



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Industry Day Conference in Kabul

October 17-18, 2012

Marcus Johnson started the conference right at 09:00am on the first day and at 09:15am on the second day, welcoming the participants he explained why we gathered and what we do on this industry day conference.

On the first day - we are looking for your input and there will be three sessions for explaining the following three upcoming programs for the interested bidders to bid on:

- USACE Upcoming Projects;
- Salang Corridor Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Program; and
- Gardez to Khost Road;

The first and second session will take place today in the morning and afternoon and the third session will be conducted tomorrow which will be a collective of both the first and second sessions. The presentations will be the same and participants will not miss any part of it. At the end of each presentation there will be a question and answer (Q&A) session.

USACE Upcoming Projects - John Drake USACE

USACE mission is to do quality and timely constructions/operations in Afghanistan in support of USFOR-A Mission the Afghan National Security and Coalition Forces.

We have 103-106 upcoming construction projects which most of them are vertical constructions. USACE executes infrastructure projects in Afghanistan which include Roads, Water and Power sections through Commander Emergency Response Program (CERP) and Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund (AIF) there would be Operation and Maintenance (O&M) opportunities available as well.

USACE has the following three districts:

- Kabul;
- Kandahar; and
- Winchester, Virginia

We encourage you to read each solicitation, read the criteria carefully. Some of the projects are set-aside for Afghan firms and some are for women. Also, think of your joint venturing and subcontracting in order to meet the solicitation criteria; and especially with firms who have past experience in what we do, provide bonding if required.

For more information about our procurements, visit the websites provided in the handouts which will be distributed at the end of the session.

Salang Corridor Operation and Maintenance Program and Construction of the Remaining 25 kms of the Gardez to Khost Road

We are at the pre-qualifications stage of contracts for Salang Corridor O&M and Construction of GK Road. We posted the pre-qualifications documents of Salang Corridor O&M in FBO and USAID/Afghanistan websites on October 8, 2012, the deadline is October 24, 2012. Also, we posted the pre-qualifications documents of Construction of the Gardez to Khost Road at the aforementioned websites on September 27, 2012 and the deadline is October 22, 2012. In addition we published the pre-qualification documents for both of these contracts in the local newspapers (Afghanistan Times and Afghanistan Outlook). Once USAID pre-qualifies the offerors then will issue the Request for Proposals only to the pre-qualified offerors.

The pre-qualification criteria for both of these projects are as follow:

1. Qualification and experience of key personnel

- A. We will need the organizational chart of the company.
- B. We need to know about at least five key personnel of the company, you can include their CVs bio-data sheets etc.

2. Experience in construction of similar projects/roads

- A. Proof that the company has done similar job, projects that you have completed with certificates/references etc. or projects that best reflect the relevant experience of the company.
- B. Copies of Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) registration of the company per year so that we know that for how long your company has been a registered company.

3. Equipment and plant of the company

We need information on all self-owned equipment or proof so that we make sure that your company owes them or rented them or they are from your subcontractors.

4. Quality assurance/management

We need to see formally documented quality control system so that we make sure that your company has a quality control system in place. USAID reserves the right to make reference checks on what you provide at any stage.

5. Financial status

- A. Annual bank account statement to show how much income your company generated annually, or audited bank account statement.
- B. We will need a letter of intent from the bank to provide Performance Bond or Guarantee. The bonding requirement amount for Salang Corridor project is \$1,000,000 and for Construction of Gardez to Khost Road is \$10,000,000.

After your submission USAID will evaluate the information you submitted and determine whether your firm is qualified and has provided all of the information we need to make a determination.

Finally, the pre-qualified offerors will receive the request for proposal (RFP) and USAID will award a Fixed Unit Price Construction Contract for the remaining 25 Km of Gardez to Khost Road and a Fixed Price Contract for Salang Corridor O&M.

Please note that these projects are set-aside only to afghan firms.

Salang Corridor Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Program

We need operation and maintenance of roads surrounding the Salang Corridor. This requirement consists of two components:

1. Emergency Response; and
2. Routine Maintenance

The duration of this contract would be 18 months and the winner will be responsible for O&M of the existing conditions of Salang Corridor road and snow galleries. The project will is estimated to begin in December 2012. Snow removal required to keep the roads clear and operational will be required under this contract. No other snow removal will be required under the resultant contract. Roads are to be in trafficable condition at all times.

Ministry of Public Works (MoPW) will have the main responsibility for snow removal.

Questions and responses:

Question 1: Is there historical data available for this project?

Response: Yes, there are some data available for the project.

Question 2: Will we get copies of this presentation?

Response: Yes, this presentation will be posted in USAID and FBO.gov website.

http://afghanistan.usaid.gov/en/opportunities/procurement_opportunities

Question 3: For Emergency response contract, how would you measure the activities of contractor?

Response: We would do continued survey each month to measure the activities of contractor and it is on call basis.

Question 4: What do we need to keep in mind for the primary survey?

Response: The initial survey will be done by USAID and based on the results we will know what to do and when and set a baseline for it.

Question 5: Are we going to do the repairs inside the tunnel?

Response: No, you are only going to do operations and maintenance outside the tunnel.

Question 6: Do we need to go and do site survey?

Response: Yes, you will do the site survey with USAID and will establish baselines based on the results of the initial survey.

Question 7: What is \$1,000,000 [bond] and what is the minimum guarantee for Salang project?

Response: The amount of \$1,000,000 is for performance bond, but at this stage we need the firms to provide us only a Letter of Intent from a bank in Afghanistan.

Question 8: Can we use the road construction projects experience for Salang project?

Response: Yes, you can because they are similar activities.

Construction of the Remaining 25 kms of the Gardez to Khost Road

Gardez to Khost (GK) Road is one of the most important highways in Afghanistan connecting the two provinces of Afghanistan (Paktya and Khost) and through which connects Afghanistan to Pakistan. This is an important transit way which is usually with heavy traffic.

Since 2007, 63 kms of this road have been completed in two sections (section 1 and section 3) from Km 0-27 and Km 65-101, section 2 from km 27 to km 65 (38km) was the remained part of the GK Road. Construction of 13 km (from km 30 to km 36 & from km 50 to km 57) of the remaining 38 km is under construction through separate contract.

The remaining 25 Km of section 2 (from km 27 to km 30, km 36 to km 50 & from km 57 to km65) is now under procurement.

We need to put the road at a trafficable condition at all times and the contractor will be responsible for snow removal and winter maintenance of the road under this contract.

Question 1: What happens to those firms who don't have experience in this field?

Response: They will be pre-qualified and if don't meet the pre-qualification criteria, won't receive the RFP.

Question 2: Is the GK road contract a unit price contract?

Response: Yes, this would be a unit price contract.

Question 3: What type of contract be awarded for the GK Road? Is this Fixed Price contract?

Response: Yes, it will be a fixed unit price contract.

Question 4: We are a women-owned organization, and have just been established. We do not have enough experience on road projects can we submit a prequalification package?

Response: Yes, you may submit a prequalification package. If you will not meet the years of experience, your firm will be evaluated on other criteria. You need to meet the minimum points required as stated in the notice.

Question 5: Why didn't the Indian company finish the road project?

Response: It was different implementing mechanism. The Contract for the road ended before the road project was completed.

Question 6: Can two (2) Afghan firms form a joint venture and prequalify? What do we need to submit?

Response: Yes, two Afghan firms can submit as a joint venture. If it is a joint venture, the firm needs to submit an AISA registration under the Joint Venture name. However, if one will be a subcontractor only, then you need to submit AISA registrations for the two firms.

Question 7: Can you reveal the amount of budget for this project?

Response: No, we can't reveal the budget for the GK Road project.

Question 8: We find that the \$10M Performance Bond too high? Why is it \$10M?

Response: If the project is \$100M, normally, you would require a 100% performance bond. However, USAID is only requiring 15% performance bond for this project. Therefore, we find the \$10M performance bond for the project sufficient.

NOTE: USAID has decided to adjust downward the requirement to US\$5 million.

Question 9: Can International firms submit a pre-qualification package?

Response: No, this is set-aside only for Afghan firms.

Question 10: Can international firms partner with Afghan firms.

Response: Yes, however, since this is a set-aside for Afghan firms, you need to meet the definition of Afghan firms. To be considered an Afghan firm, the Afghan firm(s) has to own 50% of the firm and have (at least) 50% controlling interest.

Question 11: Who will provide security for the project?

Response: The firm will have to provide their own security, however, you need to follow the government requirement to use APPF. If the firm chooses to use Risk Management Contractors (RMCs), it is up to the firm to do so.

Question 12: If we have \$10,000,000 for the performance bond, why we get this project?

Response: If a firm bids on a \$100,000,000 project, must provide a \$10,000,000 Performance Bond. Again I say that we don't need the performance bond at this stage, we need it at the award stage and amount of \$10,000,000 is not an exact amount, it may change based on the bid price. The exact amount would be 15% of the total cost of the contract.

NOTE: USAID has decided to adjust downward the requirement to US\$5 million.

Question 13: What is the reason for not completing the GK Road? Security?

Response: Well, not just security, there were other reasons as well. Security was not the only concern, topography, engineering design were also somehow problematic. Now we got good supports from both the community and MoPW as it is taking the lead and the people say that they need the road.

Question 14: Why the Indian company could not complete this section of the road?

Response: There is no clear reason for this, however, we have good experience with local firms working on these projects.

Question 15: Will USAID provide the design for the contractor?

Response: Yes, survey and design is available for the whole road.

Thanks for participation and showing interest in our actions.

For more information, please visit www.fbo.gov and for inquiries contact us via kabulaidoamailbox@usaid.gov .

Women in Transition (WIT)

Question 1: Is there a cap on the IQC?

Response: The total value is approximately \$300 million. There is no cap on Firms A and B; the U.S. women's set aside (Firm C) has a cap of up to \$50 million per task order; the Afghan (Firm D) of up to \$5 million per task order. The exact amount up to the limit will be specified in each task order.

Question 2: When will the RFP be posted?

Response: It is anticipated the RFP will be posted mid-November 2012 and out until mid-January 2013.

Question 3: Is special approval required from Washington?

Response: No

Question 4: Where should questions be sent?

Response: OAA will respond to questions prior to the mid-January closing date and will be posted on the US website www.FBO.gov as an amendment to the relevant solicitation, where appropriate.

Question 5: Will there be any restrictions applying to any of the Task Orders?

Response: For the two unrestricted awards, it is expected that the implementer will be able to deliver on all four components at any dollar level. The technical requirements will be written into each task order.

Question 6: Who can apply under Firm D?

Response: Only male and female Afghan owned firms may apply. For other opportunities, it is anticipated U.S. and Afghan firms.

Question 7: What is USAID's thought on exclusive arrangements?

Response: If the sub-contractor signs an exclusivity agreement to one firm, it is expected the sub-contractor will be not named on any other proposal. Should a firm be a proposed on more than one proposals, then the firm should not sign an exclusivity agreement.

Question 8: The Concept Paper referred to WIT as being a 10 year program?

Response: The WIT program has a 10 year vision but no thought yet been given to a follow on to this IQC requirement.

Question 9: How many task orders will be given?

Response: It is anticipated a number of task orders will be awarded. There is no set limit.

Question 10: Is the geographic coverage the same as identified in the Concept Paper?

Response: Although WIT is nationwide however some components will be implemented based on the Mission's regional economic zones.

Question 11: What if a firm has no implementation history?

Response: Then it is rated neutral in past performance. USAID may consider the work history of the key officers and owners of a firm too.

Question 12: How many awards will be given?

Response: There will be a single Request for Proposal (RFP) that will result in four IQC holders. All four IQC holders will be able to perform any one of the four components.

Question 13: Afghan firms have managed awards higher than \$5 million. Why is there a \$5 million cap?

Response: It is USAID's assessment that Afghan firms have the capacity to manage up to the \$5 million value on individual task orders. It is important to keep in mind that the task order holder can manage simultaneous several awards each up to the task order cap.

Question 14: The WIT is a large amount and will likely be subject to corruption?

Response: Given the complexity and scope of WIT and to respond to the fluid environment, task orders will enable the Mission to modulate award amounts of limited duration. More partners and the assignment of technical offices to oversee the components will provide better on-the-ground monitoring. Moreover, the IQC allows for the placement of orders over a 5-year period but performance can continue through year 6, if appropriate.

Question 15: Why doesn't Firm A and Firm B have an award cap?

Response: It is expected that [and USAID wants] these firms to have the capacity to meet deliverables in all components at any dollar amount.

Question 16: Will applicants be able to submit project proposal based on an idea related to WIT?

Response: Proposals will be submitted based on what USAID has designed. USAID already knows what is to be done under WIT.

Question 17: What guidance is available to Afghan firms in preparing the proposal?

Response: USAID will provide assistance applicants to those needing support on meeting requirements, not technical assistance.

Question 18: Are there any size restrictions for U.S. women owned firms.

Response: No. U.S. women owned firms may be any size.

Question 19: What is the amount of the grants to be funded?

Response: The amount of grant is still in discussion, and will also be dependent upon synergies with other components and other USAID projects.

Question 20: Are we able to propose any suggestions not included in the Concept Paper?

Response: Yes, suggestions may be sent to the email address in the pre-solicitation, and USAID will consider your suggestions but will not necessarily be all included in a revised Concept Paper.

Question 21: Would you provide an update on the Reform and Capacity Development to MOWA (MORE) and Providing Opportunities for Women through Enabling Resources (POWER) projects?

Response: It is anticipated MORE will be awarded late January 2013; POWER is in design and is anticipated the project will be award in early Fall 2013.

Question 22: When will the first Task Order be awarded?

Response: The first Task Order will be posted at the same time as the RFP. Proposals will be asked to respond to a Task Order in the IQC RFP.

Question 23: Comments from an Afghan woman who said she represents a Afghan Women's Engineering Society. Question- is there a set aside for an Afghan Women Owned Business?

Response: No, the set aside if for an Afghan owned business.

Question 24: When will the RFP be released?

Response: We hope to publish it on/around 15 November, 2012.

Question 25: Re. the 27 August, 2012 pre-solicitation conference in Washington, DC. Are the notes published/ available?

Response: No, but the findings have been incorporated into the procurements.

Question 26: What kind of work is covered in this project? Is it construction?

Response: No, technical assistance.

Question 27: Are joint ventures acceptable?

Response: Yes.

Question 28: Are there going to be grants? How much?

Response: Yes, we anticipate using a grants mechanism, and the amount will be incorporated into the RFP.

Question 29: Comments from an Afghan woman who later identified her organization as DHSA. The dollar limits on the firms are unfair, and the Afghan president doesn't believe in them anyway.

Response: Thank you for your comments.

Question 30: CENTCOM has cancelled its Afghan First policy. What about USAID?

Response: USAID has not cancelled the Afghan First Policy; also the set-aside for an Afghan owned firm in this procurement indicates our commitment to Afghan First.

Question 31: Is there a mandatory requirement for 5 years of Afghan experience?

Response: 3-5 years is normal. Firms without past performance are rated as neutral, and then evaluation shifts to key officer and owners of the firm.

Question 32: What about exclusivity?

Response: If you are going to state you have an exclusive relationship, make sure it is solid. It reflects badly if a firm states they have an exclusive relationship and then the partner is listed with other firms.

Question 33: Are US firms required to have an Afghan license?

Response: It is incumbent upon all bidders to have the qualifications necessary to perform work in Afghanistan.

Question 34: Can you tell us what they key factors will be?

Response: Key factors will probably include technical approach, key personnel, past performance and cost. This will be reflected in the first task order, which we hope to release with the RFP.

Question 35: Will the project have a regional focus?

Response: No, this is a nationwide program.

Question 36: What is the main focus of the project?

Response: Please read the concept paper included with your registration materials.

Question 37: Are online solutions acceptable?

Response: We are open to any innovative approaches.

Question 38: Isn't this job too big for one firm?

Response: Possible solutions could include joint ventures between 2 firms or a consortium of more than 2 firms. The goal is for it [JV or consortium] to be a group that can "stick together" for the life of the project.

Question 39: Do you have a list of interested members? Can you post it?

Response: We will check on that.

Question 40: Is Women in Transition (WIT) affected by TFBSO?

Response: Although some of the organizations may overlap, WIT is a stand-alone women's program, and does not depend on any other programs for operation.

Question 41: Are IQC awards published?

Response: Yes, upon award, USAID will publish the name, address of the organization and amount of award.

Question 42: Is a prime contractor locked into a relationship with their subs?

Response: No.

Question 43: How many provinces will be covered in this project?

Response: All

Question 44: Will there be a program management task order?

Response: The IQC manager will most likely be identified as key personnel. Marcus's shared his preference for an IQC manager to be located in Kabul, Afghanistan. No final decision has been made however.

Question 45: Is there a specific license requirement?

Response: All firms need to have the capability of performing work in Afghanistan. Another audience member answered that normally a "general services license" suffices for the provision of professional services.

Question 46: Is there an M&E plan?

Response: It is still in development because of planning for anticipated changes post December, 2014.

Question 47: What is the length of time for performance?

Response: It will depend on the specifics of each individual task order.

Question 48: USAID should have a set-aside for an Afghan Woman owned firm for this project.

Response: Thank you for your comments. We are evaluating all of them.

RADP-South RFP and RADP-North (draft) RFP

- 1) Will the deadline for submission of proposals be changed depending on the postponement now in place?

RESPONSE: Yes, we will probably adjust the deadline.

- 2) Is the proposal for addition of Urozgan in RADP-South a separate option from the main proposal?

RESPONSE: Yes, the proposal for Urozgan 3 is a separate contract line item.

- 3) Will the delay on the RADP-South release affect RADP-North, West, and Central?

RESPONSE: No they are staggered and will not be delayed due to RADP-South.

- 4) Could you please describe RADP-Central in more detail?

RESPONSE: RADP-Central will not have any field activities in central provinces. RADP-Central will focus on coordinating the activities of regional RADPs with MAIL and USAID, ensure each is adhering to data collection, monitoring and evaluation, and work with MAIL on policy and planning. Regional RADPs will report to a USAID COR and will have regular reporting requirements as are listed in the RFP, but the programs will have some data and reporting requirements that will be coordinated by the central RADP designed to keep MAIL informed as a program stakeholder.

- 5) Is there access to agriculture literature referenced in the RADP RFPs?

RESPONSE: Yes, literature references can be found at the weblink listed in the RFP.

- 6) Has USAID factored differences in cultural environments between RADP-North and South in relation to gender programming?

RESPONSE: Yes, USAID is aware that regional differences exist in a number of areas, not only gender. USAID does not feel that these differences serve as reasons to reduce the incorporation of gender in proposals. USAID has set levels of participation to encourage candidates to address gender seriously and creatively.

- 7) Is horticulture covered under “high value crops”?

RESPONSE: Yes any crops that hold a relative economic advantage over other crops are considered ‘high value’. In this respect no crops are excluded.

- 8) An earlier version of the RFP (the pre-award notice) indicated percentages of level of effort for each CLIN. However, when the RFP was published these LOE percentages

were removed. Thus it is unclear how each CLIN will be weighted? How does USAID expect proposals to weight each CLIN?

RESPONSE: Should they all be equal or should some designate more efforts than others?

- 9) Given USAID's call for closer cooperation with MAIL, will MAIL be involved in the evaluation of proposals?

RESPONSE: Yes, MAIL will be given the opportunity to sit on the Technical Evaluation Committees reviewing the RADP proposals as observers.

- 10) Could you please update us on the on-budget process for MAIL?

RESPONSE: For what will on-budget funding be used? USAID is currently working with MAIL to propose acceptable on-budget uses.

- 11) The RADP RFPs refer to coordination with USAID representatives in the field. With USAID closing its office at various levels, how will this change?

RESPONSE: USAID will still have a presence in the regions in which the RADPs (are not shown to be working in the Power Point presentation and) at various levels. We have written the RFP to cover all situations as they evolve in the field.

- 12) Does winning one RADP contract preclude an organization from winning the contract for another or from serving as a subcontractor?

RESPONSE: No, winning does not preclude an organization from winning another or serving as a subcontractor. There are no pluses or minuses associated with winning.

Thanks for participation and showing interest in our actions.

For more information, please visit www.fbo.gov and for inquiries contact us via kabulaidoamailbox@usaid.gov.