REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Date: April 8, 2022
Subject: Request for Proposal for short-term consultancy to conduct ‘Political Economy Analysis (PEA) Update for Bangladesh’.

RFP Number: CPI-PAR-03-2022
Offer Deadline: April 25, 2022; 5:00 PM ET (Washington, D.C.)

Counterpart International (hereinafter Counterpart) is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals and firms to conduct a ‘Political Economy Analysis (PEA) update for Bangladesh’ as described in this Request for Proposals (RFP). These services are required under the ‘Promoting Advocacy and Rights’ Activity (Cooperative Agreement No. 72038818CA00003) (hereinafter “the Award”) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (hereinafter “USAID”) and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (hereinafter “FCDO”).

Individuals and firms invited by Counterpart (hereinafter “bidders or Offerors”) to submit offers (hereinafter “bids” or “offers”) for the services described in this RFP are under no obligation to do so. The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the Proposal, Counterpart will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation.

This Request for Proposal includes the following sections:

I. Instructions to Bidders
II. Technical Specifications

All correspondence and/or inquiries regarding this RFP should be requested in accordance with the enclosed Instructions to Bidders (Section I, Clause 10, Clarifications).

The Instructions to Bidders (henceforth ITB) shall not form part of the bid or of the fixed-price award. They are intended to aid bidders in the preparation of bids. For the purposes of interpretation of these ITB, unless otherwise stated, the number of days stated herein shall be consecutive calendar days.

Submission of bids should be completed in accordance with the enclosed instructions to bidders (Section I, clause 11, Submission of Bids).
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SECTION I: INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1. **Introduction**

   1.1 **Request for Proposal (RFP) No. CPI-PAR-03-2022 dated April 8, 2022**: Counterpart, acting on behalf of the Promoting Advocacy and Rights (PAR) Activity, is hereby soliciting bids to conduct a Political Economy Analysis (PEA) as described in Section II of the ITB. Counterpart anticipates awarding one contract. This bid is open to independent consultants and firms.

2. **Eligible Source Countries for Goods and Services**

   2.1 All goods and services to be supplied under the fixed-price award shall have their origin in countries listed under the USAID Geographical Code 937 and shall include the following:

   937 – “Any area or country including the U.S., cooperating country, and developing countries, excluding advanced developing country.” List of Advanced Developing Countries:

   2.2 A bidder will be considered ineligible if it has been suspended, debarred, or ineligible, as indicated on (1) the “List of Parties Excluded from Federal Non-procurement Programs” and/or (2) the “Consolidated Lists of Designated Nationals”.

3. **Preparation of Bids**

   3.1 Bidders are expected to examine the specifications and all instructions contained in this RFP. Failure to do so shall be at the Bidder's risk.

   3.2 The Bid prepared by the Bidder and all correspondence related to the Bid and exchanged by the Bidder and Counterpart shall be in English.

4. **Contents of Bid**

   4.1 Submitted bids are required to consist of the following documents:

   Technical Proposal
   The Technical proposal shall be prepared in accordance with SOW, and consist of at least the following sections:
   1. Organizational background showing evidence of prior performance in PEAs;
   2. Technical Approach: explanation of the Bidder’s understanding of the objectives of the assignment, and description of tasks Bidder will undertake in response to the scope of work (referenced in Section II);
   3. Methodology: an explanation of the analytical tools to be used to conduct the tasks in response to the scope of work;
   4. Workplan: content and duration of the main tasks under the assignment, time frames for each task, milestones (including interim approvals by Counterpart), and delivery date(s) of the report;

   Price Quote
   1. Price Quote – in workable Microsoft Excel, unlocked, and with formulas intact. The price quote should be inclusive of any applicable taxes.
5. Format and Signing of Bid

5.1 The Bidder shall prepare one bid in two parts (technical and price quote) with all the required sections of the proposal typed or written in legible ink and shall be signed by a person duly authorized to bind the Bidder.

6. Price Quote

6.1 Bidders shall prepare a price quote in a workable Microsoft Excel document (unlocked with intact formulas) specifying the detailed cost breakdown and the total price of the services being offered in response to this RFP. The Bid shall clearly indicate that the prices shall be for the services whose technical specifications are described in Section II – Technical Specifications.

6.2 The Bidder shall indicate the unit price in USD for each service, the description, the quantity, and the total cost in USD of the Bid, which will comprise the total price of the Bid. If there is any discrepancy between the unit price and the total amount, the unit price shall be considered as correct, and the total amount adjusted accordingly. It shall be assumed that the Bidder is not bidding on any item for which a unit price or total amount is not indicated.

7. Statement of Qualifications

7.1 The Bidder shall include in their Bid evidence in support of its technical qualifications and ability to perform the fixed-price award if its bid is accepted. This shall consist of:
   • A CV(s) outlining the Bidder’s relevant experience
   • A sample of a previous assignment
   • E-mail addresses and telephone numbers of two references who can be contacted regarding the Bidder's prior performance

8. Bid Validity Period

8.1 Bids shall remain valid until June 25, 2022, which is sixty (60) days after the offer deadline. A bid valid for a shorter period maybe rejected as non-responsive.

9. Deadline and Late Bids

9.1 It is the Bidder’s sole responsibility to ensure that bids are received electronically by Counterpart on or before the Offer Deadline of April 25, 2022. Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Hardcopy submission and/or faxed bids will not be accepted.

9.2 A Bid received after the deadline for submission of bids shall be rejected. Bidders will be held responsible for ensuring that their bids are received in accordance with the instructions stated herein and a late bid will not be considered even though it became late as a result of circumstances beyond the Bidder's control. A late bid will be considered only if the sole cause of it becoming a late bid was attributable to Counterpart, its employees or agents or if it is in the best interest of the funding agency.

10. Clarification of Bidding Documents

10.1 Clarifications may be requested in writing not later than five (5) business days prior to the Offer Deadline. The contact for requesting clarifications is: procurement.par@counterpart.org
11. Submission of Bids

11.1 Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Complete proposals must be e-mailed to procurement.par@counterpart.org. All bids with technical and price schedule must be received by April 25, 2022; 5:00 PM (EDT).

11.2 Ensuring successful transmission and receipt of the bids is the responsibility of the Bidder. It is recommended that no e-mail exceed the size of 10 MB, inclusive of attachments.

12. Amendment of Bidding Documents

12.1 Counterpart may at its discretion, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification by a Bidder, modify bidding documents by amendment. All prospective Bidders that have received bidding documents will be notified of the amendment by e-mail and such amendments will be binding on them.

13. Modification of Bids

13.1 Any Bidder has the right to withdraw, modify, or correct its bid after it has been delivered to Counterpart, provided the request for such a withdrawal, modification, or correction together with full details of such modification or correction is received by Counterpart at the submission contact point given above before the time set for opening bids. Counterpart may ask any Bidder for a clarification of its bid; nevertheless, no Bidder will be permitted to alter its Bid Price or make any other material modification after the deadline unless the RFP has been amended or the deadline extended. Clarifications which do not change the Bid Price or other material aspects of the bid may be accepted.

14. Criteria for Award and Evaluation

14.1 Subject to Clause 15, Counterpart will award a fixed-price award to that Bidder whose proposal is deemed acceptable, and which offers the best value based upon the evaluation criteria in Section II – Technical Specifications – Evaluation Criteria. In order for a bid to be deemed acceptable, it must comply with all the terms and conditions of the RFP without any modification. A material modification is one which affects the price, quantity, quality, delivery or installation date of the equipment or materials or which limits in any way any responsibilities, duties, or liabilities of the bidders or any rights of Counterpart. In addition, the successful bidder must be determined to be responsible. A responsible bidder is one who has the technical expertise, management capability, workload capacity, and financial resources to perform the work. Counterpart may, at its option, reject all bids.

15. Counterpart’s Right to Accept Any Bid and to Reject Any or All Bids

15.1 Counterpart will reject any bid that is nonresponsive. Further, Counterpart reserves the right to waive any minor informalities in the bids received if it appears in Counterpart’s best interests to do so, to reject the bid of any bidder if, in Counterpart’s judgment, the bidder is not fully qualified to provide the services as specified in the fixed-price award, or to reject all bids.

16. Notification of Award

16.1 Before the expiration of the period of bid validity, Counterpart will notify the successful Bidder in writing that its bid has been accepted.
16.2 Upon the successful Bidder acknowledging receipt of the Notification of Award, Counterpart will promptly notify each unsuccessful Bidder, the name of the successful Bidder and that their bids were rejected. If after notification of award, a Bidder wishes to ascertain the grounds on which its bid was not selected, it should address its request to Counterpart in writing.

17. **Acceptance of Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions.**

By submitting a proposal to Counterpart International, the individual consents to Counterpart’s privacy policy terms and conditions (https://www.counterpart.org/terms-and-conditions/), and provides Counterpart International permission to process the individual’s personal data specifically for the performance of, and purposes identified in, this solicitation document and in compliance with Counterpart’s legal obligations under applicable United States and European Union laws, data protection and regulations and any other applicable legal requirements. The company/Individual may withdraw their consent at any time by contacting privacy@counterpart.org. If consent is withdrawn, Counterpart reserves the right to accept or reject the offer.
SECTION II – TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1. **General Background**

Counterpart International has been implementing the five-year Promoting Advocacy and Rights (PAR) Program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which aims to strengthen the enabling environment for civil society institutions in Bangladesh to advance democratic governance and citizen participation. PAR’s interventions include coaching, mentoring and grants for citizen-identified advocacy priorities.

Currently, the PAR program has three grantees (the DSK consortium\(^1\), the WKB consortium\(^2\), and the Shushilan consortium\(^3\)) focusing on environmental pollution and unplanned urbanization. The DSK consortium is focusing on proper waste management in Dhaka’s slums, while the WKB consortium is focusing on prevention of river, air and noise pollution in Dhaka. The Shushilan consortium is focusing on unplanned urbanization in Khulna city. This sectoral approach is designed around the government’s policy priorities. Interventions are focused on empowering communities to exercise their rights and demand better public services. In addition, these activities create a bridge between policy makers and underprivileged communities.

As way of background, to allow for adaptive program implementation across interventions, the first Political Economy Analysis (PEA) was also undertaken in 2018 when the Activity commenced, and updated periodically. The last iteration was prepared in 2020. The PEA will be updated in 2022 to understand the impacts of the program activity. As such, PAR is seeking an individual consultant to update the previous iteration of the PEA report for 2022.

2. **Objective of the Assignment**

The objective of the update to the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) is to:

- Identify and analyze changes in key political, social, and economic dynamics at work in the Bangladesh context among several key stakeholder groups that impact the implementation of the project activities, with an emphasis on issues related to Gender Based Violence (GBV), drug abuse, air pollution, waste management, unplanned urbanization, and social inclusion of groups that have been traditionally marginalized.

- Provide concise and clear recommendations and findings that are directly linked to and can inform the PAR Activity programming, particularly around advocacy of issues such as Gender Based Violence (GBV), drug abuse, environmental pollution, unplanned urbanization and social inclusion at the national and sub-national level. These recommendations should serve as an actionable guiding tool for course correction, and adjustments for implementation of future work in these spheres.

3. **Scope of Work (SOW)**

Under Scope of Work (SoW), the selected applicant will generate the following deliverables:

1. 1 (one) inception report, which contains an outline of the Political Economy Analysis updated report, workplan and methodology.

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1 DSK consortium: The consortium consists of Dustha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), Bangladesh Resource Center for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK), Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP), and Institute of Innovation for Gender and Humanitarian Transformations (inSights).
2 WKB consortium: The consortium consists of WaterKeepers Bangladesh (WKB), Stamford University, and Jahangirnagar University.
3 Shushilan consortium: The consortium consists of Shushilan and Paribartan Khulna.
2. 1 (one) Political Economy Analysis Updated report, which responds to the following questions:

- What are the new dimensions, factors, and issues influencing the operational environment in which CSOs operate?
- What are the success factors and political blockers to reform, as well as the interests and incentives of the political elite and how these power relations influence PAR’s advocacy agenda?
- According to CSO perceptions, which major parties are playing a critical role in reducing the CSO’s working space?
- What are the barriers to better governance in Bangladesh?
- What are the opportunities for civil society organizations to collaborate with key stakeholders, including the government, to improve democratic governance and citizen participation?
- What specific interventions does PAR need to develop to help CSOs better navigate the shrinking civic space?
- PAR project focus on advocacy issues i.e. Gender Based Violence (GBV), drug abuse, environmental pollution, and unplanned urbanization, and social inclusion. Which actors are involved in these issues at the national and sub-national level – have these changed in the past year? Are there any new entrants / new stakeholders to consider engaging? Identify champions for reform, and spoilers who want to maintain the status quo.
- Based on last year’s subgrantee activity learning, how should our subgrantees adapt their approach to engage these stakeholders?
- Reflecting back on the past year, have there been significant developments (e.g. new legislation, leadership changes / elections, natural or man-made disasters, recent humanitarian crises, demographic changes, large-scale social unrest, etc.,) that could affect advocacy of these issues?
- How have the aforementioned changes shifted the rules of the game ((the formal and informal institutions that influence key stakeholders’ behavior and their incentives, relationships, shifting power dynamics, etc.?)
- How have changes affected the perception of the civil society sector (e.g. increased trust? criticism?).
- Have contextual changes affected the way civil society actors engage with the government and vice-versa?
- How might these dynamics affect CSO’s ability to implement evidence-based (fact-based) advocacy initiatives?

3. 1 (one) summary document of the Political Economy Analysis, which highlights key findings, and recommendations. The document should succinct and clear, suitable for public dissemination as a communications product.

4. 1 (one) PowerPoint presentation with the key findings, results and recommendations for dissemination to PAR staff, and possibly USAID and FCDO.

4. Methodology

The consultant will use a combination of primary and secondary data collection and analysis methods to update the political economy analysis. The bidder’s methodological approach and description should at minimum include:

- Include a work plan with a detailed schedule for a period of two months from the issuance of the agreement/contract.
• Description of the tools and methods the applicant will develop and use to conduct the PEA.
• How, in collaboration with the technical team of the project, will the applicant identify participants and/or stakeholders, to conduct interviews and/or focus groups, as applicable for this assignment.
• Description of the protocols and steps the applicant will take to protect and safeguard information gathered through individual interviews and/or focus groups.

**Minimum Bidder Requirements:**
• University degree in political science, international development, international relations, public administration, or a relevant field.
• Minimum of five (5) years related experience, including conducting PEA and other relevant analyses, action planning, making recommendations, and reporting.
• Experience working in on donor-funded development projects, preferably USAID and/or FCDO.
• Strong knowledge and expertise of Bangladesh’s political system and power structures.
• Excellent organizational, analytical, oral communications skills.
• Excellent writing skills
• Advanced oral and written communication skills in English.

5. **Assignment Duration, Place of Performance, and Other Conditions.**

The short term consultancy will be implemented over an estimated period of **two months from the date of signing the contract.** The consultant will provide 25 days’ worth of effort spread out over this time frame. Delivery of services will be done remotely or at Counterpart’s Dhaka premises, with field visits to project sites in Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi and Barisal districts as and when necessary. Field visits should be the consultant’s responsibility but should be coordinated with the designated representative from PAR.

6. **Staff Structure.**

This activity may be implemented by an individual consultant or a firm. If the applicant is a firm, the applicant should include details about the proposed staffing structure to complete this activity, including CVs and bios for the proposed team.

7. **Monitoring and Reporting.**

The consultant under this award will be monitored and is subject to acceptance by the designated Counterpart International representative. The bidder is expected to prepare a final PEA report in English by the close of this contract. Counterpart also requests submission of draft reports including key findings with a presentation to PAR/CPI. Reports shall be submitted to Counterpart International via e-mail which would be provided.
8. **Expected Results, Deliverables.**

The successful candidate is to provide the following key deliverables in English within the agreement period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description of Deliverable</th>
<th>Expected Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 1 (one) inception report with outline, workplan and methodology of the PEA update report</td>
<td>a) Reference workplan, including detailed program to guide the activities the consultant will perform to complete the assignment. &lt;br&gt;b) detailed methodology with tools and materials to be used for the assignment</td>
<td>5 working days after signing of the contract</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. 1 (one) updated PEA report, as described in the Scope of Work (SOW)</td>
<td>This analysis update report will comply with the format that will be provided by the PAR team in line with the scope of work and previous PEA Report(s) including a summary with key findings and recommendations.</td>
<td><strong>First draft:</strong> 25 working days after signing of the contract&lt;br&gt;<strong>Second draft:</strong> 30 working days after signing of the contract&lt;br&gt;<strong>Final PEA report:</strong> 35 working days after signing of the contract</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. 1(one) Summary document with key findings, results, and recommendations</td>
<td>This summary report will follow the format agreed upon with the PAR team</td>
<td>38 working days after signing of the contract</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. 1 (one) PowerPoint presentation with the results/findings and recommendations, for PAR, and potentially for USAID and FCDO</td>
<td>This presentation will follow the branding and marking guidelines under the PAR project, which will be provided to the consultant by the PAR team.</td>
<td>40 working days after signing of the contract</td>
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8. **Evaluation Criteria.**

Bidders should include information which will allow Counterpart to adequately assess the following:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strength of the technical proposal, approach, and proposed methodology. The approach to conduct the PEA update and methodological requirements are clearly described and understood (listed in section 4 Methodology)</td>
<td>35 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement of Qualifications: The applicant clearly describes his or her qualifications to conduct this assignment. (listed in section 5 Minimum Bidder requirements)</td>
<td>35 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Experience: The applicant provides evidence of his/her ability to conduct the work and manage the successful implementation of the assignment. The applicant provides a clear sample of previous assignment, which describes his/her experience conducting similar work and provides solid references.</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed financial proposal: The budget costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable. The budget is clear, and structured to achieve the proposed activities on time and on budget.</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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**Total Score:** 100 points
9. **Method of payment.**

Counterpart International will transfer the payment to an account the bidder will provide. All deliverables must be approved by Counterpart. Payment will be based on the following milestones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Payment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception report including workplan and methodology</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Completion of data collection and literature review</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First draft PEA Report submission and debriefing</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of final PEA report and approval by PAR</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of summary and presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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