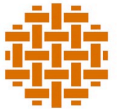




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The Civil Society and Local Government Support Program (CSLGSP) in Armenia implemented by Counterpart International funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Associate Cooperative Agreement is issuing the following Request for Proposals (RFP) with the purpose of identifying a prospective offeror that will design and implement a study tour for 12 local government representatives from Armenia. The study tour will provide the participants the opportunity to observe and discuss the know-how, experiences and successful practices of their local government colleagues in the study tour host country.

Interested companies or organizations should submit proposals along with a cover letter, which mentions their motivation for application, to Ms. Ani Dallakyan, Program Specialist, at adallakyan@counterpart.am by close of business, Armenia time – GMT +004, on April 19, 2013. Bidders who have any questions on the attached RFP should direct those questions to Ms. Dallakyan at the above email address. Questions and answers will be published on a rolling basis.

Counterpart International looks forward to working in partnership with a selected contractor to help Armenian local self-government strengthen its capacity in good governance through CSLGSP. We hope you will take time in your busy schedules to bid on this interesting opportunity.

Request for Proposals

A Study Tour on Building Capacities to Enhance Good Governance at the Local Level

**Counterpart International Civil Society and Local Government Support Program
(CSLGSP) in Armenia funded by USAID**

Date of Issuance: March 29, 2013

Final Date of Submission: April 19, 2013

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADS – Automated Directives System

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

CSLGSP – Civil Society/Local Government Support Program

CSO – Civil Society Organization

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

DUNS – Data Universal Numbering System

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies

LG – Local Government

M&IE – Meals and Incidental Expenses

OFAC – Office of Foreign Assets Control

PPP – Public-Private Partnership

RFP – Request for Proposals

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

Table of Contents

1.	Program Description	5
2.	Introduction to RFP	5
2.1.	Statement of Work	5
2.2.	Program Objectives	6
2.3.	Program Outcomes	7
2.4.	Proposed Learning Methodologies	7
2.5.	Responsibilities of Counterpart International	8
3.	Proposal Submission and Selection	9
3.1.	Proposal Submission and Deadlines	9
3.2.	Communication	9
3.3.	Proposal Deadline	9
4.	Requirements	10
4.1.	General Requirements	10
4.2.	Required Documents	10
4.2.1.	Technical Proposal	10
4.2.2.	Price Proposal	12
5.	Deliverables and Milestones	13
6.	Proposal Evaluation and Method of Award	14
6.1.	Evaluation Criteria	14
6.2.	Selection and Notificaton	14
7.	Organizational Certification	15
8.	Certifications, Assurances of Applicants	15
9.	List of Sample Attachments	15

1. Program Description

Counterpart International Armenia is the Armenian branch of a global development organization that empowers people and communities to implement innovative and enduring solutions to social, economic, and environmental challenges.

The Civil Society/Local Government Support Program (CSLGSP), a Counterpart International project in partnership with and generously supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), began its activities in October 2010. The goal of the project is to increase the level of informed and effective civic activism at the local and national levels, along with more participatory, decentralized, efficient and responsive local governance that supports the democratic process. This objective is supported by three programmatic objectives:

Component 1. Local Government and Civil Society Collaboration—Fostering Participatory Community Strategic Planning for Community Development and Improved Local Democracy.

Component 2. Support for Civic Participation, Advocacy and Citizen Activism.

Component 3. Facilitation of Decentralization and Local Fiscal Autonomy.

Current RFP is a part of *Component 3* activities that intends to achieve development in the local government level. A core activity under this program component is the development of a National Strategy for Decentralization that would provide a blueprint for future reforms over the next 10-15 years. Other activities include (a) identifying governance reforms with the potential to improve the efficiency of local governments and quality of their services through developing models for inter-community cooperation; (b) diversifying revenue sources by utilizing opportunities for corporate social responsibility and other public-private ventures; (c) increasing local government access to credit and investment capital for local projects; and (d) enhancing community infrastructure.

2. Introduction to RFP

2.1.Statement of Work

Counterpart International acting on behalf of the U.S. Agency for International Development and CSLGSP under Associate Cooperative Agreement AID-111-LA-10-00001, the Armenia Program in Civil Society Strengthening under Cooperative Agreement DFD-A-00-09-00141-00 awarded in 2010, Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance number 98.001 and titled Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas, between Counterpart Armenia and USAID is soliciting offers from companies and organizations to submit proposals to participate with CSLGSP in carrying out a study tour. The prospective offeror will design and implement a study tour that provides 12 local government representatives from Armenia the opportunity to observe and discuss the know-how, experiences and successful practices of their local government colleagues. The study tour will last 7-9 days in length in one of the following EU countries – Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The total duration of the project is 2.5 months. *Approximate time period for the study tour is June 2013.*

The selected partner organization will assume responsibility for all logistical arrangements including: travel, visa and insurance arrangements (acquisition of visas and travel insurance, booking of tickets and travel to and from the host country for study tour participants plus one

staff member), ground travel inside the host country; hotel reservations; cultural navigation; Armenian translation services for the entire duration of the tour, etc. and also ensure that the entire program is implemented as approved by contractor.

The study tour requires the assistance of facilitators who are familiar with the context of local government in the host country. During the study tour, the Armenian local government representatives will visit various organizations and local government offices that provide information, knowledge and experience in the program objectives described below. The scale and scope of visited municipalities should be comparable to size of Armenian rural and urban municipalities (1,000 – 50,000). The partner organization should organize field trips to no more than three municipalities within the distance not exceeding 300 km. Preference should be given to ground transportation inside the country.

2.2. Program Objectives

The objectives of the study tour are to:

- In the area of finance, management and service delivery
- 1) Study the best practices of formal and informal **intercommunity cooperation** among neighboring communities directed at improved municipal services with higher efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.
 - 2) Study the generation of **external revenues** from non-governmental sources, including donors, national and international foundations, EU funds, private funds, as well as legal provisions and practices of municipal borrowing. Visit local governments and business community sites.
 - 3) Study the **municipal financial management** practices of the host country and outline those that can be effectively applied to the Armenian environment. (Budget processes including execution and oversight, participatory budget planning, budget allocation, adoption, public monitoring and reporting in municipalities.)
 - 4) Identify practical approaches, mechanisms and techniques used in engaging private sector into community development and improvement of municipal services, including successful **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** and **public-private partnership (PPP)** models and outline those that can be applicable to the Armenian environment.
- In the area of decentralization and intergovernmental relations
- 5) Review **intergovernmental relations** among the state, district and local levels of government (i.e., fiscal transfer arrangements, state government grants/subsidies, shared taxes, degree of fiscal autonomy; (visit to a respective Ministry is encouraged).
 - 6) Learn about **decentralization reform** in the host country. Best practices and lessons learned in territorial division, decentralization/consolidation and distribution of competences between central, regional and local authorities, including fiscal decentralization, will be reviewed (Introduction to practiced legislation and policy documents).
- In the area of local governance and participatory decision-making
- 7) Learn about the **access to information and public participation in the decision making-process at the local level** in the host country. The exchange will be intended to promote accountable, transparent and inclusive local governance through increasing opportunities for citizen involvement in local development decisions and activities (including visits with local government and CSO representatives).

- 8) Study the practices of **strategic planning and community development** in the host country. The goal is to get introduced with best practices of community strategic planning, citizens' engagement in the process, implementation of strategic plans and monitoring by public.
- 9) Study application of the **information and communication technologies (ICT)** in the host country, including the improved access to information and development of e-services via official municipal websites, forums and blogs, electronic exchange of documents.
- 10) Study best practices of interaction between **executive and representative branches of LG**, including mayors, councils and municipal staff.

2.3. Program Outcomes

By the end of the program, the participants will be expected to:

1. **Describe and demonstrate** the features of competent municipal management in respect to generation of external revenues, efficient financial management, access to information and engagement of public in decision-making processes, formulation of vital development issues and realistic strategic plans, as well as the importance and meaningful use of information and communication technologies keeping in mind the current realities in their home country. In addition participants will be able to describe what assessment and evaluation mechanisms are useful and most relevant for ensuring a high-quality, successful public service provision.
2. **Understand and be able to describe** the features of success or failure of decentralization reform and intergovernmental relations in the host country, also the specific circumstances and lessons learned – with applicability to Armenia.
3. **Present strategies** for developing partnerships with various business companies with the intent to promote practices of corporate social responsibility and public-private partnership in their respective municipalities.
4. **Have a plan** for engaging and working in various intercommunity collaboration schemes with the purpose of addressing development issues in their community.
5. The added-value of the study tour will be **developing professional contacts** with foreign counterparts (such as preliminary agreements for establishing sister city partnership, etc.).

These program outcomes will serve as basis for an Action plan to be presented toward the end of the study tour, as well as at the Debrief Conference held in Yerevan within the two weeks upon their return to Armenia.

2.4. Proposed Learning Methodologies

The study tour provider will employ a range of strategies and methodologies that will be used to actively involve participants in projected activities and help them apply their new skills and knowledge to their work in Armenia. These may include the following:

- Small group meetings with regional and municipal officials and other office staff members, representatives from municipal associations/CSOs, etc. Small group discussions should take into account the participant profiles and allow for customized content with similar institutional contexts/experiences.
- Structured field visits to central, regional, municipal government offices and other institutions as appropriate, designed to illustrate how the operations are planned, implemented, and evaluated.
- Presentations before and during the program of visits, followed by all-group discussions with the aim of brainstorming ideas for the “Action plan” development. Participants should be given handouts with presentation notes (including contact information of the presenters)

and other relevant information.

- Structured sessions to elicit participant feedback on the program and an explanation of how participants' feedback will be used to adjust and amend the ongoing study tour program.
- Informal receptions, lunches and dinners with colleagues in the host country to promote professional contact development.
- "Action planning" to help participants apply the knowledge and skills they are acquiring to their work in Armenia. The action plan should represent a small achievable project to be accomplished within a year timeline. Best projects may be funded by Counterpart International in Armenia. The action plan should reflect current needs, specific circumstances, capacities and resources of their respective municipalities.
- Development and delivery of a presentation on their proposed action plan. This presentation will be similar to what the participants will present at the Debrief Conference upon their return in Armenia. Adequate writing time for action plan and presentation development should be considered.

Note: Applicants should assume need and contingent resources for interpretation from/into Armenian.

2.5.Responsibilities of Counterpart International

Counterpart International will issue an award to a company or organization to cover the expenses of a 7-9 day study tour for 12 local government officials from its partner municipalities in Armenia. The successful offeror will be required to adhere to the terms of the agreement with Counterpart International.

Counterpart International will play a lead role in the following aspects of the study tour, both during the planning and implementation phases.

- Selection process:* Counterpart International will develop selection criteria for participants and make a final selection through a competitive process. The anticipated group will consist of mayors, municipal servants, council members and representatives from intercommunity associations. One staff member from Counterpart International office in Armenia may also accompany in addition to the 12 participants. To account for expected visa delays and attrition, the program will identify three alternate participants who will be designated as such. Prior to the start of the program, alternates will complete all of the pre-program activities and requirements. Alternates will only participate in the program if any of the principal participants are unable to participate.
- Participant profile:* Counterpart International will provide the selected offeror with important information about participants' profile and the municipalities they come from. This information is intended to assist the organization in tailoring the study program according to the needs and the current realities in their home country.
- Pre-departure preparation:* Counterpart International will collaborate with the selected partner organization to jointly plan the pre-departure orientation prior to the start of the study tour. This planning will include a meeting in advance of departure with participants to:
 - discuss the purpose of the study tour, provide detailed program of the tour*, and share expectations,
 - introduce participants and have them begin working in teams, and
 - share a pre-departure assignment (to prepare a description of the current practices in their

* This document is required for submissions at least one week before the study tour start date; see Section 5 Deliverables and Milestones.

municipality in accordance with program objectives and possible areas for improvement).

- d. *Monitoring:* Counterpart will monitor the implementation of the program throughout the study tour, collaborating with the selected offeror as needed to ensure program objectives and outcomes are reached.

3. Proposal Submission and Selection

3.1.Proposal Submission and Deadlines

Offerors wishing to respond to this RFP must submit electronic proposals, in English, as PDF document, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1.5 spacing, standard 1 inch margins around the page in accordance with the following instructions.

An authorized representative of the organization submitting an offer must sign each copy of the proposal on the cover page, bear the seal of the organization/company if available.

Disclaimer: Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate Counterpart International to award a contract or agreement, nor does it commit Counterpart to paying for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this RFP. All awards are contingent upon USAID funding.

***NOTE:** According to latest US Government regulations all the organizations that want to receive funding from Federal funds are required to provide a nine-digit DUNS number (Data Universal Numbering System) as part of their proposals.*

Offerors that currently have a DUNS number are requested to provide this information. The selected organization(s) who are not registered with DUNS will be asked to go through registration process at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> and obtain a DUNS for their organization before signing the agreement. There is no charge for this registration. Without this code Counterpart will not be able to sign contracts, agreements and provide funds to any organization.

3.2.Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the Counterpart International Contact Person in charge of managing this RFP process. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communications. Offerors' inquiries, questions, and requests for clarification related to this RFP are to be directed in writing in English before April 12, 2013 at 6:00 PM Armenia time to:

Contact Person: Ani Dallakyan, Project Coordinator, E-mail: adallakyan@counterpart.am

With a copy to: Arthur Drampian, Project Director, E-mail: arthur@counterpart.am

3.3.Proposal Deadline

Proposals must be received no later than 6:00 PM (Armenia time – GMT +004) on April 19, 2013, via email to Ms. Dallakyan, at adallakyan@counterpart.am. Offerors are responsible for ensuring that their proposals are received in accordance with the instructions given here. Late proposals will not be considered.

4. Requirements

4.1. General Requirements

This procurement is open to any organization and company that can demonstrate capacity and adequate competence in organizing the study tour in any of the following listed EU countries – **Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania**. Counterpart International Armenia will issue an agreement to an international or host country organization or company provided it is legally registered and legally authorized to work under the laws of the host country and is in compliance with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations. Organizations and Companies must have an established local presence in the host country at the time of the award or clearly demonstrate logistic, organizational and networking capacities to provide requested services. Such an organization or company may be a private firm, a CSO (civil society organization), a municipal association, a university or university research center, or other.

An offeror may present its proposal as a member of a partnership with other companies or organizations. In such a case the contract will be awarded to the leading company or organization in the partnership. The leading company or organization will be responsible for making all partnership arrangements – e.g., division of labor, invoicing, etc. – with the other company/ies or organization/s. A legally registered partnership is not necessary for these purposes; however the different companies or organizations must be committed to working together in fulfillment of the terms of the agreement. Written statements of understanding and commitment will be required as part of any multi-organizational proposals.

4.2. Required Documents

Submitted RFP must include (I) a Technical Proposal, and (II) a Price Proposal in accordance with the instructions provided below with the aim of meeting all program objectives successfully.

4.2.1. Technical Proposal

Technical Proposal should include the following information:

Title Page (see the form in the attachments – Annex C)

Section I: Organizational Capacities, Experience and Past Performance (maximum 2 pages);

Offerors must provide a list of its capabilities and any relevant experiences around managing study tours and working with the target audience/the topic of curriculum development. Capability statements should outline relevant past experience and technical capabilities, including institutional history and experiences conducting programs in the local government field and with the municipalities in the host country.

Offerors must also provide names, email addresses, phone numbers, and contact people at three organizations who have been clients of the offeror during the last 18 months, whom Counterpart International can contact as references. References should be from projects similar in size, application and scope. Also include a brief description of the project.

Section II: Program Plan (maximum 5 pages)

a. **Orientation**

The offeror should include a brief description of the orientation, its content, and who will provide it. Outline what technical, cultural and logistical areas will be covered during the

initial orientation in the host country. This is the ideal time to also go over program rules and regulations, the review of schedule and how the program and training objectives will be monitored. The orientation should be conducted in a “classroom setting” providing an optimal environment to go over important basic program information. Further guidelines and recommendations on the orientation can be provided by Counterpart International as needed.

b. Detailed Activities and Strategies

The activities and strategies should be described in a systematic, well-designed format that ensures all program objectives are met. It should also represent a combination of the training types and learning methodologies that address all of the project focus areas outlined above. Also include a workplan (Gantt Chart) for the entire duration of the program. The Gantt chart format is provided in the Annex D.

c. Proposed Cultural Activities

In addition to a range of facilitated sessions and field visits, the program will also include at least two cultural activities for participants to gain a deeper understanding of the rich diversity and dynamic traditions of the host country and its people. Specify what these activities will include. Cultural activities may include visiting a cultural museum; partaking in a cultural workshop or neighborhood fair; or attending a free community concert. Cultural activities are primarily intended for educational, not entertainment, purposes. Cultural activities provide rare and unique learning opportunities for mutual understanding and observing different perspectives. They also provide opportune teachable moments for cross-cultural interactions and facilitate building of crucial linkages. Cultural activities should take place over evenings and weekends so as to not interfere with scheduled training time.

d. Action Planning Workshop

This workshop will take place towards the end of the study tour and will allow participants the opportunity to review their action plan development and the content covered on good governance. With the assistance of subject matter experts and through in-depth discussions with each other and with experts, this workshop will help facilitate the development of an actionable plan that identifies the approaches and models most suitable for their municipality, and how to implement this plan upon the completion of the study tour.

e. Action Plan and Program Outcomes Presentation

The end of the program should include a presentation of their action plans completed by the participants in the host country. These presentations will also be delivered at the Debrief Conference in Armenia upon their return and will also be the primary forum for demonstrating the achievement of the program outcomes, as specified in Section 2.

f. Closing Reception and Awards Ceremony

The study tour will close with a farewell reception in the host country in honor of the delegates and the fruitful collaboration between participating institutions. The reception will provide an opportunity for the study tour provider’s network to gather with delegates in order to continue discussions for further collaboration between participants and their respective institutions. An award ceremony – held on the last day of tour – will include presentations by both program staff and participants, and a ceremony during which certificates of completion will be formally issued. The farewell reception will immediately follow this event.

Section III: Program Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (maximum 2 pages)

The program will include regular opportunities for reflection, discussion, and feedback on program activities. This feedback will be incorporated to improve on-going presentations and events.

The study tour provider should detail out the plan for how this will take place, including any

specific tools that will be used to ensure the feedback is incorporated into the program design and future activities throughout the program duration. How will the study tour provider plan to document and share its feedback and responses with Counterpart International throughout the program duration?

Participants will take an exit interview towards the close of the program to gauge participants' perspectives on how the program transpired and what objectives were accomplished. Counterpart will provide further details about what to include as part of the exit interview.

Section IV: Management, Personnel and Staffing Plan (maximum 2 pages)

Provide information on full and part-time staff of the proposed project and explain who will be responsible for what tasks, in particular indicate the title and the capacities of the staff persons responsible for the suggested activities (include personnel short résumés and job descriptions indicating staff members' relevant experience and expertise). Please, include also interpretation services for the program activities: provide 3 (three) candidates for consecutive interpretation services. Each candidate shall provide a résumé and one reference.

4.2.2. Price Proposal

The Price Proposal is used to establish the best value among proposals, and serves as a basis of negotiation for the signing of the contract. It should consist of:

Section V: Detailed Budget

All offerors must submit a cost breakdown for completing the study tour described in this RFP. Proposals must show unit prices, quantities, and total price. All items, services, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total price. Please, provide the budget as displayed in the Annex E. The selected organization must agree to abide by the price submitted for the duration of the contract.

- The price proposal must be in US Dollars no more than 45,000 USD.
- All offerors must provide a price guarantee that the proposal price remains valid for 120 days.
- Counterpart will not pay for any costs incurred by the offeror in preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP.
- Detailed cash and/or in-kind cost-share provisions from applicants will be considered favorably. All proposed cost-share will be subject to final approval by Counterpart International.

Section VI: Budget narrative

The budget narrative should provide details on types of resources to be obtained, cost per unit, and price justification. The budget narrative must include information about how the amounts for each estimated cost were determined. Allowable costs under this contract may include but are not limited to the following: program expenses, office equipment, personnel, technical assistance and administrative expenses. The applicant should solidly justify all the expenses, in particular the necessity to purchase the resources stated within the context of the project impact.

Supporting information should be provided in sufficient detail to allow for a complete analysis of each element. Please, provide the budget narrative as displayed in the Annex F.

5. Deliverables and Milestones

Payment will be contingent upon receipt of the deliverables specified below, with the exception of lodging and transportation arrangements, as well as meals and incidental allowances, for which payment will be made upon submission of actual receipts. For travel, visa and insurance arrangements receipts and copies of respective documents will serve as a basis for payment. Percentages of payments for these deliverables will be negotiated with successful offeror.

Submit revised draft schedule of activities based on additional feedback from Counterpart	Three weeks before the study tour start date
Proof of lodging arrangements	Three weeks before the study tour start date
Written confirmation of travel, visa and insurance arrangements required with contact details for vendors used. Any updates to this list will be provided to Ms. Dallakyan as needed and requested.	Two weeks before the study tour start date
Written confirmation of all in-country transportation required with contact details for vendors used. Any updates to this transportation list will be provided to Ms. Dallakyan as needed and requested.	Two weeks before the study tour start date
Submit a complete final daily agenda of the study tour. The agenda will include the following information: travel time, date and time of meetings, exact location of meetings, and the topics to be discussed.	One week before the study tour start date
Final/revised bios for trainer pool	One week before the study tour start date
Receipts and copies of participant air tickets, visa and insurance documents	Within three days of participants' arrival date
Receipt of participant per diems, M&IE	Within three days of participants' arrival date
Hotel receipts	Within three days of participants' arrival date
Completed participant final presentations (to be presented at the Debrief Conference in Yerevan Armenia Counterpart staff)	By the departure date/final program date
Participant exit questionnaires and program evaluation feedback	By the departure date/final program date
Action plans from all participants	By the departure date/final program date
Written documentation of meeting notes from all scheduled meetings. These meeting notes shall include summary of talking points and sign in sheet for meeting participants, including contact details.	Within one week of program completion
Photos and video recordings of participants during the study tour that chronicles their growth and experiences throughout the program (5-7 minute video clips).	Within 30 days of program completion
Final report including instruments used for program evaluation, the final program schedule, and any proposal	Within 30 days of program completion

for in-country, follow-on program plans, as well as a list of 3-4 participants who can articulate the group's key lessons and experiences in debriefings in country.	
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Counterpart International Armenia reserves the unilateral right to terminate this agreement at any time, paying for all deliverables completed at the time of termination and a pro-rata share of any deliverable in progress.

6. Proposal Evaluation and Method of Award

6.1.Evaluation Criteria

The technical evaluation of each response to this RFP will be based on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization. The purpose of this RFP is to identify those organizations that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to supply the services identified in Section 4.

Institutional	Points
Company background and experience <i>Does the company have experience relevant to the project's Scope of Work?</i>	20
Personnel qualifications <i>Do the proposed team members have the experience and capabilities needed to carry out the Scope of Work?</i>	20
Technical	
Technical know-how <i>Does the proposal clearly explain, understand and respond to the objectives stated in the Scope of Work?</i>	15
Workplan <i>Do the approach, activities and timeline given in the proposal fulfill the requirements of the Scope of Work effectively and efficiently?</i>	10
Sector knowledge <i>Does the proposal demonstrate the offeror's knowledge of both the region and the local government institution in the host country?</i>	15
Price	
Best overall value <i>Does the budget proposed represent a reasonable, realistic, and complete set of costs offering?</i>	20
Total	100 points

6.2.Selection and Notification

Counterpart International may award one agreement resulting from this RFP to the offeror(s) whose quotation(s) conforming to this RFP offer(s) the greatest value. Counterpart may also (a) reject any or all quotations, (b) accept other than the lowest cost quotation, (c) accept more than

one quotation, (d) accept alternate quotations, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in quotations received.

Written notification will be sent to the selected offeror(s) via email. Those offerors not selected for the negotiation phase will not be notified.

7. Organizational Certification

In order for their proposal to be considered, the offeror must complete and submit the organizational certification included in Annex A to this RFP. This certification attests to the Offeror's awareness and agreement to the content of this RFP and all accompanying calendar schedules and terms and provisions contained herein. The Offeror must ensure that this certification is duly completed and correctly executed by an authorized officer of the Offeror's company.

8. Certifications, Assurances of Applicants

Certifications and Assurances of Applicants must be submitted as part of an Applicant's price proposal. It must be signed by an authorized agent of the applicant. See Annex B.

9. List of Sample Attachments

- i. Organizational Certification form (Annex A)
- ii. Certifications, Assurances of Applicants (Annex B)
- iii. Proof of organization's registration and/or ability to legally operate in the host country
- iv. Title Page (Annex C)
- v. Workplan/Gantt Chart (Annex D)
- vi. Budget (Annex E)
- vii. Budget Narrative (Annex F)
- viii. Personnel short résumés and job descriptions.