



## Information for Development Program

### Request for Expression of Interest

## **Information and Communication Technologies, Poverty and the Global Economy: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries**

**Country:** International

**Notice/Contract Number:** 1257

**Publication Date:** 13 July 2005

**Deadline:** 5 August 2005

**Funding Agency:** *infoDev*

**Implementing Organization:** *infoDev*

**Contact Person:** Seth Ayers, *infoDev* (sayers@worldbank.org)

### **Eligibility of Bidders:**

The Consultants are expected to be a team of experts with the ability to complete a multifaceted assignment within a short timeframe and with a minimum of 8 years of experience in analyzing the competitiveness and growth challenges and opportunities facing developing countries in the global economy and the role that information and communication technologies can play in helping developing countries address those challenges and opportunities.

### **Expression of Interest (EOI):**

*infoDev* invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing expert services to perform a study on **Information and Communication Technologies, Poverty and the Global Economy: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries** as detailed in the attached Terms of Reference.

The work involved in this assignment is scheduled to be completed within approximately 4 months from the date of signing the contract agreement within an available lump-sum budget of \$150,000, which includes all fees, travel, and additional related expenses, including an independent audit performed at the conclusion of the assignment.

Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

For this assignment, we specifically request the submission of a 5 page note that provides in greater detail how the consultants would conduct this assignment if selected. The note should include the

following: (i) an analytical framework and a process by which the research will be conducted; (ii) a timeline that demonstrates the consultants ability to meet the deadlines as noted in the Terms of Reference below; (iii) a brief narrative on resource allocation; and (iv) brief summaries of key personnel to be involved in the work, particularly their experience that directly relates to needs of this study. In order to prepare the note, interested consultants should review the Terms of Reference, which is provided below. **We suggest that the Expression of Interest, including the 5 page note and other supporting materials, should not exceed 25 pages in length.**

Selection will be based on the “Consultants Qualifications” (CQ) method of procurement and Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers May 2004 (current edition). Electronic submission of the Expression of Interest, including the note, is preferred. The EOI can be submitted either as a Microsoft Word or PDF file. **Please send your email submission to [sayers@worldbank.org](mailto:sayers@worldbank.org) by Friday, August 5, 2005 before 23.30h Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).**

Seth Ayers, *infoDev*  
2121 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
M/S: F P5-503  
Washington, DC 20433 USA  
Tel: 202.473.4868 Fax: 202.522.3186  
E-mail: [sayers@worldbank.org](mailto:sayers@worldbank.org)

Note: More information about World Bank procurement processes and guidelines can be found on its eProcurement web site at <http://www.worldbank.org/eprocurement>.

## Terms of Reference

### **Information and Communication Technologies, Poverty and the Global Economy: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries**

#### **Background**

In recent years, developing countries and their partners in the international development community have devoted considerable attention to the role that information and communication technologies (ICT) might play in promoting economic growth, combating poverty, and strengthening their participation and competitiveness in the global economy. Spurred by the example of developing countries, such as India, that seem to be “riding the ICT wave” successfully, many developing countries are looking to emulate these successes and reap the benefits of ICT-led growth for their own economies. International development agencies have supported, and participated in, this mounting enthusiasm for ICT-led growth and poverty reduction by helping developing countries prepare and implement “national ICT strategies” or “e-strategies” designed to integrate ICT into broader national development and poverty reduction plans, as well as into national sectoral strategies in areas as diverse as health, education, rural development, public sector reform and private sector development.

Yet there are some signs that this enthusiasm for ICT-led growth and poverty reduction in developing countries may be excessive, or at least subject to caveats. Developing countries, therefore, need to think about the challenges and opportunities of ICT-enabled growth and poverty reduction within the larger context of reforming the structure, and increasing the flexibility and diversity, of their economy; maximizing the reach and beneficial effects of ICT across economy and society; and creating the proper policies, regulations, incentives and investments – both public and private – to promote broad-based economic growth. ICT can be a key enabler of a broader strategy of economic growth, poverty reduction and global competitiveness. They should not, however, be seen as either a substitute for or the main focus of that broader strategy.

That broader strategy needs to be rooted in a realistic and rigorous assessment of each developing country's particular assets and competitive advantage; the current structure of its domestic economy and place in regional and global markets; and its potential for entering new markets or developing new goods or services. ICT can be a vital tool of this strategy in several ways; by extending access to new markets, by increasing productivity, by making it possible to disaggregate the value chain for goods and services in ways that permit developing countries to find new niches in global markets, by expanding access to global knowledge and best practice. Yet ICT can only help if the broader growth and competitiveness strategy is itself realistic, and if there is sufficient commitment from all key stakeholders to take the measures necessary – policy, regulation, infrastructure, human capital – to create the conditions for success.

In recent months, *infoDev* has begun to sponsor a series of regional and country studies on ICT, poverty, growth and competitiveness. A study on the entire Caribbean region has recently been completed, and national studies of Tanzania, Uganda, and Ghana are in progress or will begin shortly. Each of these studies is rooted in the general principles articulated above; that ICT-for-growth strategies must be rooted in realistic and rigorous assessments of the broader conditions and constraints facing a given country as it seeks to compete in a global economy. In order to provide a

common analytical framework for this growing area of *infoDev*'s work program, *infoDev* is now commissioning a broader "framework paper" on how ICT can help developing countries diversify their economies, compete in regional and global markets made more open by globalization and new technologies, and as a result assure broad-based economic growth that leads to a reduction in poverty. This framework paper will build on these existing *infoDev* regional and national studies while providing a broader perspective and a general analytical framework for developing country policymakers trying to chart a course forward for their countries. Once completed, this framework paper will provide the general intellectual framework for future country and regional studies commissioned by *infoDev*, and for *infoDev*'s broader work program on the impact of ICT on growth and competitiveness in developing countries.

### **Scope of Work**

The study will consist of two parts. The first part will be the primary focus of the study; the second will be included as an annex to demonstrate how this framework can be applied in practice, as well as provide the basis for future analytical work:

1. The first part will lay out the general analytical framework for understanding the challenges and opportunities that ICT pose for developing countries as they seek to promote broad-based growth and combat poverty in the context of an increasingly open global economy. It will address, *inter alia*, the following questions:
  - What are the broad economic implications for developing countries of an increasingly open, ICT-enabled, knowledge-intensive global economy?
  - In such a global economy, how can developing countries make judicious decisions about priorities for economic reform and ICT investment, both in terms of the structure of their economies and their openness to and preparedness for trade and global competition?
  - What opportunities and challenges do ICT pose for developing countries in this context, in terms of the information and knowledge flows they enable, the mobility of capital and jobs that they encourage, and the diverse forms of economic, social and political innovation and empowerment they make possible?
  - What are the key policy, investment, infrastructure and human capital initiatives that developing countries must take in order to benefit fully from the opportunities posed by ICT?
  - To what extent are these initiatives, and the opportunities offered by ICT for economic growth and competitiveness, limited by natural and historical factors in given countries? In particular, how can largely rural and extremely poor countries whose economies depend primarily on agriculture and primary goods possibly benefit from ICT as tools of economic growth and diversification? Are ICT of any relevance to countries caught in "poverty traps"? How do other historical legacies (e.g. language, educational systems) shape a country's ability to take advantage of ICT-enabled growth and global competitiveness?
2. The second part will be included as an annex and examine one key sector (eg agribusiness, textiles, back-office services, etc) in developing countries by deconstructing the international value chain for that sector. ICT combined with advances in transportation have created a global marketplace for goods and services. For instance, the value chain for producing a pair

of pants may begin with cotton seeds developed in the United States, grown and harvested in Mali, converted to cloth in Bangladesh and assembled in China. At each stage along this value chain there are factors that create a comparative advantage enabling each country to compete to provide the product or service. These factors include the classical production factors (land, labor and capital), as well as the broader enabling environment such as infrastructure (roads, telecom, ports, etc) and policy and regulations (cost of access to telecom and Internet, banking regulations, etc). By examining each stage of a value chain the necessary components of the broader enabling environment will become apparent and provide a reference for policymakers in determining their competitiveness along the value chain and the implications of policy and regulatory reforms. By undertaking this detailed analysis for one sector, this second component of the study is meant to offer a model of the type of in-depth analysis of competitiveness, value chains, and the structure of a country's economy that developing countries must undertake in order to construct a realistic strategy for ICT-enabled growth.

### **Timeline & Deliverables**

The required deliverables, and expected deadlines, for this activity are as follows:

- August 5, 2005           Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest
- August 15, 2005        Selection of winning firm
- August 22, 2005        Completion of negotiations and signature of grant agreement
- September 12, 2005    Submission of detailed work plan and outline of full study
- October 15, 2005       Submission of first draft of full study
- November 15, 2005     Submission of revised draft
- December 1, 2005     Completion of final revisions
- Nov.-Dec. 2005         Presentation of the studies findings at an *infoDev* sponsored event

### **Available Lump-Sum Budget**

The work involved in this assignment is schedule to be completed within approximately 4 months from the date of signing the contract agreement within an available lump-sum budget of \$150,000, which includes all fees, travel, and additional related expenses, including an independent audit performed at the conclusion of the assignment.

### **About *infoDev***

*infoDev* is a consortium of international development agencies, working in close cooperation with partners from civil society and the private sector, and assisted by an expert secretariat housed at the World Bank. Its mission is to help developing countries and their international partners use information and communication technologies (ICT) broadly and effectively as tools of poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth, and empowerment of individuals and communities. Its work is rooted in the conviction that information and communication are indispensable elements of effective and responsive institutions (including governments), markets and societies.  
<http://www.infodev.org/>