



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

DATE: 17/04/2024

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: No. RFP/2024/007

**FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF SERVICE CONTRACT(S) FOR THE PROVISION OF**

**INTERNET, INTER-BRANCHING AND MOBILE CONNECTIVITY SERVICES
TO SEVERAL UNITED NATIONS OFFICES IN LEBANON**

CLOSING DATE AND TIME: 17/05/2024 – 23:59 HRS LEBANON LOCAL TIME

INTRODUCTION TO UNHCR

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on 14 December 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

In more than six decades, the agency has helped tens of millions of people restart their lives. Today, a staff of some 20,739 people in more than 135 countries continues to help about 108.4 million persons. To help and protect some of the world's most vulnerable people in so many places and types of environments, UNHCR must purchase goods and services worldwide. For further information on UNHCR, its mandate and operations, please see <http://www.unhcr.org>.

1. REQUIREMENTS

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on behalf of the Participating United Nations Agencies in Lebanon is issuing this tender document for the purpose of concluding Service Contract(s) for internet, inter-branching and mobile connectivity services.

Specifically, through this RFP several United Nations agencies aims to establish Contract(s) with (i) a primary internet link symmetric provider, a contract with (ii) a secondary symmetric xDSL internet link provider, a contract for (iii) Inter-branching symmetric point-to-point link, and a contract for (iv) Mobile connectivity services.

IMPORTANT:

Terms of Reference (ToR) are detailed in **Annex A** of this document.

United Nations may award Contract(s) with initial duration of two (2) years, potentially extendable for two (2) periods of one (1) year each. If parties agree to extend the Contract(s), the contractor is expected to review its rates against the major competitors on the local market and should amend the rate downwards if the contract rate is higher than the average market rate. The successful bidders will be requested to maintain their quoted price model for the duration of the Contracts(s).

IMPORTANT:

When a Contract is awarded, either party can terminate the agreement only upon 90 days (3 months) notice, in writing to the other party.

The initiation of conciliation or arbitral proceedings in accordance with **article 18** “settlement of disputes” of the UNHCR General Conditions of Contracts for provision of Services shall not be deemed to be a “cause” for or otherwise to be in itself a termination clause.

It is strongly recommended that this RFP and its annexes be read thoroughly. Failure to observe the procedures laid out therein may result in disqualification from the evaluation process.

Sub-Contracting: Please take careful note of article 5 of the attached UNHCR General Conditions of Contract for the Provision of Services, July 2018 version (**Annex E**).

Note: this document is not construed in any way as an offer to contract with your firm.

2. BIDDING INFORMATION:**2.1. RFP DOCUMENTS**

The following annexes form integral part of this RFP:

Annex A:	Terms of Reference (ToR)
Annex B:	Service Level Agreement (SLA)
Annex C:	Financial Offer Form
Annex D:	Vendor Registration Form
Annex E:	UNHCR General Conditions of Contracts for the Provision of Services – <i>July 2018</i>
Annex F:	UN Supplier code of conduct
Annex G:	Confirmation on Vendor Non-sanction lists
Annex H:	UNHCR Special Conditions for Cloud Computing Revision November 2023

2.2 ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would appreciate you informing us of the receipt of this RFP by return e-mail to eljebbaw@unhcr.org with cc to elahmady@unhcr.org as to:

- Your confirmation of receipt of this RFP
- Whether or not you will be submitting a proposal

IMPORTANT:

Failure to send the above requested information may result in disqualification of your offer from further evaluation.

2.3 REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Bidders are required to submit any request for clarification or any question in respect of this RFP by e-mail to Ahmad El Jebbawy, Assistant Supply Officer at eljebbaw@unhcr.org with cc to elahmady@unhcr.org. **The deadline for receipt of questions is at 23:59 hrs Lebanon local time on 13/05/2024.** Bidders are requested to keep all questions concise.

IMPORTANT:

Please note that Bid Submissions are **not** to be sent to the e-mail addresses above.

UNHCR will compile the questions received. UNHCR may, at its discretion, copy any reply to a particular question to all other invited bidders at once.

2.4 SUPPLIER PRE-BIDDING CONFERENCE

All suppliers that express interest to submit a proposal may be invited to participate on a supplier pre-bidding conference in case needed.

Advance notification of attendance including the names and contact details of firms' representative is required in order to enter the site/premises. Notification should be addressed in writing to atat@unhcr.org with cc to najjars@unhcr.org .

2.5 YOUR OFFER

Your offer shall be prepared in English.

Please submit your offer using the Annexes provided. Offers not conforming to the requested formats may be not taken into consideration.

IMPORTANT:

Inclusion of copies of your offer with any correspondence sent directly to the attention of the responsible buyer or any other UNHCR staff other than eTenderBox platform will result in disqualification of the offer. Please submit your offer as described in the "Submission of Bid" section 2.7 of this RFP.

Your offer shall comprise the following two sets of documents:

- Technical offer
- Financial offer

2.5.1 Content of the TECHNICAL OFFER

IMPORTANT:

No pricing information should be included in the technical offer. Failure to comply may risk disqualification. The technical offer should contain all information required.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the services requested by UNHCR can be found in **Annex A**.

It should be noted that for the purpose of analyzing your proposal we will require detailed information on four (4) main services deliverable types describing your proposal according to the capacity of:

- I) Providing continuous access to Internet resources through a **primary link** (Microwave, Fiber or EFM)
- II) Providing continuous access to Internet resources through a **secondary link** (xDSL)
- III) Providing **Inter-branching** guaranteed symmetric connection/point-to-point link between United Nations offices. [t]he UNHCR offices should use the inter-branching for connectivity only, and any data should be transmitted by a VPN managed by UNHCR.
- IV) Providing reliable **Mobile Connectivity Services** as per the requirements stipulated in **Annex A**

Awarded bidders shall be either awarded a Contract for types I and III or II and III in addition to type IV.

There are Eight (8) pre-conditions that must be met by a bidder to qualify for further consideration. Pre-conditions are not ratable components of the technical proposal. The eight (8) pre-conditions are:

1. Company is registered and licensed by the Government of Lebanon (GoL) to provide such goods/services
2. Proof that company has been in relevant business for a minimum period of three (3) years prior to the closing date of this RFP
3. Registration certificate with VAT, if applicable
4. The company must be authorized by Lebanese telecommunication regulatory authority (TRA) to provide such services
5. The technical proposal should include a diagram showing the whole path between the two sites
6. An industry standard Service Level Agreement (SLA) is offered detailing the MIR/CIR parameters, including the elements shown in table in section IV (Annex A), point 1 of the ToR (Annex A) and include Performance Credit or rebate in favor of UNHCR Lebanon as per ToR (Annex A) section 6
7. The bidder must provide software to allow monitoring of the SLA
8. Written confirmation of the acceptance of the Annex B (SLA) document

It is to be noted that the SLA will be an integral part of the Contract(s) to be signed with the selected vendors.

Missing documents, if any, will be requested from the vendors. Vendors refusing to provide missing document, when requested, will not be included for further evaluation.

Your technical offer should be concisely presented and structured in the following order to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

A) Company's General Profile

A description of your company with the following documents:

- Registration certificate and last audit reports
- Year founded
- If multi location company, specify headquarters location
- Total number of clients including references and services provided
- Copy of any quality certificates of ISO or other relevant standards
- UNHCR Vendor Registration Form: Please complete, sign and submit with your technical proposal the UNHCR Vendor Registration Form (**Annex D**)

Any information that will facilitate our evaluation of your company's substantive reliability, financial and managerial capacity to provide the services.

B) General Organization Capability

- Please describe you firm's capability for managing the services requested, including a clear description of how your firm can provide guaranteed 24/7 uninterrupted internet and inter-branching services and a description of technical resources and capacity to manage the services as described in the Terms of Reference (**Annex A**).
- Supporting documents should describe the companies' structure, capacity and qualifications to provide the connectivity services in Lebanon.

C) Relevance of Specialized Knowledge and Experience in similar connectivity Contracts

- Please list current and ongoing contracts that have direct relevance to this requirement.

- Please describe recent experience of connectivity services of a similar nature including but not limited to the experience with other United Nations agencies, with other Humanitarian organizations and with the private sector. Please demonstrate in detail the size of each project/service with and the number of years' experience with each.
- Provide evidence of successful completion similar contracts within the last five years. For each completed contract, please include value of each completed contract and contact information for the primary client contact.

D) Quality Management System, Risk and Mitigation Measures

- Outline the quality assurance mechanism in place to ensure that connectivity provision is reliable and consistent with the detailed Terms of Reference (**Annex A**). The mechanism should include supervision, execution and reporting, customer support service, ability to leverage technical resources and a Service Level Agreement including at least the required elements as outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Annex A**).
- Provide description of the software to be provided to monitor, in real time, the usage of the bandwidth, the quality of the service and state of all internet and inter-branching links.
- Describe your firm's risk management approach as they related to the services required.
- Describe your firm's incident management approach as they related to the services required.

E) Approach and Methodology

- Explain your firm's understanding of United Nations Lebanon's internet, inter-branching and mobile connectivity needs.
- Provide a description of your firm's approach, methodology and timeline of how your firm would roll-out and implement the requested services outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Annex A**).
- Identify any gaps in the information provided in this RFP.

F) Management structure and key staff

- Project organigram. Provide the organizational chart that will be put in place to deliver the services required together with a description of the management and key personnel structure.
- Describe how many NOC engineers and Service Desk workforce are currently employed by your firm and how many would be assigned to the United Nations account.

G) UNHCR General Conditions for the Provision of Services

- Your technical proposal should contain your acknowledgement of the UNHCR General Conditions for the Provision of Services by signing each page of **Annex E**.

2.5.2 Content of the FINANCIAL OFFER

Your separate **Financial Offer** must contain an overall offer in a single currency, preferable in US Dollars.

The financial offer must cover all the services to be provided (price "all inclusive"). The quoted fees shall comprise all cost, including travel within Lebanon, any required accommodation and meals, communication (facsimile, telephone, etc.), reporting time, communications.

The Financial Offer is to be submitted as per the Financial Offer Form (**Annex C**). Bids that have a different price structure may not be accepted.

United Nations is exempt from all direct taxes and customs duties. With this regard, price has to be given without VAT. VAT, if applicable, will be paid to the company by the United Nations which it claims for refund with the Government later.

You are requested to hold your offer valid for 120 days from the deadline for submission. UNHCR will make its best effort to select a company within this period. UNHCR's standard payment terms are within 30 days after satisfactory implementation and receipt of documents in good order.

The cost of preparing a bid and of negotiating a Contract, including any related travel, is not reimbursable nor can it be included as a direct cost of the assignment.

2.6 BID EVALUATION:

2.6.1 Supplier Registration:

The qualified supplier(s) will be added to the Vendor Database after investigation of suitability based on the submitted Vendor Registration Form and supporting documents. The investigation involves consideration of several factors such as:

- Financial standing;
- Core business;
- Track record;
- Contract capacity.

2.6.2 Technical and Financial evaluation:

For the award of this project, UNHCR has established evaluation criteria which govern the selection of offers received. Evaluation is made on a technical and financial basis. The percentage assigned to each component is determined in advance as follows:

If the technical proposal passed the pre-conditions listed under point no. 2.5.1 of this document, the **Technical offer** will be evaluated using inter alia the following criteria which cover **60%** from the total score.

	Points obtainable
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Expertise and capability of the bidder</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General organizational capability. - Relevance of experience on similar projects. - References. 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Proposed workplan and approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of UN work environment and needs (scope of work). - Firm's approach and methodology to achieve the ToR. - Project Management Services. - Quality management system risk and mitigation measures. - Incident management approach. 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Management structure and key staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Management structure. - No. of key NOC engineers proposed. - No. Service desk workforce proposed. 	
Total:	60*

*The cut-off point for the technical offers to be considered technically compliant is 36 points.

Remark: The Technical offer score will be calculated according to the percentage distribution for the technical and financial offers.

The **Financial offer** will use the following percentage distribution: **40%** from the total score.

The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price offer that is opened and compared among those invited firms. All other price offers will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price; e.g., [100 points] x [USD lowest] \ [USD other] = points for other supplier's Price Component.

For evaluation purposes only, the offers submitted in currency other than US Dollars will be converted into US Dollars using the United Nations rate of exchange in effect on the date the submissions are due.

2.7 SUBMISSION OF BID:

The offers must bear your official letter head, clearly identifying your company.

Bids should be submitted by file upload to eTenderBox, the online bid registration tool of UNHCR.

The eTenderBox can be accessed via the following URL: <http://etenderbox.unhcr.org>

In order to use the eTenderBox, registration on the website is required. This registration is exclusively for eTenderBox and does not replace any other registrations for UNHCR applications. One Supplier should have only one registered email account in the system. Therefore, the Supplier must use only one eTenderBox account for managing its offers to UNHCR. In case the password is forgotten, that account cannot be used anymore and new registration is required. Registration Guide and User Manual of eTenderBox are available at the above URL.

IMPORTANT:

The technical offer and financial offer shall be clearly separated by uploading them to the appropriate category in the system. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

Allowed extensions for files to upload are .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .rtf, .png, .jpg, .jpeg, .pdf, .txt, .zip, .ppt, .pptx, .bmp, .rar, .gif, .tif and .tiff. Executable files (.exe, .bat, .cmd, etc.) should not be uploaded. The maximum size limit per file is **10MB**.

Uploaded files can be amended by the Supplier while the tender is open. The selected files for upload are submitted when the 'Save & Submit' button is clicked on. Therefore, this button has to be clicked before the deadline expires. If done so, the selected files will be submitted and uploaded successfully even if the deadline expires during the file upload. It is the Supplier's responsibility to ensure that all files of the final offer are submitted by the tender expiration deadline.

Once the deadline for submission is expired, the bid will be automatically closed after which the uploaded files can be reviewed but options for additional upload and deletion of previously uploaded files are not available anymore. In order to ensure the safe submission of the full and final offer, it is recommended to have all files uploaded well before the tender deadline.

DEADLINE: 17/05/2024, 23:59 HRS LEBANON LOCAL TIME.

IMPORTANT:

The tender deadline displayed on eTenderBox is always in the user's local time zone. Therefore, no further time difference calculation is needed in order to define the deadline of the tender. Please always consider

the above before submitting your offer and make sure that all documents are uploaded and submitted to eTenderBox well before the tender deadline.

IMPORTANT:

Any bid received after this date or sent to another UNHCR address may be rejected. UNHCR may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of bids, by notifying all prospective bidders simultaneously.

IMPORTANT:

Any bid submission via email or hard copy may result in disqualification of your offer unless instructed in writing by UNHCR. Please note that external links for file transfer will not be accepted.

UNHCR will not be responsible for locating or securing any information that is not identified in the bid. Accordingly, to ensure that sufficient information is available, the bidder shall furnish, as part of the bid, any descriptive material such as extracts, descriptions, and other necessary information it deems would enhance the comprehension of its offer.

IMPORTANT:

The Financial offer will only be opened for evaluation if the bidder's technical part of the offer has passed the evaluation and has been accepted by UNHCR as meeting the technical requirements.

2.8 BID ACCEPTANCE:

UNHCR reserves the right to cancel the RFP, accept the whole or part of your bid without having to assign any reason whatsoever and is not obliged to select the lowest offer.

UNHCR may at its discretion increase or decrease the proposed content when awarding the contract and would not expect a significant variation of the rate submitted. Any such increase or decrease in the contract duration would be negotiated with the successful bidder as part of the finalization of the Purchase Orders for Services.

UNHCR may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of bids, by notifying all prospective suppliers in writing. The extension of the deadline may accompany a modification of the solicitation documents prepared by UNHCR at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective supplier.

Please note that UNHCR is not bound to select any of the firms submitting bids and does not bind itself in any way to select the firm offering the lowest price. Furthermore, the Contract will be awarded to the bid considered most responsive to the needs, as well as conforming to UNHCR's general principles, including economy and efficiency and best value for money.

2.9 CURRENCY AND PAYMENT TERMS FOR PURCHASE ORDERS

Any Purchase Order (PO) issued as a result of this RFP will be made in US Dollars. Payment will be made in accordance to the General Conditions of contract for Services. Payments shall only be initiated after confirmation of successful completion by UNHCR business owner. UNHCR will not consider any advance payment.

2.10 UNHCR GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CONTRACTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES

Please note that the General Conditions of Contracts for Provision of Services (**Annex E**) will be strictly adhered to for the purpose of any future contract. The Bidder must confirm the acceptance of these terms and conditions in by attaching a signed and stamped copies of the attached conditions of services.

2.11 ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Please note that UNHCR strictly follows zero tolerance policy and as such advises its suppliers not to offer any gift, favor, hospitality, etc. to UNHCR staff.

2.12 THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT

The UN Global Compact is a call to companies to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals.

UNHCR encourages bidders to sign up to this initiative at: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

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UNHCR Office - Beirut, Lebanon