Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

FOR

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES

**Develop An ICT Policy, Website and Micro E-Library for Centre
D'etudes et de Recherche Sur Les Analyses Et Politiques Economiques
(CERAPE)**

(ACBF/REOI/004/24/SALCA/BMGF)

MARCH 2024

**THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING
FOUNDATION (ACBF HEAD OFFICE)**
2 Fairbairn Drive, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: (+263-242) 304663, 332002
Cell: +263 772 185 308 - 10
E-mail: root@acbf-pact.org

**ACBF REGIONAL OFFICE,
WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA**
3rd Floor, The Rhombus, Plot 24 Tumu Street,
Kanda Estates, Accra,Ghana
Tel : +233 540122013
E-mail : accra@acbf-pact.org

**ACBF REGIONAL OFFICE,
EAST & SOUTHERN AFRICA**
ACK Garden House, 2nd Floor, 1st Ngong Ave, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 (20) 5160052
Cell: +254 727 116 276
E-mail: nairobi@acbf-pact.org

www.acbf-pact.org

1. Background and rationale

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) is implementing the "*Strengthening African Leadership for* Climate Change *Adaptation*" (SALCA) program, which aims to improve the performance of organizations working in the field of climate change adaptation for a sustainable climate change adaptation ecosystem on the African continent. The overall expected outcome of the program is to have a strong group of African-based and African-led organizations capable of shaping Africa's response to climate change through effective policy dialogue, advocacy and the use of a common voice to raise awareness and influence policy.

More specifically, the SALCA program will strengthen the capacity of selected organizations to play a leading role in climate adaptation by improving their efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability, while enhancing their ability to develop an organizational culture of excellence, with the overall aim of improving the continent's ability to undertake the actions needed to prepare for and adapt to the current and future impacts of climate change.

The program emphasizes a data- and evidence-based approach in its implementation, as well as gender sensitivity and social inclusion in the climate adaptation strategies of selected organizations. As part of its implementation strategy, the SALCA program supports target organizations including the Center for Studies and Research in Economic Analyses and Policies (CERAPE), in implementing the customized institutional capacity improvement plans (CICIPs). These plans aim to address priority capacity challenges faced by target organizations working with marginalized African communities to develop sustainable and resilient climate adaptation strategies.

The Center for Studies and Research in Economic Analyses and Policies (CERAPE) is a research Centre established in November 2002 and registered in the Republic of Congo, as a Non-Governmental Organization. Its mission is to conduct research on economic and social issues, including agriculture, to inform policy and practice. CERAPE has a regional presence, with country research units in Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

As part of this 4-year program, ACBF is supporting CERAPE to strengthen its capacity as a research institution contributing meaningfully to climate adaptation agenda in Africa. The specific objectives of the intervention are:
   i)   *To enhance the organization systems and processes for effective delivery of its mandate*;
   ii) *To strengthen human capacity*; and

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iii) *To enhance capacity for sustainable operations*.

As a first step to support CERAPE, ACBF conducted a Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) of the institution between September and November 2022 to understand its strengths and needs. The CNA of CERAPE focused on the following ten key institutional capacity areas: Governance and Leadership, Strategic Planning and Innovation, Human Resource management, financial management, Program Planning and Implementation, Results management and Quality Assurance, Communication, Knowledge Management, Resource Mobilization and Partnership and Infrastructure. The CNA among other findings revealed weaknesses in CERAPE's ICT Infrastructure. It was therefore recommended that an ICT Policy and a functional website be designed and set up for CERAPE.

It is in this regard that the CERAPE Regional Coordination, in collaboration with ACBF, seeks to commission an individual level consultancy to develop a website and ICT Policy.

2. Objectives

The objective of this consultancy is to create a comprehensive website and micro e-library for CERAPE that serves as an interactive platform, facilitates data archiving, downloading, and showcases all relevant information and activities. The website will be designed to present content in an organized, visually appealing, and user-friendly manner. Its primary goal is to provide a fully functional online platform for CERAPE, enabling seamless access to data and information related to CERAPE's business and programs. The website should have the following functionalities.

i.   **Design the website structure**: Develop an organized and intuitive layout for the website that aligns with CERAPE's requirements and goals.

ii.   **Create a provisional digital mock-up of the website**: Produce a visual representation of the website's design and functionality to provide a clear understanding of its appearance and features.

iii.   **Purchase a subscription for installation**: Acquire the necessary subscription or hosting service to ensure smooth installation and hosting of the website.

iv.   **Install the digital site and conduct virtual workshop testing**: Set up the website on the designated platform and perform thorough testing to identify and resolve any technical issues or usability concerns in a simulated workshop environment.

v.   **Incorporate observations and suggestions from CERAPE and ACBF**: Consider the feedback and recommendations provided by CERAPE and ACBF stakeholders to refine and enhance the website's design, functionality, and user experience.

vi. **Finalize the website**: Make necessary adjustments and improvements based on the feedback received, ensuring that all aspects of the website meet the desired standards and objectives.

vii. **Training and maintenance**: Provide comprehensive training to CERAPE members on how to effectively utilize and maintain the website, enabling them to manage content updates, address technical issues, and maximize the website's potential.

3.0 Scope of Work

The consultancy services will be provided to CERAPE, an institution located in Congo Brazzaville. The consultancy aims to develop a functional and interactive website for CERAPE to enhance communication efforts. The scope of work for this assignment will include the following;

- Design website layout, site structure, and user interface.
- Development of fully operational prototypes to validate requirements
- Development of themes/plugins, stocks (logo, imageries), and website functionalities
- Lead data migration and initial data uploading.
- Registration of domain, and hosting the website on a reliable, high-performing and secured web server
- Implementation of strong site security
- Test and fine-tune the functionality, performance and responsiveness from popular computing devices (desktop, smartphone, tablets), and web browsers (IE/Edge, Firefox, Chrome, Safari)
- Perform search engine optimization (SEO) to improve the website's ranking in search engine results pages.
- Provide training to client's website team.
- Provide maintenance and support plan (regular backups, updates, bug fixes and users support to keep the site up-to-date and responsive)

3.1 **ICT Policy**

- Conduct an initial assessment of CERAPE's ICT infrastructure, systems, and practices. Gather information from documentation, policies, and procedures. Interview key stakeholders to understand their perspectives and requirements.
- Conduct research on best practices, standards, and frameworks for ICT policies in the nonprofit sector. Benchmark against similar organizations to
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- identify areas of improvement. Identify relevant guidelines, certifications, or frameworks to ensure compliance.
- Conduct a comprehensive needs analysis to identify the specific ICT requirements, challenges, and opportunities within CERAPE's operations and programs.
- Develop a comprehensive ICT strategy and framework that aligns witCERAPE's mission, goals, and values. Define the policy's scope, objectives,
- inciples, and strategic priorities. Address key areas such as data protection, privacy, security, accessibility, and ethical considerations. Ensure compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Define clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms for implementing and enforcing the ICT policy, and establish procedures for reporting, escalation, and resolution of ICT-related issues.
- Develop guidelines and procedures for ICT governance and management. Outline processes for ICT project management, procurement, deployment, and maintenance. Ensure alignment with CERAPE's organizational structure and decision-making processes.
- Incorporate measures to protect data, ensure privacy, and mitigate risks associated with ICT operations, and define security protocols, access controls, and incident response procedures. Also, conduct a risk assessment and propose risk mitigation strategies.
- Identify ICT skill gaps within CERAPE and develop strategies to address them, and recommend capacity-building initiatives, training programs, and resources to enhance staff members' ICT skills and knowledge. Further, provide guidance on ongoing professional development opportunities and knowledge sharing.
- Prepare a comprehensive and user-friendly ICT strategy document that is easily understood and accessible to all stakeholders, and ensure the document includes clear guidelines, procedures, and reference materials; and develop a communication plan to effectively communicate the ICT strategy across CERAPE.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing the ICT policy. Define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure impact and identify areas for improvement. Recommend periodic review and updating to ensure alignment with trends and needs.

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- Present the ICT strategy draft to management and stakeholders, incorporate feedback, finalize the document, and provide support during implementation.

The consultant is also expected to work in close collaboration with the CERAPE's Communication Consultant to update the website in accordance with the CERAPE Communication Strategy as well as develop an organisational logo for CERAPE.

4.0 Methodology

ICT Policy
The Consultant will review the existing procedures, and other relevant CERAPE ICT documents, propose a methodology for the assignment and engage with CERAPE management, staff and other stakeholders including ACBF.

Website and E-Library
In general, the assignment will be conducted using various methods such as but not limited to:

4.1 **Data Gathering**: Conduct an initial consultation with CERAPE to understand the website requirements, goals, target audience, and desired features.

4.2 **Content Planning**: Collaborate with CERAPE to identify and organize the website content, including pages, sections, and multimedia elements.

4.3 **Website Design**: Develop a visually appealing and user-friendly website design, incorporating CERAPE's branding elements and ensuring a consistent and professional look across all pages.

4.4 **Website Development**: Build the website using appropriate technologies and platforms, ensuring responsiveness, accessibility, and compatibility with different devices and browsers.

4.5 **Content Creation and Integration**: Create and integrate relevant content, such as text, images, videos, and documents, into the website, adhering to best practices for search engine optimization (SEO).

4.6 **Functionality Implementation**: Incorporate necessary functionality, such as contact forms, donation systems, event registration, newsletter subscriptions, and social media integration, based on CERAPE's requirements.

4.7 **Testing and Quality Assurance**: Conduct thorough testing to ensure the website functions properly across different browsers, platforms, and devices. Identify and rectify any bugs, errors, or usability issues.

4.8 **Training and Handover**: Provide training to CERAPE's staff members on managing and updating the website, including content management system (CMS) usage, basic troubleshooting, and security practices. Prepare comprehensive documentation for future reference.

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4.9 **Launch and Deployment**: Coordinate with CERAPE to launch, ensuring a seamless transition the website, domain, hosting, and security settings.

4.10 **Post-Launch Support**: Offer post-launch support to address any issues, provide technical assistance, and guide CERAPE in effectively utilizing the website's features. Establish a maintenance plan for regular updates and security patches.

5.0 Key Deliverables

At the end of the consultancy assignment the following deliverables are expected:

    i.   The website design and specifications which will present a great visual look and its functionalities are well developed to provide the best experience to users.

    ii.   A newly developed CERAPE logo that effectively brands the organization in line with its mission, vision and core values.

    iii.   The procurement of data storage, management, and tracking technology.

    iv.   The installation and testing of the website.

    v.   The systems operations and user documentation manual and deliver training to the support staff and system administrators to perform content upload, system maintenance and administration.

    vi.   Training and capacity building for the identified CERAPE's personnel.

    vii.   The final report and other relevant documentation

    viii.   A detailed Inception Report outlining the approach towards realising the consultancy objectives.

    ix.   A draft ICT strategy and governance framework that aligns with CERAPE's mission, goals, values and includes guidelines and procedures for the governance and management of ICT resources and systems within CERAPE.

    x.   A comprehensive ICT strategy and governance framework (Final) taking into consideration the comments received from various stakeholders.

6.0 Qualifications, Experience and Competencies

- Master's degree in ICT, telecommunications, computer science or related disciplines.
- Bachelor's degree in web development, computer science, information technology, or a related field.
- Experience working with NGOs and other non-profit organizations.
- Relevant certifications or professional training in web development and design

- At least 5 years proven experience in developing ICT policies and web design for non-profit organizations.

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- Demonstrated portfolio of successful website development projects.
- Experience with content management systems (CMS) such as WordPress, Joomla, or Drupal.
- Familiarity with website hosting, domain registration, and server configuration.
- Knowledge of web design principles, user experience (UX), and responsive design.
- Technical skills involving proficiency in HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and other relevant web development languages; Experience with front-end frameworks like Bootstrap or Foundation; Knowledge of back-end technologies such as PHP, Ruby, or Python; Familiarity with database management systems (e.g., MySQL) and SQL queries; Understanding of SEO best practices and website optimization techniques; Ability to integrate and customize third-party plugins, APIs, and widgets.
- Strong graphic design skills with an eye for aesthetics and usability.
- Ability to conduct thorough testing and quality assurance to ensure a bug-free and optimized website.
- Open-minded, willing to accept criticism and a team player.
- Excellent writing and communication skills in French; knowledge of English is an asset.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate and work well with diverse people.

7.0 Duration of Assignment

The provisional start of this assignment 1st April 2024 with the expected end date being 30th June 2024, with a maximum of 90 calendar days.

8. Content, Schedule and Submission

The outputs must meet quality standards. The website must be illustrated, with photos, documents and videos. The final website must be installed no later than September 30, 2024.

The expected results and provisional timetable are presented in the table below.

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Table 1. Delivery & Finance schedule

N°	Activities	Timeline	Fees US$
1	Presentation of inception report, including draft outline	April 10, 2024	
2	Interim report on digital mock-up and draft ICT strategy and governance framework with proposed strategic initiatives and budget	April 25, 2024	
3	Feedback from CERAPE and ACBF	April 30, 2024	N/A
4	Integration of comments and suggestions and production of the revised ICT strategy and governance framework	May 6, 2024	N/A
5	Website installation and Report validation workshop	May 30, 2024	
6	Submission of the final report	June 20, 2024	
7	Staff training on New ICT policy and Website	June 30, 2024	

- *NOTE: Please complete the table above and include it as part of your financial proposal.*

9. Location and working arrangements

This is a home-based consulting assignment. The consultant will have access to the relevant information needed to carry out the tasks involved in this assignment. The consultant must provide his own workstation (laptop, Internet, telephone, scanner/printer, etc.) and have access to a reliable Internet connection.

CERAPE will review draft reports for quality assurance and provide feedback on the deliverables. Approval of all deliverables and reports by CERAPE will be a prerequisite before any payment are made to the consultant.

10. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation of the proposals will be evaluated based on Consultants Qualifications experience (70 and above criteria.

The evaluation committee shall evaluate the technical Proposals based on their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria, and point system specified below.

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Technical proposals shall be rejected at this stage if it does not comply with important aspects of the Terms of Reference or if it fails to achieve the minimum technical score indicated.

The minimum technical score required to pass is: 70 Points. The financial proposal will be evaluated based on the bidder with the lowest economical cost.

Criteria, sub-criteria, and point system for the evaluation of the Full Technical Proposals:

	Criteria	Max Points (100)
1	(i) Specific experience of the Consultant relevant to the Assignment:	20
2	(ii) Adequacy and quality of the proposed methodology, and work plan in responding to the Terms of Reference (TORs):	30
3	(iii) Proposed consultants' General qualifications (general education, professional certificate, training, and experience): and competence for the Assignment in response to the TOR: Total points for the criteria: **100** The minimum technical score (St) required to pass is ***70***	50
	Total Points	**100**

11. Language

All documents and deliverables should be written in <u>French</u>, single spacing font size 11, Times New Roman and submitted as both word and pdf versions.

Qualified candidates are requested to submit their application by **March 22, 2024,** to the following addresses**:** procurement@acbf-pact.org with the subject line: **Individual Consultancy: ACBF/REOI/004/24/SALCA/BMGF -Recruitment of Consultant to Develop a ICT Policy Website and Micro E-Library for CERAPE.**

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