided by stakeholders?
 - The total budgeted amount for this component is \$85,000 which includes hosting, maintenance for up to 15 months, and travel. Sustainability will depend on stakeholders and user buy in.
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2. Hosting location?
 - Will defer to firms to propose best offerings.
3. For HS code data will we get any support on that?
 - Yes, MRA, Malawi Revenue Authority, will provide the latest Harmonized Tariff Schedule. In addition, there will be an in-country coordinator and Project Working Group composed of public-private sector representatives committed to provide any time of support necessary.
4. What is the language preferences for everything including training materials?
 - English
5. Is travel included in 85K?
 - Yes, travel will be coordinated by head office, but please provide your estimate on the number of travel you deem necessary. Most travel will take place to Blantyre Malawi where MRA is headquartered but also potentially to Lilongwe to consult with businesses.
6. Are we restricted to any coding languages?
 - No, but please take into account your counterparts and assess what programming languages are the most used and are the most familiar to MRA maintaining system.
7. Closing date for submission is when? And will digital copies of proposal will work?
 - March 3rd is closing date, digital copies are fine. Once firms are shortlisted after March 3rd, by the project working group and CIPE, candidates will then be invited to a post-proposal conference to provide us with a demo. This will be followed by selection of the winning firm and contractual arrangements and negotiations.
8. What kind of contract will it be, how long would this take?
 - From posting of opportunity to final signatures takes us on average 90 days.
9. For the demo, does our tool have to be customized?
 - You do not necessarily have to customize, you can put forward solutions you have worked on in the past.

10. Can we partner with other companies that are, for example, experts in cyber security?
- Yes, there is no restriction in partnership, you may work with other entities. However, firms must let CIPE know so we can do our due diligence when it's time for contracting.
11. The intellectual property will be meant for the Malawi Revenue Authority, correct?
- We anticipate that the IT firm will retain the IP rights for the core technology and any proprietary platforms or tools developed independently of this project.
 - However, specific customizations, modules, or features developed explicitly for the HS Classification and Tariff Information Tool, funded through this project and tailored to Malawi's trade facilitation needs, will be subject to shared IP rights. In any case, the details of the IP ownership structure, including the scope of shared rights, usage licenses, and any restrictions, will be **determined during the contract negotiation phase.**
12. What about copyright and protection of the Intellectual Property? If they want to transfer the technology to another country, would we have any protection?
- Please include this in your proposal if you need protection against transfer so MRA and stakeholders are aware of this.
13. The focus is on digitizing HS 2022, and nothing older?
- Yes, MRA has adopted HS 2022.