

General Information

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is seeking to establish a framework agreement with VSAT Internet supplier for its country operations in Africa. This invitation to bid (ITB) provides interested companies, hereafter referred to as “supplier”, with the opportunity to respond to NRC’s requirements for VSAT connectivity for its operations.

Background

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is a non-governmental, humanitarian organisation with 60 years of experience in helping to create a safer and more dignified life for refugees and internally displaced people. NRC advocates for the rights of displaced populations and offers assistance within the shelter, education, emergency food security, legal assistance, and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors.

To carry out its mandate efficiently, NRC requires reliable Internet connectivity in its sites which often operate in remote locations. NRC is launching a tender to provide VSAT services across its sites in Africa.

NRC operates 4 sites in Central African Republic and 5 sites in Mali with immediate need of VSAT connections (marked in red on the map below). This tender is likely to lead to an initial contract for those 9 sites for two years, with a potential extension of a further year. Projected staffing at the sites for the first year suggest a total bandwidth requirement of 54 Mbps (up + down). Details of each site are in Appendix 1.

NRC operates a further 16 sites in Africa that use VSAT connections (marked in yellow). In addition to the initial supply for 9 sites, NRC anticipates that the framework agreement will be used to supply VSAT connectivity to several of these 16 sites and additional sites that require VSAT connections during the period of the agreement. These sites represent a further 50 Mbps (up + down).



About the framework agreement

The framework agreement will last for two years from the date of the signing of the framework agreement contract. NRC aims to have the framework agreement in effect from September 2018. After two years have passed from the date of signing the framework agreement, it may then be extended for a further one year should both parties agree to do so. The framework agreement will be non-exclusive and NRC may choose to enter more than one framework agreements following its analysis of bids received for this invitation to bid. NRC does not commit to a purchasing volume by tender for or signing the framework agreement. Commitments will come from contracts resulting from the framework agreement.

Bid instructions and conditions

All communication between the bidder and NRC shall be to CWARO.Tender@nrc.no and in English.

Questions concerning the ITB shall be submitted to the same e-mail address starting from 21.08.2018 and the subject field of e-mails shall include [NRC PROVISION OF VSAT CONNECTIVITY-Africa].

If one of the bidders asks for clarification on any point during the bid period, both the question from the bidder and the reply from NRC will be shared with all bidders. Submitters of questions will be anonymized when the Q&A message is shared.

The bid itself shall be submitted as attachments to a cover letter by e-mail to CWARO.Tender@nrc.no

Closing date for questions: By midnight CET on 06.09.2018.

Closing date for bids: All complete bids are to be received by NRC at CWARO.Tender@nrc.no by midnight CET on 14.09.2018. Email subject should be labelled : BID-NRC PROVISION OF VSAT

Notification of selection:

All bidders will be contacted by midnight CET on 04.10.2018 with formal notification of final selection.

Interested parties are encouraged to present a formal bid. All bids and any annexes are to be submitted in English only.

NRC reserves the right to accept or reject the whole or part of bids based on the information provided. Incomplete quotations, which do not comply with our instructions, conditions and requirements, may not be considered.

Currency, payment terms and validity

The required currency for all pricing information is USD. The pricing structure should be fixed for the duration of the contract.

NRC standard payment terms are within 30 days upon satisfactory receipt of goods and documents in good order.

The bidder shall clarify the validity of all pricing information (except for shipping) in the response to the ITB.

As per NRC logistics guidelines, the duration of the agreement itself will be two years from the signing of the framework contract. When the agreement contract ends, a new procurement process with invitation to bid will be initiated in order to potentially renew the framework contract.

Requirements & technical specification

Bidders are required to provide response on all the below requirements and questions. Incomplete bids may not be considered.

Bidder operational requirements

- i. Operate one or more teleport(s) with multiple redundant fiber links to the Internet backbone, redundant power supplies, and provide details of the locations and contingency measures in the bid documents.
- ii. Should have a 24/7/365 Support Network Operations Center for incident report and network issues to ensure continuity of the service, with a ticketing system in use that NRC staff can login to log and monitor progress of tickets.
- iii. Should provide a web-based monitoring interface for the client to observe the performance and utilization of the resources by month, week day and hour, that includes bandwidth consumption per site, latency, and packet loss.
- iv. Alerting by email on detection of unplanned outages, technical issues that affect service, as well as at least 72 hours' notice for planned outages due to maintenance and solar outages.

Account management requirements

- v. Assignment of a dedicated account manager to NRC.
- vi. Key performance indicators will be agreed between NRC and the bidder. Monthly meetings will take place between the account manager and NRC to review KPIs and the account in general. Once a year this meeting should be face to face.

Logistics requirements

- vii. Provide information about how shipments of equipment will be made to each country in the most cost-effective way. Detail how customs clearance will be handled. NRC prefers DDP shipping where practical.

Installation requirements

- viii. Installation will be carried out by engineers with Global VSAT Forum accreditation or equivalent
- ix. Provide details of installation workforce to be used in Africa. Will the bidder use their own staff to install or local contractors? Where are the engineers normally located?
- x. Installation will include electrical earthing/grounding and lightning protection for all outdoor equipment, and any necessary security (e.g. fences around outdoor equipment)
- xi. Supplier shall clarify what is expected from NRC in terms of infrastructure on-site (e.g. closed rack cabinet, cooling, surge protection, backup power etc.).
- xii. Give details of testing done to confirm the commissioning process and the procedure for sign off with NRC local staff.

Technical Requirements

- xiii. Supplier should consider usage of existing VSAT equipment available on site (details in Appendix 2). If not, he should clearly define equipment, shipping and installation fees in his bid.
- xiv. Outline the VSAT platform and modem models proposed (e.g. iDirect X3, X5, X7).
- xv. The bandwidth for each site shall be provided on a dedicated and non-sharable basis with other customers.
- xvi. Provide details of which satellite will be used for each site and which band is proposed. Provide footprint maps for each band and satellite.
- xvii. Capacity to apply traffic shaping and quality of service rules for NRC corporate traffic like ERP applications, internal portals, eMail, Voice and Video Conferencing based on NRCs specifications which can be detailed as layer 3 (ip address and port) or layer 7 (hostnames).
- xviii. Capacity to apply firewall rules to filter unwanted traffic.
- xix. Traffic shaping, QoS and firewall filtering should be carried out at the teleport to improve efficient use of the VSAT link.
- xx. Each site should be issued with a public fixed IP subnet of /30 allowing the VSAT equipment and NRC firewall to use a fixed public IP address. Any firewall features managed by the bidder will allow ping traffic to the VSAT equipment and NRC firewall for monitoring purposes.

Licensing

- xxi. NRC intends to operate according to local licensing legislation. Provide information about how VSAT licensing is managed by the supplier for VSAT service in Mali and Central African Republic specifically and elsewhere in Africa in general. Bidder must agree to work with any licensing specialists NRC engages.

Pricing structure

- xxii. **Standard pricing structure**
Pricing structure that assumes all on-boarding costs are covered in advance. Pricing could be a simple monthly rate per Mb (simplex), or a tiered system where pricing changes as certain monthly volume rates are reached. Please give details of any pricing tiers covering total bandwidth between 40 and 120 Mbps.
- xxiii. **Cost recovery pricing structure**
The proposal should also include a pricing structure that incorporates all up-front installation costs into the monthly rate. Here three-year contract should be assumed and a minimum monthly total bandwidth may be defined.
- xxiv. Include details of any additional monthly fees either fixed or applied to additional services offered.
- xxv. **Upfront costs**
For standard pricing structure, give specification and costs for proposed hardware and estimated shipping, import and installation costs to each of the initial 9 sites.

Flexibility within contract

- xxvi. NRC may wish to increase or decrease total bandwidth during the terms of the contract, due to changing requirements across sites. Outline how this will affect cost, including how any volume discounts apply.

- xxvii. NRC may wish to transfer bandwidth between sites. Give details for how such requests will be handled.
- xxviii. Should NRC close a site for any reason, give details of how this will be handled in terms of fees and technical assistance.
- xxix. Should NRC wish to relocate a site, give details of how this will be handled in terms of fees and technical assistance.
- xxx. Supply an example contract with contractual terms that will apply to NRC.

Bid evaluation

NRC is not bound to select any of the suppliers who submitted bids and does not bind itself to select the lowest price offer. The Framework Agreement will be awarded to the bidder considered most responsive to the needs of NRC and most conforming to NRC’s general principles, including value for money. The quotation that complies with all of the specifications, requirements and offers the most competitive price, as well as all in line with below mentioned evaluation criteria, shall be selected. Any offer that does not meet the requirements shall be rejected.

The overarching criteria for selection with weighting percentages are the following:

- Pricing, flexibility and contract terms (60%)
- Proven experience with supplied references (20%)
- Service level agreement (20%)

Appendix 1: Initial 9 sites

MALI

Site Name	Geo-coordinates	Downlink bandwidth requirement	Uplink bandwidth requirement
Gao	16.2572, -0.0401	4.5	2.25
Menaka	15.9156, 2.396174	1.5	0.75
Timbuktu	16.7646, -3	2.5	1.25
Teninkou	12.6189021, -7.9330154	1	0.5
Mopti	14.487428, -4.197463	2.5	1.25

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Site Name	Geo-coordinates	Downlink bandwidth requirement	Uplink bandwidth requirement
Carnot	4.9399527, 15.870894	6	3
Ndele	8.411194, 20.6446805	4.5	2.25
Sibut	5.7333305, 19.083333	6.5	3.25
Bangui	4.367664, 18.582020	7	3.5

Appendix 2: Existing equipment

Country	Site Name	Antenna Type	Antenna Diameter	BUC	LNB	Modem
CAR	Carnot	VisioSat Dual Optic (Tx/Rx)	1.2m	BUC Ku-Linear 4Watt	LNB Ku DRO (LO 9.75GHz)	Modem iFast-Ip SkyEdge II
	Ndele	VisioSat Dual Optic (Tx/Rx)	1.2m	BUC Ku-Linear 4Watt	LNB Ku DRO (LO 9.75GHz)	Modem iFast-Ip SkyEdge II
	Sibut	VisioSat Dual Optic (Tx/Rx)	1.2m	BUC Ku-Linear 4Watt	LNB Ku DRO (LO 9.75GHz)	Modem iFast-Ip SkyEdge II
Mali	Gao		1.2m		iLBN 2w	Mdn 2200
	Timbuktu		1.2m		iLBN 2w	Mdn 2200