COMMON MARKET FOR

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCUREMENT OF MANAGED DEDICATED CLOUD SERVER FOR DIGITAL RCTG**

**TENDER REF:** **CS/ADM/RCTG/PRO/ 11/07/2024(001)**

**ISSUED ON: 11th July 2024**

**CLOSING DATE: 2nd August 2024**

**JULY 2024**

1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**
   1. **The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)**

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is the regional intergovernmental organization of 21 Member States, population of over 560 million and global trade in goods worth US$ 235 billion. COMESA forms a major marketplace for both internal and external trading. Its area is impressive on the map of the African Continent covering a geographical area of 12 million (sq km). Its achievements to date have been significant. It is a free trade area stretching from Tunisia to Eswatini. COMESA was formed in December 1994, replacing a Preferential Trade Area which had existed since 1981.

We are seeking proposals from qualified service providers for a Managed Dedicated Cloud Server for our Digital RCTG-MIS. The chosen provider will deliver, manage, and support the hardware and software infrastructure as specified below.

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1. **PURPOSE & SCOPE**
   1. **OBJECTIVE**

The primary objective of this project is to establish a robust, secure, and scalable cloud server environment that supports our digital RCTG-MIS operations. The system must ensure high availability, performance, and security.

* 1. **SCOPE**

The service provider will be responsible for providing, configuring, managing, and supporting the specified hardware and software components. This includes ensuring compliance with all technical requirements, providing ongoing technical support, and facilitating hardware and software scalability as needed.

1. **SPECIFICATIONS**
   1. **HARDWARE SPECIFICATIONS**

CPU

• Type: Intel Xeon Gold or equivalent AMD EPYC  
• Cores: 16 cores (32 threads)  
• Speed: 2.1 GHz or higher

Memory

• RAM: 64 GB DDR4

Storage

• Type: SSD for OS and applications, NVMe SSD for database  
• Capacity:  
 • 500 GB SSD for OS and applications  
 • 2 TB NVMe SSD for database storage

Network

• Bandwidth: 1 Gbps dedicated uplink  
• Public IP: At least 1 dedicated IP address

* 1. **SOFTWARE SPECIFICATIONS**

1. Operating System

• Ubuntu Server 20.04 LTS or CentOS 8  
• Management: Full OS management including updates and security patches

1. Security

• Firewall: Managed hardware firewall  
• DDoS Protection: Enterprise-grade DDoS protection  
• SSL: Managed SSL certificates

1. Backup and Disaster Recovery

• Backup: Automated daily backups  
• Recovery: Disaster recovery solutions with a focus on minimal downtime.

* 1. **ADDITIONAL FEATURES**

1. Monitoring

• 24/7 server and application monitoring  
• Real-time alerts and performance reporting

1. Support

• 24/7 technical support with a dedicated account manager  
• SLA guarantees for hardware replacement and uptime

1. Scalability

• Easy scalability options for hardware upgrades and additional resources as needed

1. **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**
2. Company Information

• Company name, address, and contact information  
• Overview of company background and experience in providing managed cloud services

1. Technical Proposal

• Detailed description of the hardware and software to be provided  
• Approach to managing the specified cloud server environment  
• Security measures and compliance standards

1. Project Management Plan

• Timeline for deployment and configuration  
• Risk management and mitigation strategies

1. Support and Maintenance

• Description of support services, including response times and SLA commitments  
• Details of ongoing maintenance and management services

1. Pricing

• Detailed pricing breakdown for initial setup, ongoing management, and support services  
• Any additional costs for scalability or optional features

1. **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

The organization to be considered for the assignment shall have the following requirements:

* 1. A minimum of eight(8) years of experience in providing public cloud services.
  2. Proven expertise in managing and supporting cloud server infrastructure for similar projects.
  3. A portfolio of previous projects and clients demonstrating the ability to deliver high-quality cloud solutions.
  4. Access to cutting-edge technology and infrastructure, including high-performance servers, storage solutions, and network capabilities.
  5. Ability to provide a secure and scalable cloud environment with advanced features such as DDoS protection, managed firewalls, and SSL certificates.
  6. 24/7 technical support with guaranteed response times and a dedicated account manager.
  7. Clear Service Level Agreements (SLAs) outlining uptime guarantees, hardware replacement times, and support response times.
  8. Regular maintenance schedules and proactive monitoring to ensure optimal performance and security.

1. **ALL PRICES MUST BE INDICATED IN USD.**

There will be a no price variation after signing of contract.

Prices must be exclusive of all taxes.

1. **VALIDITY OF THE BID**

The Bid shall be valid for a period of 120 days after the closing date of this tender.

1. **DURATION OF THE CONTRACT**

Total duration of the initial contract will be 3 years, renewed annually.

1. **AMENDMENTS OF PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS**

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Bids, COMESA, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective Bidder, may modify the Proposal Documents by issuing an addendum.

In order to afford prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendments into account in preparing their offers, COMESA may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals.

1. **SUBMISSION**

The bidder shall submit **both** the technical and financial proposals as separate attachments online by email, in a pdf format, and the financial proposals MUST be password protected. The bidders shall keep their passwords to themselves until they are contacted to provide them during the financial opening meeting.

Bid submission shall be to the following email:[**tenders@comesa.int**](mailto:tenders@comesa.int) **copy to** [procurement@comesa.int](mailto:procurement@comesa.int). Physical deliveries shall not be accepted.

Bids should be addressed to the following address:

**THE CHAIRMAN - PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE**

**COMESA SECRETARIAT**

**BEN BELLA ROAD**

**P.O BOX 30051**

**LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

**Tel: 260 211 229725 - 32**

**Attention: Mr. Silver Mwesigwa**

**NOTE:** Only successful firms which shall score over and above 70% in the technical evaluation shall be financially evaluated and considered for contract award. The selection method to be used is the Quality Cost Based Selection ( QCBS).

**PHYSICAL SUBMISSION IS NOT ALLOWED.**

1. **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **2nd August 2024 at 17.00 Hours Zambian Time (GMT+2).**

1. **LATE TENDERS**

Any Tender received by COMESA after the deadline for submission of Bids shall be rejected. There shall be no exception to this requirement.

1. **EVALUATION AND COMPARISON OF PROPOSALS**
2. To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of Bids, COMESA may ask the Bidder for clarification of its Bid. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing and no change in price or substance of the Proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted.
3. COMESA will examine the Proposals to determine whether they are complete, whether any computational errors have been made, whether the documents have been properly signed, and whether the Proposals are generally in order.
4. Arithmetical errors will be rectified on the following basis: If there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total price that is obtained by multiplying the unit price and quantity, the unit price shall prevail, and the total price shall be corrected. If the Bidder does not accept the correction of errors, its Proposal will be rejected. If there is a discrepancy between words and figures, the amount in words will prevail.
5. Prior to the detailed evaluation, the Procurement Committee will determine the substantial responsiveness of each Proposal to the Request for Proposals (RFP). For purposes of these Clauses, a substantially responsive Proposal is one, which conforms to all the terms and conditions of the RFP without material deviations. COMESA’s determination of a proposal’s responsiveness is based on the contents of the Proposal itself without recourse to extrinsic evidence.
6. A Proposal determined as not substantially responsive will be rejected by the COMESA and may not subsequently be made responsive by the Bidder by correction of the non-conformity.
7. The bids will be evaluated as follows:

* The Bidder that has offered what is adjudged to be the best technical and financial offer will be offered the contract.
* If the Bidder that offered what was adjudged to be the best technical and financial offer declines to accept the offer, then the Bidder that is adjudged to have offered the second best technical and financial offer will be offered the contract.

1. Technical bids shall be evaluated based on the following criteria using the CQBS method.

Table 1: Criteria for Overall Technical Evaluation

| Criteria | | % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| T1 | Experience and Expertise:   1. Evaluation of the service provider's experience in the industry and expertise in managing similar cloud projects. 2. Review of the portfolio of previous projects and client testimonials. | 25 |
| T2 | Technical Capabilities:   1. Assessment of the proposed hardware and software solutions, including performance, security features, and scalability. 2. Evaluation of the provider’s ability to meet the specified technical requirements | 40 |
| T3 | Support and Maintenance:   1. Analysis of the technical support structure, including availability, response times, and SLAs. 2. Review of the maintenance and monitoring plans to ensure continuous operation and quick issue resolution. | 20 |
| T4 | Certifications and Compliance | 15 |
|  | **Total** | **100** |

1. **MINIMUM TECHNICAL PASS SCORE IS 70%**

Only financial submissions of bidders achieving 70% of technical scores shall be considered for evaluation on least cost basis.

1. **TECHNICAL QUERIES**

For any technical queries related to terms of reference, kindly contact the Procurement Unit on the following email: [procurement@comesa.int](mailto:procurement@comesa.int) with a copy to [smwesigwa@comesa.int](mailto:smwesigwa@comesa.int) and [rmokua@comesa.int](mailto:rmokua@comesa.int)

1. **COST OF TENDERING**

The tenderer shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its tender, and COMESA will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs regardless of the outcome of the tendering process.

1. **ETHICAL CONDUCT**

COMESA requires that Tenderers observe the highest standard of ethics during the selection and execution of such contracts. For this provision, the Purchaser defines the terms set forth below as follows:

1. “Corrupt practice” means the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of an officer of the Purchaser in the tendering process; and
2. “Fraudulent practice” means a misrepresentation of facts to influence the tendering process to the detriment of the Purchaser.

COMESA will reject a proposal for award if it determines that a Tenderer has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities in competing for the contract in question and has not disclosed all material any debarment in any organization or being involved in any form of illegal activities.

1. **NOTIFICATION OF AWARD**

Prior to the expiration of the period of tender validity, the Purchaser will notify the successful tenderer in writing that its tender has been accepted.

The notification of award will signify the formation of the contract subject to the signing of the contract between the tenderer and COMESA.

Simultaneously the other tenderers shall be notified that their tenders were not successful.

1. **SIGNING OF CONTRACT**

Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the contract, the successful tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to COMESA.

The Parties to the contract shall have it signed within thirty (30) days from the date of notification of contract award unless there is an administrative review request.