

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare
Male', Republic of Maldives



Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare

Expression of Interest

(by the consulting firm in response to the REOI
issued by the procuring entity)

for

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture
Information and Communication Technology (AICT) platform and
Development of Mobile Application

Ref No: MAP/CS/2023/11

Submission date: 14th December 2023

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

Foreword

This document has been prepared by Project Implementation Unit of Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare and is based on the 1st edition of the IFAD-issued standard procurement document for expression of interest available at www.ifad.org/project-procurement. This bidding document is to be used for the procurement of services using Quality Cost Based Selection in projects financed by IFAD.

IFAD does not guarantee the completeness, accuracy or translation, if applicable, or any other aspect in connection with the content of this document.

Instructions to Consultants¹

Reference Number: MAP/CS/2023/21

30th November 2023

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application

1. The Government of Maldives has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (“the Fund” or “IFAD”) towards the cost of Maldives Agribusiness Programme (“the client” or “procuring entity”), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the recruitment of consulting services, for which this REOI is issued.

The use of any IFAD financing shall be subject to IFAD’s approval, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement, as well as IFAD’s rules, policies and procedures. IFAD and its officials, agents and employees shall be held harmless from and against all suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses and liability of any kind or nature brought by any party in connection with Maldives Agribusiness Programme.

2. The client now invites expressions of interest (EOIs) from legally constituted consulting firms (not individual consultants) (“consultants”) to provide Consultancy Service for ‘The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application’. More details on these consulting services are provided in the preliminary terms of reference (PTOR) attached as **Annex 1**. The consultant may sub-contract selected activities provided that said services do will not exceed 20% of the total consultancy work.
3. Before preparing its EOIs, the consultant is advised to review the preliminary terms of reference attached as **Annex 1**, which describe the assignment and **Annex 2** that details the evaluation of the technical qualifications.
4. The consultant shall not have any actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest. A consultant with an actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest shall be disqualified unless otherwise explicitly approved by the Fund. A consultant including their respective personnel and affiliates are considered to have a conflict of interest if they a) have a relationship that provides them with undue or undisclosed information about or influence over the selection process and the execution of the contract, b) participate in more than one EOI under this procurement action, c) have a business or family relationship with a member of the client’s board of directors or its personnel, the Fund or its personnel, or any other

¹ This document refers to legally constituted consulting firms as “consultant”.

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

individual that was, has been or might reasonably be directly or indirectly involved in any part of (i) the preparation of this expression of interest, (ii) the selection process for this procurement, or (iii) execution of the contract. The consultant has an ongoing obligation to disclose any situation of actual, potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest during preparation of the EOI, the selection process or the contract execution. Failure to properly disclose any of said situations may lead to appropriate actions, including the disqualification of the consultant, the termination of the contract and any other as appropriate under the IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Projects and Operations².

5. All consultants are required to comply with the Revised IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations (hereinafter, “IFAD’s Anticorruption Policy”) in competing for, or in executing, the contract.
 - a. If determined that a consultant or any of its personnel or agents, or its sub-consultants, sub-contractors, service providers, suppliers, sub-suppliers and/or any of their personnel or agents, has, directly or indirectly, engaged in any of the prohibited practices defined in IFAD’s Anticorruption Policy or integrity violations such as sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse as established in IFAD’s Policy to Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse³ in competing for, or in executing, the contract, the EOI may be rejected or the contract may be terminated by the client.
 - b. In accordance with IFAD’s Anticorruption Policy, the Fund has the right to sanction firms and individuals, including by declaring them ineligible, either indefinitely or for a stated period of time, to participate in any IFAD-financed and/or IFAD-managed activity or operation. The Fund also has the right to recognize debarments issued by other international financial institutions in accordance with its Anticorruption Policy.
 - c. Consultants and any of their personnel and agents, and their sub-consultants, sub-contractors, service providers, suppliers, sub-suppliers and any of their personnel and agents are required to fully cooperate with any investigation conducted by the Fund, including by making personnel available for interviews and by providing full access to any and all accounts, premises, documents and records (including electronic records) relating to this selection process or the execution of the contract and to have such accounts, premises, records and documents audited and/or inspected by auditors and/or investigators appointed by the Fund.
 - d. Consultants have the ongoing obligation to disclose in their EOI and later in writing as may become relevant: (i) any administrative sanctions, criminal convictions or temporary suspensions of themselves or any of their key

² The policy is accessible at www.ifad.org/anticorruption_policy.

³ The policy is accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/document-detail/asset/40738506>.

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

- personnel or agents for fraud and corruption, and (ii) any commissions or fees paid or to be paid to agents or other parties in connection with this selection process or the execution of the contract. As a minimum, consultants must disclose the name and contact details of the agent or other party and the reason, amount and currency of the commission or fee paid or to be paid. Failure to comply with these disclosure obligations may lead to rejection of the EOI or termination of the contract.
- e. Consultants are required to keep all records and documents, including electronic records, relating to this selection process available for a minimum of three (3) years after notification of completion of the process or, in case the consultant is awarded the contract, execution of the contract.
 6. The Fund requires that all beneficiaries of IFAD funding or funds administered by IFAD, including the client, any consultants, implementing partners, service providers and suppliers, observe the highest standards of integrity during the procurement and execution of such contracts, and commit to combat money laundering and terrorism financing consistent with IFAD's Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy.⁴
 7. **Procedure:** the selection process will be conducted using Quality Cost Based Selection as laid out in the IFAD Procurement Handbook that can be accessed via the IFAD website at www.ifad.org/project-procurement. The client will evaluate the EOIs using the criteria provided in **Annex 2**. The shortlisted consultant(s) will be provided with the detailed TORs and asked to submit a detailed technical and financial offer. The evaluation will include a review and verification of qualifications and past performance, including a reference check, prior to the contract award.
 8. Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.
 9. Any request for clarification on this EOI including the PTOR should be sent via e-mail to the address below no later than 07th December 2023, 10:00hrs (GMT+5). The client will provide responses to all clarification requests by 10th December 2023, 15:00hrs (GMT+5).
 10. **Submission Procedure:** please submit your expression of interest using the forms provided for this purpose. Your EOI should comprise one (1) original copy of each EOI form annexed to this document. EOIs shall be submitted to the address below no later than 14th December 2023, 14:00hrs (GMT+5).

⁴ The policy is accessible at <https://www.ifad.org/en/document-detail/asset/41942012>.

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

Form EOI-1

EOI Submission Form

[Location, date]

[Authorized official]

Re: Consultancy for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application

Ref: MAP/CS/2023/11

We, the undersigned, declare that:

1. We are expressing our interest in providing the consulting services for the above-mentioned assignment and have no reservations to the REOI, the instructions to the consultants and any addenda thereto.
2. Our expression of interest is open for acceptance for a period of ninety (90) days.
3. Our firm, its associates, including any subcontractors or suppliers for any part of the contract, have not been declared ineligible by the Fund and have not been subject to sanctions or debarments under the laws or official regulations of the client's country or not been subject to a debarment recognized under the Agreement for Mutual Enforcement of Debarment Decisions (the "Cross-Debarment Agreement")⁵, beyond those declared in paragraph 9 of this EOI submission form.
4. We acknowledge and accept the IFAD Revised Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations. We certify that neither our firm nor any person acting for us or on our behalf has engaged in any prohibited practices as provided in ITC Clause 6. Further, we acknowledge and understand our obligation to report to anticorruption@ifad.org any allegation of prohibited practice that comes to our attention during the selection process or the contract execution.
5. No attempt has been made or will be made by us to induce any other consultant to submit or not to submit an EOI for the purpose of restricting competition.

⁵ The Cross-Debarment Agreement was entered into by the World Bank Group, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, additional information may be located at: <http://crossdebarment.org/>.

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

- 6. We acknowledge and accept the IFAD Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. We certify that neither our firm nor any person acting for us or on our behalf has engaged in any sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or abuse. Further, we acknowledge and understand our obligation to report to ethicsoffice@ifad.org any allegation of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse that comes to our attention during the selection process or the contract execution.
- 7. The following commissions, gratuities, or fees have been paid or are to be paid with respect to the selection process: *[Insert complete name of each recipient, its full address, the reason for which each commission or gratuity was paid and the amount and currency of each such commission or gratuity.]*

Name of Recipient	Address	Reason	Amount	Currency

(If none has been paid or is to be paid, indicate “none.”)

- 8. We declare that neither our consulting firm nor any of its directors, partners, proprietors, key personnel, agents, sub-consultants, sub-contractors, consortium and joint venture partners have any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest as defined in ITC Clause 5 regarding this selection process or the execution of the contract. *[insert if needed: “other than the following:” and provide a detailed account of the actual, potential or perceived conflict].* We understand that we have an ongoing disclosure obligation on such actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and shall promptly inform the client and the Fund, should any such actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest arise at any stage of the procurement process or contract execution.
- 9. The following criminal convictions, administrative sanctions (including debarments) and/or temporary suspensions have been imposed on our consulting firm and/or any of its directors, partners, proprietors, key personnel, agents, sub-consultants, sub-contractors, consortium and joint venture partners:

Nature of the measure (i.e.,	Imposed by	Name of party convicted,	Grounds for the measure (i.e.,	Date and time

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

Subsidiary and associated companies (<i>wherever applicable</i>): (details in the following format to be provided for all associates) – (i) Name of the company (ii) Nature of business (iii) Address of the company (iv) Website of the company (v) Brief description of company (maximum of 120 words)	
Any other information that the consultant would like to add:	

Maximum 10 pages

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

Form EOI-3

Experience of the Consultant

Re: Consultancy for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application

Ref: MAP/CS/2023/11

[Using the format below, provide information on each relevant assignment for which your firm, and each associate for this assignment, was legally contracted either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association, for carrying out consulting services similar to the ones requested under the preliminary terms of reference included in this EOI. The EOI must demonstrate that the consultant has a proven track record of successful experience in executing projects similar in substance, complexity, value, duration, and volume of services sought in this procurement.]

Maximum 20 pages

Assignment name:	Approx. value of the contract (in MVR):
Country: Location within country:	Duration of assignment (months):
Name of client:	Total No. of staff-months of the assignment:
Address, and contact details (including email address(es)):	Approx. value of the services provided by your firm under the contract (in MVR):
Start date (month/year): Completion date (month/year):	No. of professional staff-months provided by associated consultants:
Name of associated consultants, if any:	Name of proposed senior professional staff of your firm involved and functions performed (indicate most significant profiles such as project director/coordinator, team leader):

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

Narrative description of project:

Description of actual services provided by your staff within the assignment:

Name of Firm: _____

ANNEX 1

PRELIMINARY TERMS OF REFERENCE

Re: Consultancy for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application

Ref: MAP/CS/2023/11

1. Client

The client for this assignment is Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare (MoAAW).

2. Country Background

Maldives being located near the equator is a tropical country with warm and humid tropical monsoon climate with an annual temperature of 28°C. The hottest month of the year is April with an average daily maximum of 32°C and an average low of 29°C. The coolest month of the year is November with an average daily maximum of 30°C and an average low of 27°C. There are two distinct seasons in Maldives. The Southwest monsoon and the Northeast monsoon. From May or April to October or November is the southwest monsoon which brings windy and rainy weather, and the rest of the year is usually dry and sunny days. Between December and April rainfall amounts are at their lowest, accompanied with the longest hours of sunshine.

Agriculture is one of the primary industries involved in domestic production along with Fisheries in Maldives. Its contribution to GDP was at 1.6% in 2020. Production has remained constant throughout the past five years with a slight increase of 1.6% in 2020 compared to 1.1% and 1.2% in 2019 and 2018 respectively.

Due to the geographic nature of the country, visiting farmers regularly to provide technical support is a costly operation. Almost all Maldivian farmers use smart phones and mobile internet service. In order to increase outreach to farmers, it is essential to make the best use of user-friendly smart technologies.

3. Project Background

The Government of Maldives (GoM) through the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare (MoAAW) is initiating the implementation of the Maldives Agribusiness Programme (MAP) with the support of International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) set up within the MoAAW will manage the

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

which requires the support of the SP. A variety of information materials (videos, leaflets etc.) will further facilitate the training programs.

Provide technical trainings for famers and Technical Officers, to men and women, equally.

5. Overall objectives

The Programme's goal is to sustainably increase the incomes, food security and nutrition status of small farmer households.

The development objective is to strengthen and enable the environment for sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. This objective will be achieved through identification of improvements in the existing policies, development of new regulations to strengthened the institution and the services, to enhance agricultural technologies and access to financing and markets for small farmer households.

6. Objectives of the assignment

The overall purpose of this assignment is to improve make agricultural technical information are easily accessible to farmers and creating mutually beneficial relationship between research and extension personnel and farming communities.

7. Scope of work

- 7.1. Develop a software requirement specification (SRS) and approve it by the PIU/MoAAW technical team.
- 7.2. The SRS must include both functional and non-functional requirements and system implementation procedures of the application. Major functional requirements include:
 - a. Six pillars of the application, Extension/Information dissemination, Market platform, Agriculture production data, Discussion forum, Making appointments with technical people, Chat engine
 - Extension (Key Features)
 - Pest & disease identification
 - Enable to provide crop cultivation recommendations based on crops selected by the user. Administrators should be able to schedule to send automatic recommendations until the completion of crop
 - Fertilizer recommendation based on crop stage

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

- b. Assign roles to multiple staff to manage multiple features of the application. For example, verify posts, comments shared by users, respond to quarries etc.
 - c. Opportunity for input suppliers to advertise their products and services
 - Enable to showcase flash and short video adds
 - Enable users to view advertisement policy / guideline and obtain quotation for the adds
 - Enable to make electronic payments for adds
 - Verification process and schedule publishing for certain periods. For example, show advertisement for the period of 6 months and unpublish automatically unless the policy is renewed
 - d. Sellers rating mechanism
 - e. Generate automatic and manual push notifications / Alerts for all users and specific group of users
- 7.3. The mobile application is going to be a further enhancement of the “Dhanduveriya” web application.
- 7.4. The service provider shall design UI/UX for all the components of the application based on SRS.
- 7.5. In addition to the existing functions and features of application, service provider should develop a chat engine that would be built-in with this mobile application which must be able to handle live chats.
- 7.6. Enable to send push notifications to the users of application based on an event taking place in a specific location,
- 7.7. Enable to generate automatic push notifications / alert to the role assigned staff based on assigned task
- 7.8. Features to enhance system interoperability to enable better interfacing with Ministry website and other existing applications where needed.
- 7.9. Integrate “Moosun” application and enable to to send tips to farmers based on weather events
- 7.10. Utilize E-faas for login authentication.
- 7.11. Ensure enhancements are developed and structured to optimize system performance.

Maldives Agribusiness Programme

Consultancy Service for The Enhancement of Agriculture Information and Communication Technology (AICT) Platform and Development of Mobile Application (Ref no: MAP/CS/2023/11)

8.7. Share developed System source codes with MOAAW at the end of the consultancy period.

The developed system must align with Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and Unique Product Number (UPN) framework.

9. Consultant's qualifications and experience

Key expert 1: Software Engineer

Qualifications and skills

The lead consultant should have an MSc Degree in software engineering.

General professional experience

- Proven track record of web and mobile application development for multiple disciplinary organizations
- A team with well-organized and self-directed individuals with sound technical skills, analytical ability, good judgment, and a strong operational focus.

Specific professional experience

- Experienced in requirement gathering, documenting and analysis.
- Experience in managing ICT infrastructure of state or national level e-governance projects will be an advantage
- Working knowledge of the relevant computer systems and applications

Key expert 1: System Developer

Qualifications and skills

Consultant must have a degree in Information Technology or a related course from a recognized university with a minimum of 5 years of experience in IT-related fields.

General professional experience

- A well-organized and self-directed individual with sound technical skills, analytical ability, good judgment, and strong operational focus.

Specific professional experience

- Experience providing training; experience setting up training programmes and workshops preferred

