

Subject: **Request for Proposals:
Cost benefit analysis to study outsourcing option for UNAIDS
web publishing needs**

28 October 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. You are requested to kindly submit a proposal to undertake a Cost benefit analysis to study outsourcing option for UNAIDS web publishing needs, by 17 November 2009. Your proposal could form the basis for a contract between your firm/institution and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

2. To enable you to submit a proposal, please find enclosed:

- a) Proposal Submission Form, to be completed and returned with your proposal
- b) Terms of Reference (TOR), containing a description of UNAIDS requirements

This letter is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract with your firm/institution.

Manner of Submission

3. Your proposal shall be prepared in the English language and comprise : (a) Proposal Submission Form and (b) Proposal itself.

4. Your proposal shall be sent to TechnicalBids@unaids.org on or before 17 November 2009 18:00 Geneva time. Any proposal received after this date may be rejected. UNAIDS may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of proposals, by notifying all prospective proposers in writing.

5. You are requested to hold your proposal valid for 60 days from the deadline for submission. UNAIDS will make its best effort to select a firm/institution within this period.

6. Assuming that a contract can be satisfactorily concluded by 27 November, 2009, the assignment is expected to commence immediately.

7. If you consider that your firm/institution does not have all the expertise for the assignment, there is no objection to your firm/institution associating with another firm/institution, particularly from a developing country, to enable a full range of expertise to be proposed.

8. Any firm/institution with which you might be associated may not be eligible to participate in proposing/bidding for any services which may result from or be associated with the project of which this assignment forms a part.

9. Please note that the cost of preparing a proposal and of negotiating a contract, including any related travel, is not reimbursable nor can it be included as a direct cost of the assignment.

10. Any requests for clarification should be referred to -- **Mr. Htin Aung**, Web Platform Manager, UNAIDS, at the following telephone: +41.22.791.4762 or e-mail: aungh@unaids.org. Any written reply to a particular question may be copied to all other invited firms/institutions, at the discretion of UNAIDS.

Content of Proposal

11. The proposal should be concisely presented and structured in the following order to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

- a) Description of the Firm and the Firm's Qualifications
A brief description of your firm/institution and an outline of recent experience that highlights your experience in conducting cost benefits analysis and your knowledge in the field of web publishing in English, French, Spanish and Russian is a must. You should also provide information that will facilitate our evaluation of your firm/institution's substantive reliability and financial and managerial capacity to provide the services.
- b) Understanding of the Requirements for Services, including Assumptions
Include any assumptions as well as comments on the services as indicated in the TOR, or as you may otherwise believe to be necessary.
- c) Proposed Approach, Methodology, Timing and Outputs
Any comments or suggestions on the TOR, as well as your detailed description of the manner in which your firm/institution would respond to the TOR. You should include the number of person-months in each specialization that you consider necessary to carry out all work required.
- d) Proposed Team Structure
The composition of the team which you would propose to provide in the country of assignment and/or at the home office, and the work tasks (including supervisory) which would be assigned to each. The curriculum vitae of the senior professional members of the team including their specific responsibilities on this project, relevant experience and qualifications and their working language(s).
- e) Fees
Your fees shall be quoted in a single currency, either in US Dollars or in the currency of your home country. If you opt for the latter, and for evaluation purposes only, your proposal will be converted into US dollars using the United Nations rate of exchange in effect on the date submissions are due.

Payment Provisions

12. UNAIDS' general policy is to pay for the performance of contractual services rendered or to effect payment upon the achievement of specific milestones described in the contract.

Evaluation of Proposals

13. The proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:
- a) the firm/institution's general reliability as well as experience and capacity in the specific field of the assignment ;

- b) the approach in responding to the TOR and the detailed work plan ;
and
- c) the qualifications and competence of the personnel proposed for the assignment.

14. Please note that the UNAIDS is not bound to select any of the firms/institutions submitting proposals. Furthermore, since a contract will be awarded in respect of the proposal which is considered most responsive to the needs of the project concerned, due consideration being given to UN general principles, including economy and efficiency, UNAIDS does not bind itself in any way to select the firm/institution offering the lowest price.

15. An invitation to submit proposals has also been sent to other firms:

Yours sincerely,

Frederic Claus
Chief of Administrative Services Team, UNAIDS
Geneva, Switzerland

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM

TO: UNAIDS
20 Avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

Dear Sir/Madam:

Having examined the RFP , we the undersigned, offer to supply the required consultancy services for a fee of

We undertake, if our proposal is accepted, to commence and complete delivery of all items in the contract within the time frame stipulated.

We understand that you are not bound to accept any proposal you may receive and that a binding contract would result only after final negotiations are concluded on the basis of the technical merit and fee proposed.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 2009__.

Signature

(in the Capacity of)

Duly authorized to sign proposal for and on behalf of:

Cost benefit analysis to study outsourcing option for UNAIDS web publishing needs

Terms of reference

1 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this RFP (Request for Proposal) is to engage a consultant to study the benefits and feasibility of outsourcing to external companies or individual contractors the daily web publishing tasks currently carried out by UNAIDS staff members.

The study will be an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of different alternatives, will investigate whether the benefits outweigh the costs and will aim to gauge the efficiency of outsourced services relative to the provision of services in-house. The result of this study will be evaluated in the context of larger UNAIDS Secretariat enhancement efforts and will provide a framework for decision-making.

The study will be measured in terms of costs, practicality and sustainability and will include all issues surrounding outsourcing alternatives, such as the risks involved, return on investment, opportunity costs, institution knowledge retention, etc.

The scope of this study only covers daily web publishing functions at UNAIDS.

1.1 UNAIDS—the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations family that brings together the efforts and resources of ten UN system organizations in the AIDS response to help the world prevent new HIV infections, care for people living with HIV and mitigate the impact of the epidemic.

With its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, the UNAIDS Secretariat works on the ground in more than 80 countries worldwide. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through the UN theme groups and the joint programmes on AIDS. Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. UNAIDS helps mount and support an expanded response to AIDS—one that engages the efforts of many sectors and partners from government and civil society.

UNAIDS HQ is located in Geneva, Switzerland. The UNAIDS Secretariat has approximately 1000 staff worldwide, of which 350 staff are located in its headquarters office in Geneva, with the remainder being spread over seven Regional Support Teams (RSTs) and over 85 Country Offices (COs).

1.2 Background

1.2.1 UNAIDS web sites

The UNAIDS web presence is hosted on multiple domains. The official UNAIDS web site, www.unaids.org, contains around 7000 web pages in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Russian. While there are no imminent plans to offer content translated into Arabic and Chinese, this potential requirement has to be taken into account. An average of seven feature stories are published each week on the web site.

The UNAIDS web site hosts a document repository, data.unaids.org, which contains the main UNAIDS publications, factsheets, press releases, global reports, guidelines and other publicly available documents. This repository contains 26 000 files (5 GB); these are mainly PDF documents in English, French, Spanish and Russian, but other languages are also present.

The UNAIDS web presence is maintained jointly by the Communications team (content), Administrative Services team (publishing) and Information Management and Technology team (technical support).

1.2.2 Target audience of the UNAIDS web site

The UNAIDS web site hosts a broad range of news stories, analysis, event coverage, policy announcements and multimedia on the HIV epidemic and AIDS response produced by UNAIDS, its Cosponsoring organizations, governments and civil society partners.

The target audiences of the UNAIDS web site include government officials and policy-makers, civil society, researchers, media, advocates, community members, practitioners and researchers.

1.3 Content management system (CMS) in use for web publishing

At present, the main UNAIDS web site is managed using Microsoft Content Management Server 2002. Since this product is no longer supported by Microsoft and its functionality and performance are no longer meeting the requirements of UNAIDS, a decision has been taken to replace this software.

A parallel project has therefore started that will select and implement a CMS application that meets the business requirements for the maintenance of the UNAIDS web site, with the possibility of extending it for use with regional, country and other satellite web sites. The new CMS may become operational by the middle of 2010; however, the exact operation date will depend on many factors.

1.3.1 Web site editors

1.3.1.1 CMS core users

The Web Content team is responsible for developing and approving all content for the web site. Web content officers write the articles that are published on the web site, find suitable photos or images for the article, identify related links and determine where the article should be located on the site. The Web Content team has editorial control over what is published and when it is published.

The Web Platform team is responsible for publishing the content on the web site. Using the CMS, web platform officers create pages according to the specifications of the Web Content team, format the text and links according to the style guidelines, insert the necessary photos and links, enter the appropriate keywords, and publish the page after a quality check.

1.3.1.2 Occasional users

The PCB editor is responsible for profiling PCB documents on the site and creating links to them in the CMS. The Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) is the governing body of UNAIDS and is convened twice a year. For each meeting, the PCB editor uploads all related documents, such as agenda, reports, and proposals, to the web document repository through the profiling system. A blank page is created by the Web Content team in the appropriate location and the PCB editor updates the page with links to the documents.

The country profiles editor is responsible for the content of the country pages. The country profiles editor maintains country-specific data in XML, from which most of the content of the country pages is derived. He or she also generates the graphs and maps for each country. The country profiles editor's only interaction with CMS is to insert additional links that are not included in the XML.

1.4 IT infrastructure at UNAIDS HQ

1.4.1 Network

The Internet access for headquarters consists of redundant 100 mbps links to two separate internet service providers (ISPs); the links are shared between WHO and UNAIDS. The actual management and support of the Internet links is provided by the WHO Information Technology and Telecommunications (ITT) department.

The majority of the applications are hosted on a virtual infrastructure, based on VMware Virtual Infrastructure (VI), using the operating system VMWare ESX v3.5 update 2. At present, there are 38 virtual machines (VMs) and 42 physical servers.

The primary operating system platform used at UNAIDS is Microsoft Windows 2003. All in-house hosted databases are based on Microsoft SQL Server. The web site is in an IIS environment.

2. ASSUMPTIONS

The consultant(s) will be available for consultations, interviews and meetings with all stake holders at UNAIDS offices throughout the consultancy as needed, will use their own personal computers and laptops and may require to sign non-disclosure agreement.

3. CONSTRAINTS

Inevitably there will be costs and benefits that are difficult to quantify. Costs such as salaries and benefits and return on investment are quantifiable and thus appear to be objective. However, some qualitative factors may inevitably enter into the decision-making process. These include: (1) the effect on staff morale; (2) the need to keep to the web posting schedules; and (3) relationships with partners such as the Cosponsor UN agencies that use the UNAIDS web site for their AIDS-related programme activities. These factors are difficult to measure in monetary terms. In some situations, qualitative aspects may be more important than the immediate financial benefit of an outsourcing option. In addition, cost–benefit analyses in most situations involve difficulties in measuring certain objectives.

This study is expected to be carried out under these constraints. Each cost and benefit must be addressed carefully and spelled out clearly in the final recommendations.

4. DELIVERABLES

The consultant is required to produce a detailed report (total with annexes approximately 25–30 pages) detailing all alternatives that are judged to be feasible for UNAIDS to meet its daily web publishing staffing needs. The report will present at least, but will not be limited to, the following:

1. Costs of the existing web publishing team;
2. Alternative web publishing solutions;
3. Comparison between all solutions;
4. Quantifiable costs and benefits (quantitative analysis);
5. Non-quantifiable costs and benefits (qualitative analysis).

5. SUGGESTED TIMETABLE

ACTIVITY	Timeline (tentative dates)
Contract signing	Week 1
Initial consultation: Agree on deliverables (create a list of all of the relevant benefits and costs), Final report format, progress reporting mechanism, establish working relationships between UNAIDS and Consultants, appoint project managers	Week 2
Desk review, interviews, consultations and report writing	Week 3, 4, 5, 6
Draft report submitted to UNAIDS Administrative Services Team	Week 7
Comments provided on the draft report by UNAIDS, finalize report	Week 8, 9, 10
Final report submitted to UNAIDS	Week 11, 12

PUBLISHING WORKFLOW FOR UNAIDS WEB SITES

