

**Organisational Development Period Offer
Additional Sub-Sectors G (Civil Society) and H (Justice Systems)**

Generic Debrief to Tenderers

1. Overview

1.1 AusAID wishes to thank all who tendered for the Organisational Development Period Offer for two additional sub-sectors: Sub-Sector G (Civil Society); and Sub-Sector H (Justice Systems).

1.2 The tender attracted a total of 41 individuals. For Sub-Sector G, 10 complying tenders were received nominating a total of 21 individuals. For Sub-Sector H, 8 complying tenders were received nominating a total of 20 individuals. The Technical Assessment Panel (TAP) was able to make clear distinctions between individuals nominated.

1.3 Period Offer Deeds have been offered to all tenderers rated technically suitable by the TAP.

1.4 A number of tenders (and individuals included in tenders) were not rated technically suitable by the TAP. Accordingly, some tenderers have not been awarded PO Deeds and some of the Deeds awarded to firms do not include all of the individuals nominated.

1.5 In the Request for Tender (RFT), AusAID advised that it would provide tenderers with a generic debriefing within 30 days of Tenderers being notified of the outcome of the tender process. Accordingly, the following summary of the common strengths and weaknesses of the tenders received (as identified by the TAP) is provided to assist tenderers to formulate future AusAID tenders.

2. About The Technical Assessment Panels (TAP)

2.1 The TAPs comprised appropriately qualified AusAID representatives and an independent external expert. The TAP members ranked tenders and individuals on the basis of their technical merit based on the tender content against the specifications set out in the Terms of Reference (TOR) within the RFT. The following summarises TAP member comments on the common strengths and weaknesses of the tenders received.

3. Inclusions Which Strengthened or Weakened Tenders

General Comment

Stronger Tenders

- Addressed all of the tender requirements in a clear and logical manner;
- Provided specific, relevant examples demonstrating substantial capacities against the selection criteria; and
- Provided clear links between CVs, experience data sheets and responses to selection criteria.

Weaker Tenders

- Made assertions, but did not provide specific, relevant examples to back up these assertions;
- Failed to address *all* aspects of *all* selection criteria;
- Lacked consistent links between CVs, experience data sheets and responses to selection criteria (eg either did not draw experiences from CVs into responses; or included information in responses that did not appear in CV);
- Submitted responses from specialists in areas other than Civil Society/Justice Systems; and
- Contained errors and discrepancies in documentation (eg obviously incorrect dates in CVs).

Comments against Selection Criteria

- i) **Relevant work history which demonstrates successful in-the-field application of knowledge and skills of the category; and that knowledge and skills have been successfully applied within:**
- a range of sectors (that is, in several of the sectors of agriculture, education, environment, health, legal and judicial, natural resources, transport etc);
 - government and/or non-government organisations.

Stronger Tenders:

- Were from individuals who were able to demonstrate substantial capacities in the Sub-Sector, particularly long term implementation work, as well as a mix of shorter-term design, review and analysis tasks;
- Provided specific examples which demonstrated relevant knowledge and skills; and
- Outlined relevant experience in their specialist field across a number of sectors.

Weaker Tenders:

- Asserted relevant knowledge and skills, but did not reinforce the claims with examples; and
 - Outlined relevant experience in only one sub-sector.
- ii) **Problem solving skills, especially in the context and conditions prevailing in less developed countries.**

Stronger Tenders

- Provided examples of challenging situations they had faced in developing countries and outlined successful approaches;
- Outlined a practical ‘framework’ for problem-solving and linked this to actual situations; and

- Provided evidence of experience in a number of different developing country contexts.

Weaker Tenders

- Provided no practical examples of experiences or skills in problem solving; and
- Mentioned theoretical approaches (eg “uses tools such as Stakeholders Analysis and SWOT analysis”), but did not explain how these were used in specific contexts and whether they worked.

iii) Demonstrated excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to produce timely, lucid, brief reports.

Stronger Tenders

- Were written very well, with minimal spelling, grammar or expression errors across the tender;
- Provided evidence of both oral and written communication skills;
- Cited examples of written work that related directly to AusAID requirements (eg project reports etc); and
- Provided examples of oral communications experience across a spectrum of experiences (from small meetings/negotiations to large gatherings/media events).

Weaker Tenders

- Contained obvious errors and/or significant spelling, grammatical or editorial errors;
- Lacked balance – ie provided too much detail in some areas and insufficient in others;
- Provided evidence of only ‘oral’ or ‘written’ skills, but not both;
- Provided examples of written work that were not directly relevant to AusAID’s requirements (eg academic writing, diplomatic reporting); and
- Provided a narrow range of oral communication examples (eg only mentioned negotiations, but not other types of experiences/skills).

iv) Demonstrated strong interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity and the ability to interact effectively and sympathetically with people at all organisational levels in partner countries.

Stronger Tenders

- Provided examples relating to a number of developing country or other relevant contexts;
- Outlined experience dealing successfully with people at all levels in developing countries; and
- Demonstrated cultural awareness through undertaking training/development opportunities.

Weaker Tenders

- Provided examples relating to only one developing country context; and
 - Outlined limited experience dealing with people in developing countries (eg only junior people, or only senior officials, but not a wide range).
- v) **Demonstrated understanding of the need to integrate gender and governance policies and initiatives in AusAID’s programs and projects.**

Stronger Tenders

- Demonstrated a strong theoretical understanding of gender, incorporating issues relating to both women and men, and provided examples of practical application of this understanding;
- Provided evidence of having undertaken gender-specific roles on aid activities; and
- Demonstrated an understanding of the role of governance in contributing to development outcomes.

Weaker Tenders

- Only addressed only ‘gender’ or ‘governance’, but not both;
 - Asserted that ‘understanding’ existed, (eg “is conversant with all AusAID policies regarding...”; “acutely aware and practiced in AusAID policies”, “is experienced in...utilising good governance principles and practice”), but provided no evidence to back this up; and
 - Addressed gender as if it related to the participation of women only, or only involved issues of “anti-discrimination.
- vi) **A demonstrated capacity to lead and/or participate in teams.**

Stronger Tenders

- Provided evidence of both team leadership and team membership; and
- Outlined principles guiding the approach to working with and leading teams, and provided examples where these principles were applied successfully.

Weaker Tenders

- Provided narrow range of examples – eg only ‘team leadership’ or only ‘team membership’; and
 - Asserted that they had a good approach, but provided no framework for working as part of a team, or examples of practical experience (eg “I have no problems working in either scenario”).
- vii) **Good proficiency in word processing (including Microsoft Word) and spreadsheets (including Microsoft Excel), capacity to be self sufficient with**

laptop and portable printer while overseas; capacity to send and receive email documents.

Most tenders provided responses which were considered more than adequate for this criterion, demonstrating that hardware, software and individual skills were available to the level required by AusAID. In a small number of cases, exceptional IT skills were demonstrated through experience in software development and providing IT-specific input on aid projects, but in no case was this criterion influential in making major distinctions between individuals nominated.

viii) Knowledge of the goals, objectives and principles of Australia's aid program.

Stronger Tenders

- Gave evidence of their 'knowledge' by presenting an explanation of aid program goals, objectives and principles; and
- Had a 'big-picture' understanding of the Australian aid program and the way in which the aid program contributes to the advancement of Australia's 'national interest'.

Weaker Tenders

- Asserted that they had 'knowledge' but provided no evidence (eg "I am sure of my capability in this regard");
- Provided a narrow or 'small-picture' understanding, focused on particular activities they had been personally involved in (eg only mentioned South Pacific legal/judicial issues); and
- Completely missed the role of Australia's 'national interest' in the aid program's goal.