

1) How many awards does UNFPA intend to make for each Lot?

UNFPA intends to award multiple LTAs for each Lot.

2) Can UNFPA provide an indication for the number of tenders that may be expected to be released under each Lot over the course of the LTA?

Please refer to the Terms of Reference for each Lot. The number of evaluations under each Lot that are already planned is listed there. The need for other evaluations not already listed may arise over the course of the LTAs.

3) Should financial proposals be submitted in USD?

Please refer to Section 11 of the RFP document.

4) In terms of the financial proposals, should bidders provide illustrative rates for the various positions in order to provide UNFPA with a general idea of costs related to evaluations with those amounts of Level of Effort and team structure?

The rates provided in the financial proposals are expected to remain fixed for the duration of the LTAs. They must be the rates that will be charged in the event an LTA is signed.

5) Can UNFPA confirm that if bidders are submitting for more than one of the three Lots separate Technical Proposals and Financial Proposal need to be submitted for each Lot?

Yes. Separate technical and financial proposals need to be submitted for each Lot, because the evaluation process for each Lot is separate and independent of the one for the other Lots.

6) If bidders submit for more than one Lot, may bidders send technical proposals for the various Lots in one submission email and all financial proposals for the Lots in a separate submission email, or do there need to be separate submission emails for each Technical Proposal and also separate submission emails for each Financial Proposal (i.e. Email 1- Technical Proposal Lot 1, Email 2- Technical Proposal Lot 2, Email 3-Financial Proposal Lot 1, Email 4- Financial Proposal Lot 1).

Please refer to section 20 of the RFP document.

7) The RFP on page 30 mentions that there is an overall Technical Proposal with the required forms and corporate information, and then separate technical proposals for each Lot. Do bidders need to submit more than one overall Technical Proposal (with required forms etc.) if they are submitting for multiple Lots. Alternatively, will one overall Technical Proposal suffice?

One overall Technical Proposal with the required forms and corporate information will suffice.

- 8) Should rates included in the financial proposals for each Lot be specific to the individual proposed for that position in the technical proposal, or be illustrative rates that can be used for all tenders under that Lot?**

The rates in the Financial Proposal should be the rates specific to the proposed individual. Should an LTA be awarded, the rates in the Financial Proposal will become the contractually binding maximum rates. Rates may not be illustrative; the bidder has to be prepared to honor the provided rates should an LTA be awarded.

- 9) Are the roles proposed in the Financial Proposal for each Lot expected to be filled by an expert that is included in the Lot's Technical Proposal (i.e. are all positions required to be filled as listed in the Financial Proposal budgets for each Lot)?**

Yes. Rates in Financial Proposals must be for proposed experts under the Technical Proposal. UNFPA envisions that all requested roles will be needed during the validity of the LTA, albeit not all of them for each evaluation.

- 10) Can UNFPA confirm that at this stage bidders do not need to include costs related to travel, etc. other than those costs as listed in the Financial Proposal templates for each Lot?**

Bidders do not need to provide costs for travel in their Financial Proposals. Travel will be arranged and paid for as detailed in Section IV: UNFPA Special Conditions of Contract.

- 11) Since the TORs for each of the Lots do not include specific evaluation details, are bidders expected to submit general methodologies and approaches without tailoring to a specific evaluation?**

Yes. UNFPA is interested in seeing the capability of bidders to work with methodologies and approaches tailored to the thematic area. The more specific methodology for each evaluation will be submitted and evaluated during secondary bidding against the specific ToR for the evaluation. Please also see section 36.4 of the RFP document regarding secondary bidding.

- 12) Are bidders able to include the same expert in more than one Technical Proposal/Lots?**

Yes, one bidder may include the same expert in more than one Lot. Please also see question 13.

- 13) Can bidders provide a pool of experts in each Lot's Technical Proposal, or do the experts have to be assigned to the specific roles listed in the Budget Templates for each Lot?**

The experts have to be assigned to each specific role listed in the respective ToR because each proposed expert has to be evaluated against the requirements of a particular profile. A daily rate must be provided for each role. One expert may be assigned to more than one role; however, that expert would have to be able to cover both roles if they are both included in the team for a specific evaluation under the LTA. The Price Schedule Form matches the profiles requested in each ToR.

14) Could you please clarify paragraph E33.1 of the Request for Proposals? If multiple suppliers are to be selected then this must mean that bidders with scores below the highest combined technical and financial score must be selected? How will you determine how many suppliers will be selected for each Lot?

When multiple LTAs are awarded, they are awarded to the bidder with the highest combined score, second highest combined score, third highest combined score, etc. The number of LTAs to be awarded will be determined in accordance with the extent to which different proposals cover our needs.

15) Please could you confirm that we are allowed to form a consortium with a partnership agreement between the specific partners for the specific LTA for each lot instead of bidding as a joint venture? If not, please could confirm that a letter of intent to enter in a JV suffices, during the bidding time (as specified in the RfS Section VI Annex F – Page 50)?

Joint Venture is given as an option, but it is not mandatory. Bidders may form consortia as long as there is one leading entity which can enter in a contractual arrangement with UNFPA, which will be liable for delivering the requested services to the necessary quality standards, which will invoice UNFPA, which will be paid by UNFPA, and which will represent the other party to the contractual arrangements for all other legal and contract management purposes. How the members of the consortium arrange the operational, legal, and financial aspects of their partnership between each other is not reviewed by UNFPA, as long as there is one legal entity that submits the bid and with whom UNFPA can enter in a contractual arrangement.

16) Do all the annexes have to be signed by all partners of the consortium?

No. They have to be signed by the legal entity submitting the bid, which must be the same legal entity that will enter in a contractual arrangement with UNFPA should an LTA be awarded. Please also see question 15.

17) Is hiring an external consultant defined as subcontracting?

In this context, no. UNFPA understands that due to the specificity of the services, it is unlikely for one supplier to employ all of the required experts under each Lot.

18) May the same experts be presented for other lots (if relevant)?

Please refer to question 12.

19) How many references should be presented? Is there a threshold about how these will be evaluated?

There is no specific requirement for a number of references. They need to be sufficient to allow UNFPA to establish the bidder's qualifications and experience.

20) How much time will UNFPA take to evaluate the specific proposals received for each RfQ?

It is assumed that the question refers to secondary bidding. It is not possible to give a specific timeframe at this point, as it would depend on the complexity of each evaluation, which in turn will affect the complexity of the proposals. It also depends on the available internal resources at the time the secondary bidding request is issued. UNFPA will strive to complete evaluation under secondary bidding within a reasonable timeframe that allows LTA holders to manage their resources.

21) What is the mobilization time the selected LTA holder will have to start the project once the RfQ has been awarded the specific contract?

It is assumed that the question refers to secondary bidding. Once an LTA holder has been awarded a Purchase Order following secondary bidding, work will be expected to start immediately.

Specifically For Lot 2: The FGM joint evaluation for phase I and II is expected to start March/April 2018. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the FGM Evaluation for Phase I and Phase II (2018) is attached to the Procurement Notice. For the bidders who have been awarded an LTA, a secondary bidding will be issued immediately once the LTA contract is signed.

22) How many consortia will be selected for each lot of the Lots?

Please refer to question 1.

23) Can the same consultant be proposed for more than one LOT (so e.g. can the Bidder include the same consultant in the technical proposal for LOT 2 and for LOT 3)?

Please refer to question 12.

24) ToR LOT 1, p. 6, clause 24 Local experts (and similarly ToR LOT 2, p. 8, clause 34 and ToR LOT 3, p. 10, section 5), mentions “The cost of local-language interpretation is not included in this RFP, but will be included in secondary bidding.”. However, the ‘Price schedule form’ included in the RFP mentions ‘interpretation services’. Should the Bidder still provide prices for these interpretation services?

Apologies for the oversight. Yes, rates for interpretation services are to be included in the Price Schedule Form and will serve as ceiling rates during secondary bidding should an LTA be awarded.

25) Section I: Instructions to Bidders | Part D. Bid Opening and Evaluation

Paragraph 28.1 - “For LOT 1 and LOT 3, each proposed team leader will be evaluated separately and only those who pass 70 points will be included in a potential LTA”

Question: We interpret this to mean that, in a scenario where UNFPA awards an LTA to a company, only those team leader candidates presented by the company during this LTA bidding process (and who pass 70 points) will be eligible for specific evaluations during the quadrennial evaluation plan. Is that a correct interpretation?

Yes. Only team leaders who pass 70 points will be included in a potential LTA. Only team leaders included in the LTA may be proposed during secondary bidding for specific evaluations.

26) Section VI – Annex D: Bidder’s Previous Experience

Footnote 4 - “Please indicate relevant contracts to the one requested in the RFP”

Question: We interpret this to mean we should select relevant contracts only rather than supply an exhaustive list of previous experience. Is that a correct interpretation?

Yes. Only relevant contracts should be presented.

27) Section VI – Annex D: Bidder’s Previous Experience

Note below Table - “To be attached: Evidence (client’s letter or certificate) in support of satisfactory completion of above orders.”

Question: Will archival email correspondence indicating a client’s acceptance of contract deliverables be sufficient evidence?

Yes.

28) Section VI – Annex D: Bidder’s Previous Experience

Data block in lower right corner of the page requesting Chartered Accountant’s signature and stamp.

Question: What is the purpose of a chartered accountant’s signature on a table containing previous experience?

Please refer to question 49.

29) Section VI – Annex E: Price Schedule Form Lot 1

Note #3 – “If one evaluator covers more than one thematic area, please indicate so on the form.”

Question: Team composition is contingent on an evaluation’s scope and schedule. For the purpose of the price schedule, how are bidders expected to make predictions about those variables?

For this RFP, UNFPA is asking for a daily rate for each of the requested profiles. The specific team composition for each evaluation will be determined during secondary bidding (please see section 39.4 of the RFP document), but will be drawn from the profiles included in the LTA. If one evaluator covers more than one of the requested profiles and can thus be used in more than one role, please indicate so, as bidders are required to propose people for all requested roles.

30) The days in the price schedule example, are they per evaluation or for the whole evaluation pipeline per lot?

Please refer to question 64.

31) Value: What is the overall value of work expected to come through this framework? If not known, is there any idea of how many tenders would come out?

Please refer to the Terms of Reference for each Lot. The budget for each of the already planned evaluations under the Lot is listed there.

32) Previous Experience: In Section VI – Annex D, you ask for completion certificates. Would we be able to include ongoing projects? Many of our projects are large multi-year evaluations (some of which are only finishing later this year). If this is permissible, what evidence would suffice?

Only completed evaluations/projects are acceptable for this RFP.

33) Evidence of Completion: Some of our donors do not provide completion certificates, others can be difficult to retrieve, especially from a few years ago. Is there any other form of evidence that would be acceptable to UNPFA on these occasions?

Please refer to question 27.

34) Consortium Partners: Do partners need to complete Annex C?

No. Annex C must be completed and signed by the entity submitting the bid, which must also be the entity that will enter into a contractual relationship with UNFPA should an LTA be awarded. Please also see question 16.

35) Is there a minimum or maximum number of suppliers with which UNFPA intends to sign an LTA?

Please see question 1. The exact number will depend on the extent to which the received proposals meet our needs.

36) Line with the “encouragement to present an offer with partners from both the global south and the global north”, is the JV the only mechanism allowed to bid with a partner organisation? Can we suggest partners from the south or the north that will not, however, enter formally into the LTA with UNFPA? Would a consortium that has not been legally registered, as per Annex F, be eligible to bid? Would a “letter of intent to enter into such an agreement” be enough at this proposal stage?

Please refer to question 15.

37) Can work samples be provided through links or should they be attached to the technical proposal sent by email?

They should be attached to the technical proposal sent by e-mail.

38) Are we not required to provide CVs for the Quality Assurance function in this proposal in line with what is expected in the future in the TOR? (“The supplier is expected to dedicate specific resources to quality assurance efforts that are independent from the evaluation team, and must consider all time, resources, and costs related to this in their technical and financial bid”).

Please refer to question 54. Bidders may choose to submit CVs if they deem it necessary to demonstrate their quality assurance process.

39) Annex C, Bidder Identification Form. What is understood as “production capacity” for consulting firms? Would number or value of services provided per year be an adequate measure?

This field is “Not applicable” for services.

40) Does a “chartered accountant” need to sign and stamp the list experience provided? Can the business and/or legal authority sign this document instead? What other options exist?

Please refer to question 49.

41) Is there a minimum or maximum of references that should be provided in Annex D?

There is no requirement for a specific number. There should be enough relevant previous experience to allow UNFPA to assess the capability of the bidder to deliver the services under the LTA.

42) Do interpretation services need to be budgeted for each lot, regardless of whether we may need to use them?

There is no “budgeting” as such, as what is requested is a daily rate. Given that not all evaluation services to be purchased under the LTA are known at this point, UNFPA believes such services may be needed and therefore need to be available under the LTA.

43) Do Quality Assurance costs need to be provided at all in this proposal, or perhaps separately, or should they be embedded in the fee structure?

Please refer to question 54.

44) The financial proposal template asks for rates and does not take into account volume or staff leverage which may vary in each task request. How does UNFPA envision pricing at task level and will vendor be expected to provide discounts at the task order/call order level depending on resource used for a particular labor category?

The LTA rates will be ceiling rates. LTA holders will be able to offer lower rates during secondary bidding, but are not obliged to. Please refer to section 36.4 for details on secondary bidding.

45) Are ranges for the daily rates permissible for the labor categories listed? If ranges are not permissible, can the vendor offer a higher rate to account for varying years of experience of the sources with potential to discount at the task order level?

Ranges are not allowed. Bidders must offer one rate per profile. These rates will become ceiling rates in the LTA. LTA holders will be able to offer lower rates during secondary bidding. Note, however, that UNFPA request CVs of specific people for the core team profiles, and expects these specific people to be available to work on UNFPA projects. Please also note that the rates offered during this RFP are subject to financial evaluation.

46) Can UNFPA provide the specific locations of the evaluations?

Unfortunately, at this point, we do not yet have the specific locations for the evaluations. This is why travel costs are not to be included in the financial proposal. For details on how travel will be arranged, please see Annex IV - UNFPA Special Conditions of Contract.

47) As the bid is for a framework and no full TORs can therefore be provided for the different evaluations and other work that might take place under the agreement, it seems rather ambitious to predict and detail a methodology. As this stage therefore, we would only expect to provide an indicative example of the kind of methods we might employ. We would normally shape these nearer the time with the client. Could you kindly therefore let us know the detail of thinking and the length of text expected in the methodology section of the bid?

Yes, indicative examples of the kind of methods that might be employed are expected. The detail of thinking and the length of the text is for the bidder to decide.

48) Can you confirm whether it is allowed to insert in our proposal a hyperlink to each of these work samples (reports) available on a secure webpage, instead of annexing all work samples to the technical proposal?

Work samples must be submitted as files. UNFPA cannot accept links to websites, shared folders, etc., as UNFPA has no control over changes/additions to the content by the bidder after the bid submission deadline.

49) The Request for Proposal (RFP) on p. 45 Section VI – Annex D: Bidder’s previous experience asks for a client certificate to support satisfactory completion of previous experience. In addition the section contains a table which asks for the references to be “countersigned by and stamp of Chartered Accountant” While we believe that the proof of performance already provides strong support that an evaluation has been carried out (successfully), the signature and stamp of chartered accountant can be quite time and cost consuming given the relatively short submission deadline. We would thus appreciate if the latter requirement can be omitted in case certificates can be provided for all the references submitted. Could you kindly confirm?

UNFPA requires signature and stamp of Chartered Accountant to ensure that the contract values listed in Annex D are correct. However, in this case, certificates by the client are also acceptable if they list the contract value.

50) We understand that the proposal for the LTA should be a general one demonstrating our experience with similar type of assignments/agreements for other humanitarian actors. To what extent are we expected to incorporate in our proposal the focus of the two already mentioned evaluations?

It is assumed the question refers to Lot 2. Please refer to question 61.

51) Would it possible to already inform the geographical zone for the first 2 evaluations?

Please refer to question 46.

52) The RFP document, page 30, Lot 1, states, "Curriculum vitae of the proposed team leader, up to a maximum of three. Each will be evaluated separately." Does this mean we may propose 3 possible team leaders for each of the 2 evaluations already identified ? Summing up to 6 team leaders.

No. It means that bidders may propose up to three team leads to be considered for inclusion in the LTA. For each evaluation under the LTA, there will be a secondary bidding process – please refer to section 36.4 of the RFP document. During secondary bidding, LTA holders will submit technical proposals containing a specific team (based on the ToR for each evaluation) drawn from the profiles (and the specific people per profile) included in the LTA.

53) Do we also understand correctly that the team presented for the LTA for Lot 1, is the team expected to carry out the 2 already mentioned evaluations?

During secondary bidding, LTA holders will present technical proposals focusing more specifically on approach and methodology, plus a team drawn from the list of profiles included in the LTA. Therefore, all or part of the profiles (depending on need) included in the LTA will be expected to work on all evaluations under the LTA.

54) For each Lot, it is specified that “The supplier is expected to dedicate specific resources to quality assurance efforts that are independent from the evaluation team, and must consider all time, resources,

and costs related to this in their technical and financial bid. The bidder must present the quality assurance mechanisms which will be applied throughout the evaluation process as part of the technical offer.” (e.g. Lot 1 p. 3 Quality assurance). Given the emphasis on quality assurance (QA) and based on our experience that rigorous and continuous QA is of crucial importance especially in the context of complex evaluations, can you please clarify whether QA can be included in the price schedule form (now it’s not mentioned as a separate line/position in the form) and/or in the budgets of specific evaluations? If not, could you please clarify how this should be covered.

Since quality assurance is an integral part of every step of the evaluation, rather than a separate stage, UNFPA considers that the cost of QA cannot be separated from the daily rates of the profiles involved in the providing the services. Daily rates for each profile should therefore take into account quality assurance activities.

55) Could you specify what counts as writing samples? Would you like to see reports, articles etc.?

Examples include articles, sections of evaluation reports, evaluation briefs, and concept notes.

56) Can we present up to three Team Leaders (TL) for Lots 1 and 3, but only one TL and perhaps one co-TL Lot 2?

For Lot 2 - As per the RFP document, bidders may propose a team leader or/and two co-team leaders. Please refer to the original RFP document for the full list of required items for submission.

57) Does the separate evaluation of the TLs mean that those TL with less scores will not be considered further in the assessment of the bid?

It means that team leaders who do not pass the minimum of 70 points will not be included in a potential LTA with the bidder and therefore will not be eligible to work on evaluations under the LTA. Logically, this would mean that of the proposed team leaders, at least one must pass 70 points, and the bidder must meet the other technical evaluation criteria in order to proceed to financial evaluation.

58) Not used.

59) Which TOR should be used to respond to criteria A “understanding of the TOR, the nature and scope of work...”?

The ToR for the respective Lot the bidder is bidding for.

60) We understand that at this stage, suppliers are bidding to secure a long term agreement to provide evaluation services to UNFPA within specific thematic areas. In view of this, could you please clarify the extent to which technical proposals should focus on: i) the management of the long term agreement, including how we will convene and mobilise at relatively short notice well qualified evaluation teams to undertake high quality evaluations; ii) technical approaches which might be applied on the three evaluations covered under Lot 2? Could you also clarify how the scoring of technical proposals will reflect these two aspects of proposals?

Point 1. It is not included in the assessment criteria in section 29.

Point 2. See section 29, Lot 2, point A.

- 61) The ToRs for Lot 2 appear to speak most explicitly to the two evaluations of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C. Apart from a team leader or two co-team leaders, what other team roles do you anticipate on the corporate thematic evaluation related to gender equality? What are the responsibilities for each of those roles, and the required competencies? This additional information appears essential to be able to present a comprehensive technical proposal, as described in the Request for Proposals Section II, paragraph 2b.

As explained in the RFP document (screenshot below), bidders under RFP 17/035, Lot 2, are ***not*** bidding for the UNFPA and UNICEF joint evaluation; they are bidding for a Long-Term Agreement for evaluation services in the field of gender equality and of joint initiatives related to the abandonment of female genital mutilation. Please prepare technical proposals in response to the Terms of Reference for Lot 2 (attached to the tender notice), and not in response to the ToR for the joint evaluation.



SECTION II: TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Please refer to the respective document attached under the Procurement Notice on UNGM

LOT 1: Evaluations of humanitarian assistance

LOT 2: Evaluation services in the field of gender equality and of joint initiatives related to the abandonment of female genital mutilation

LOT 3: Evaluation services in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights

For information and planning purposes only, for bidders bidding for LOT 2: Terms of Reference for the UNFPA and UNICEF Joint Evaluation of UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change Phase I and Phase II.

The most current Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation are attached under the Procurement Notice to serve as additional information for bidders bidding for LOT 2. This joint evaluation is expected to start in March/April 2018. No action required at this point. However, bidders for this LOT should be aware that should they be awarded an LTA, a secondary bidding request will be issued almost immediately after signing the LTAs. UNFPA reserves the right to make minor adjustments to the provided ToR prior to issuing the secondary bidding request.

- 62) We understand that UNFPA will notify LTA holders of the planned start date of each evaluation at least 3 months prior to the expected start date. Is it your intention to share draft TORs for the evaluation at this stage? This would be important to allow for adequate advance planning so that well qualified consultants are available for the assignment.

Please refer to RFP 17-035, section 36.4.1.

Regarding Lot 2 specifically - The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the FGM Evaluation for Phase I and Phase II (2018) is attached to the Procurement Notice. For the bidders who have been awarded an LTA, a secondary bidding will be issued immediately once the LTA contract is signed. The FGM joint evaluation phase I and II is expected to start March/April 2018.

63) Can UNFPA confirm that suppliers are expected to professionally design and print evaluation reports (ToRs for Lot 2, paragraph 15)? We imagine that UNFPA would want to follow a corporate brand, which may be difficult for external organisations to replicate. Could you confirm how many evaluation reports suppliers would be expected to print?

Please see ToR for Lot 2, page 4, section 15 under dissemination and follow up phase.

Yes. Suppliers will be expected to professionally edit, design and print evaluation reports as well as evaluation briefs. For this purpose, we have UN editing guidelines, templates and guidelines for our reports and briefs, as well as examples of final evaluation reports to which the supplier can reference for design and publishing purposes.

On average, 200-400 reports are printed for dissemination; 500 evaluation briefs.

64) We note that the price schedule form for Lot 2 includes specified numbers of days and numbers of words to be translated. Could you please clarify if these are maximum or minimum (or something else) and explain how they have been calculated? Are they indicative for each of the 3 evaluations, or a total for all 3 evaluations?

See RFP 17-035, section VI – Annex E: Price Schedule Form Lot 2 (p. 47). Footnote 6: “The number of days/words is provided in the Price Schedule for the sole purpose of facilitating the financial evaluation of the bids. It is not to be construed as a purchase commitment, or as an indication of purchase volume under the LTA.”