

## INVITATION FOR BIDS

<b>Procurement Number:</b>	AFRICA2020CAR03o
<b>Open Date:</b>	November 12, 2020
<b>Questions Deadline:</b>	November 18, 2020
<b>Closing Deadline:</b>	November 23, 2020
<b>Geographical Area Restrictions:</b>	N/A
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Hugues Marsac, hmarsac@iri.org

### Background:

The International Republican Institute (IRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, organization dedicated to advancing freedom and democracy worldwide. Since 1983, IRI has worked to develop democratic institutions and ideals, carrying out a variety of international programs to promote freedom, self-government and the rule of law worldwide. IRI provides technical assistance in the areas of political party strengthening, developing civic institutions and open elections, promoting democratic governance and advancing the rule of law.

IRI regularly conducts activities throughout CAR that are designed to promote political participation among citizens and good governance and strengthen the country's democratic institutions. IRI's current project is focused on providing training to elected officials and much-needed civic education to citizens. To further this work, IRI is in need of a telephone operating company to send a series of 20 SMS messages to at least 100,000 unique mobile phone users throughout CAR over a 4-month period. The SMS messages will contain information meant to educate the public on key political and electoral processes and/or civic issues.

### Period of Performance:

Date of signature to March 31, 2020.

### Technical Bid:

Interested bidders must present the technical bids outlining the following information:

- IRI seeks a telephone operating company or a similar firm to directly disseminate a total of 20 SMS messages to at least 100,000 unique mobile phone users throughout CAR over a four-month period.
- Ten of the messages should be sent before December 27, 2020, and the remaining ten should be sent between December 28, 2020 and March 31, 2021.
- IRI will provide the content of the messages and request specific transmission dates
- The non-partisan messages will contain voter education-focused information on key election dates and processes to encourage peaceful electoral participation and expand citizens' understanding of electoral processes.
- IRI will require the company to provide data on the regional location of the mobile users reached

- Pricing must be quoted per batch of 10,000 unique mobile phone numbers, assuming a series of twenty SMS messages are sent to each unique phone number.
- Quotes should specify approximately how many phone numbers will be targeted in each region of the country and how many characters are allowed per individual text message.
- Quotes should also include the cost of reporting the results of one Yes/No SMS question to IRI.
- Pricing must be submitted in francs CFA (XAF)
- Bidders must submit the name of an authorized signatory for the contract.
- Bidders must submit a proof of legal registration in the Central African Republic (tax identification number or company registration).

If the Bidder is a U.S. organization/resident, or a foreign organization/resident which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., the technical bids must contain Bidder's Taxpayer Identification Number.

Price information should be presented as a firm-fixed Unit Price for each of the deliverables identified below and in the format of the table below. Pricing must be valid for at least 60 (sixty) calendar days after the due date for proposal submission. The proposed Unit Price should be fixed and inclusive of all costs to perform, including inspection services, transportation, taxes, import duties (if any), and other levies. If there are any additional fees not reflected in the table below, such pricing must be fully described in the bid. Bids must be submitted in francs CFA (XAF); payments under any resulting contract will be made in this currency.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dissemination of 20 SMS			

**IFB Terms and Conditions:**

1. Prospective Bidders are requested to review clauses incorporated by reference in the section "Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference". By submitting a bid, bidder agrees to comply with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to the services identified above, and will specifically identify any disagreement with or exceptions to the terms, conditions, and provisions.
2. IRI may reject any or all bids if such is within IRI's interest.
3. The Bidder's initial bid should contain the Bidder's best offer.
4. IRI reserves the right to make multiple awards or partial awards if, after considering administrative burden, it is in IRI's best interest to do so.
5. Discussions with Bidders following the receipt of a bid do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.

6. IRI will hold all submissions as confidential and shall not be disclosed to third parties. IRI reserves the right to share bids internally, across divisions, for the purposes of evaluating the bids.
7. Bidders confirm that the prices in the bid/proposal/application/quote have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other bidder or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
8. By applying to this IFB, applicant is certifying that if it is awarded a contract, none of funds payable under the resulting contract will be used to (1) procure or obtain, extend or renew a contract to procure or obtain; (2) enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure; or (3) obtain the equipment, services, or systems that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system in compliance with the National Defense Authorization Act. Covered telecommunications equipment and services mean any of the following:
  - i. Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).
  - ii. For the purpose of public safety, security of government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).
  - iii. Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment.
  - iv. Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of the National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the government of a covered foreign country. ([2 CFR 200.216](#)).
9. Bidders agree to disclose as part of the bid submission:
  - a. Any close, familial, or financial relationships with IRI staff and agents. For example, the bidder must disclose if a bidder's mother conducts volunteer trainings for IRI.
  - b. Any family or financial relationship with other bidders submitting bids. For example, if the bidder's father owns a company that is submitting another bid, the bidder must state this.
  - c. Any other action that might be interpreted as potential conflict of interest.

### **Evaluation and Award Process:**

1. IRI may contact any Bidder for clarification or additional information, but Bidders are advised that IRI intends to evaluate the offers based on the written bids and reserves the right to make decisions based solely on the information provided with the initial bids. IRI may but is not obligated to conduct additional negotiations with the most highly rated Bidders prior to award of a contract, and may at its sole discretion elect to issue contracts to one or more Bidders.

2. Mathematical errors will be corrected in the following manner: If a discrepancy exists between the total price proposed and the total price resulting from multiplying the unit price by the corresponding amounts, then the unit price will prevail and the total price will be corrected. If there were a discrepancy between the numbers written out in words and the amounts in numbers, then the amount expressed in words will prevail. If the Bidder does not accept the correction, the offer will be rejected.
3. IRI may determine that a bid is unacceptable if the prices proposed are materially unbalanced between line items or sub-line items. Unbalanced pricing exists when, despite an acceptable total evaluated price, the price of one or more contract line items is significantly overstated or understated as indicated by the application of cost or price analysis techniques. A bid may be rejected if IRI determines that the lack of balance poses an unacceptable risk.
4. IRI will conduct a source selection based as follows:  
IRI intends to make an award to the responsible Bidder based on the following evaluation factors:
  - a) Technical evaluation, (including technical capabilities, proposed technical approach, and personnel qualifications) – 40 percent
    - o *Ability to directly disseminate SMS messages to unique mobile phone numbers throughout CAR– 30 percent*
    - o *Ability to specify the regions of unique phone users– 10 percent*
  - b) Past performance and experience in performing similar projects – 20 percent
  - c) Price – 40 percent

IRI intends to evaluate bids in accordance with these factors and make an award to the responsible bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the program.

5. If a cost realism analysis is performed, cost realism may be considered in evaluating performance or price.

#### **Submission Instructions:**

Bids must be submitted via email to Hugues Marsac, at hmarsac@iri.org with the subject line “AFRICA2020CAR03o” by the deadline listed above.

#### **IRI Obligations**

Issuance of this IFB does not constitute an award commitment on the part of IRI, nor does it commit IRI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a quotation.

#### **Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference**

IRI is required to make the contractor subject to the clauses of the prime award. This contract incorporates one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Where “flow-down” to the contractor is appropriate and applicable, references to “USAID” or “Department of State” shall be interpreted to mean “IRI”, “Recipient” to mean “Contractor”, and “Subrecipient” to mean “lower-tier subrecipients”. Included by reference are 2 C.F.R. 200 and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-governmental Organizations/US Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions.