REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

MULTINATIONAL: BENIN, COTE D'IVOIRE, GHANA, NIGERIA AND TOGO AND THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)

STUDY ON THE ABIDJAN–LAGOS CORRIDOR HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT (PIU)

RECRUITMENT OF A FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT

1. The ECOWAS Commission has received Grants from the African Development Fund (ADF) and the European Development Fund (through the African Investment Facility –AfIF) to cover the cost of the study on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project, and intends to use part of the grant amount to finance the service contract of a Finance and Account Assistant in the Project Implementation Unit.

2. The services under this contract mainly concern all accounting activities during the project implementation. The activities include: (i) keeping of project accounts and accounting documents in line with statutory standards of the AfDB; (ii) participating in the preparation of financial management documents; (iii) applying expenditure execution and eligibility rules; (iv) participating in the preparation of the annual work programme and budget (AWPB) of the unit and project; (v) paying for operations after authorization; and (vi) carrying out all accounting operations in line with public finance rules and principles. The contract period shall be one (1) year, renewable based on the results of the performance contract signed with the Project. The working languages will be English and French and the person should therefore be fluent in either English or French and have working knowledge in the other.

3. The ECOWAS Commission invites all interested eligible and qualified individual Consultants to submit their candidacy to provide the services described above. The Consultants must produce a letter of expression of interest and their curriculum vitae, providing clear information on their experience and qualification with respect to the assignment (CV, references of similar services demonstrating that they are qualified, description of their experiences and tasks in similar assignments, availability, etc.).


5. Interested Consultants can obtain further information at the address mentioned below during office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon (GMT+1) on working days. The TORs can also be consulted on the ECOWAS (http://www.ecowas.int/doing-business-in-ecowas/ecowas-procurement/) and AfDB (see below) websites.

6. The expressions of interest should be submitted or sent to the address (physical or electronic) below not later than 22nd June, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. (GMT+1), and must be clearly marked: “Study on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project/Expression of Interest in the services of a Finance and Account Assistant for the Project Implementation Unit”.

For delivery in person or by Mail:

Office of the Commissioner,
General Administration & Conference,
Fifth (5th) Floor of the ECOWAS Commission Headquarters,
Plot 101, Yakubu Gowon Crescent,
Asokoro District,
Abuja, NIGERIA.
For delivery by e-mail:
Attention Commissioner General Administration & Conference
Email: snartey@ecowas.int

with copies to aweeks@ecowas.int
cappiah@ecowas.int
sbangoura@ecowas.int
procurement@ecowas.int

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF A FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT FOR THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT

I- Context and Rationale

The ECOWAS Regional Integration vision involves the enhancement of infrastructure development which is recognized as a catalyst for economic growth and integration of peoples. In this regard, the ECOWAS Commission, which prioritizes transport infrastructure in its 2020 Vision Strategy Paper: “Towards an ECOWAS of Peoples”, obtained from the Heads of State during the 42nd Ordinary Summit held in February 2013, formal approval for the construction of a homogenous six-lane (2x3 lanes) highway corridor to link five ECOWAS Member States namely Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire.

This 1,028-km “Abidjan-Lagos Highway" links major cities, and crosses a high economic potential zone with about 75% of West Africa’s volume of trade. To the extent possible, the highway will follow a new route different from the existing corridor.

To implement this major project, technical and financial partners (including ADF and the European Union’s AFIF), as well as participating Member States have undertaken to finance several technical preparatory studies on the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Highway Development Project to the tune of UA 16.28 million or USD 22.32million.

This project, which seeks to conduct feasibility, final design and complementary studies so as to transform the corridor into a competitive infrastructure in terms of trade and transport development, comprises eight (8) components and will be implemented under the authority of the ECOWAS Commission.

The implementation arrangements provide for a Steering Committee as the oversight body, a Study Delivery Team (SDT) for supervising project activities, and a Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The PIU will: (i) ensure the day-to-day administration and efficient management of the project; (ii) conduct procurement activities under the project; (iii) review the various study reports and decide on their quality and adequacy; (iv) make logistical and financial arrangements for various stakeholder meetings, as well as the donor and potential private investors’ roundtable; and lastly (v) ensure the administrative and financial management of project activities.

The Unit, which will be based in the Office of the ECOWAS Permanent Representative to Cote d’Ivoire in Abidjan, will comprise: (i) independent experts namely: a project coordinator, two (2) road engineers with procurement skills (a Francophone and an Anglophone), support staff (accounting officer, administrative assistant, driver), and (ii) five (5) experienced representatives (civil engineers or any other disciplines related to the conduct of the study) of sector Ministries of each country who will be deployed periodically as may be required. The Project Implementation Unit will work in close collaboration with ECOWAS and benefit from the expertise of a mobilized Technical Assistance Team.

II- Assignment and Tasks of the Finance & Accounts Officer

Under the control and supervision of the Project Coordinator, he/she will be responsible for keeping the accounts of the Project Implementation Unit and will, in compliance with good governance rules, be particularly responsible for:
• keeping project accounts and accounting documents in line with statutory standards;
• participating in the preparation of financial statements;
• applying public expenditure execution and eligibility rules of the related donors;
• making payments following authorization by the Authorizing Officer appointed in accordance with the procedures manual;
• carrying out all public finance accounting operations;
• carrying out other accounting activities.

In performing these tasks, the Finance and Accounts Assistant of the project will also have the following duties:

1- Keeping of project accounts

• Prepare service providers’ direct payment files and invoices for the special accounts;
• Prepare Cheques and Transfer Orders, as well as keep banking records;
• Receive and duplicate accounting records, as well as payment notices to be presented during posting of the related accounting records;
• Keep petty cash, issue payment vouchers, and keep the cash book;
• Conduct periodical closing of cash transactions (at least monthly);
• Prepare monthly bank reconciliation statements;
• Keep periodic statements for tracking PIU operation (fuel, missions, car maintenance, etc.);
• Participate in the preparation of accounting records and, after audit, keep accounting documents and archives;
• Be primarily responsible for the proper filing and archiving of all project accounting documents.

2- Preparation of disbursement documents

• Prepare direct payment files to be submitted to the African Development Fund (ADF);
• Prepare files for replenishment of the special accounts;
• Prepare the required supporting statements for each request for replenishment of the project special accounts.

2- In public finance

• Ensure timely payment of the corresponding VAT for invoices received by the project;
• Prepare and follow up customs clearance documents for equipment procured by the project.

3- Other duties

• Participate in verifying equipment and supplies at the time of delivery if designated as a member of the PIU acceptance commission;
• Contribute jointly with the Administrative and Financial Service to periodically updating the inventory of property procured under the project;
• Carry out other accounting tasks assigned by other supervisors.

III. Expected Performance of the Financial and Accounting Assistant

The expected performance will include the following:
• Project accounts are kept up to date;
• Project service providers are paid regularly and on time;
• Project accounts are replenished in a timely manner;
• Accounting documents are well maintained and filed;
• In public accounting, all regularization (VAT) documents are prepared within the statutory time frames.
The Financial and Accounting Assistant will be assessed in terms of the points described above and the quality of his/her services. His/her performance will be evaluated.

IV. Profile of the Financial and Accounting Assistant

The PIU Financial and Accounting Assistant must have the following qualifications:

Qualifications:
- Hold a University Degree or Diploma from a recognized training institute in accounting and/or financial management;

Required Knowledge and Experience
- Have at least five (5) years’ work experience in administrative and financial management of donor-funded projects;
- Have a minimum of 2 years’ work experience as accounting officer;
- Have a good knowledge of accounting procedures and international standards;
- Have a good knowledge of public accounting;
- Have a very good knowledge of computer applications (especially Word, Excel, TOM2PRO, etc.);
- Have served as accounting officer in the implementation unit or executing agency of at least 1 transport infrastructure project financed by multilateral donors;
- Speak and write English or French very well with a good working knowledge of the other;
- Be physically fit and able to make frequent trips to the field;

Reporting

The Finance and Accounts Assistant will submit a progress report on the project financial management status to the Project Coordinator on a quarterly basis or such other frequency as may be required.

V- Selection Criteria

1. General qualifications and aptitude for the task to be performed 30%
2. Experience in the task described in the terms of reference 50%
3. Language skills 10%
4. Knowledge of the West African Region (3 Similar Projects/Experiences) 10%

VI- Duration of the Contract

One (1) year, renewable during the project life cycle based on the results of the performance contract signed with the project.

VII- Place of Work

The position will be based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.