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Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services (BRICKS) Project
Terms of Reference

Creation & maintenance of web portal (Consulting services firm)

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Background

BRICKS project is a six-year program that supports the establishment of a regional knowledge and monitoring hub for the US$1.1 billion multi-sector portfolio of sustainable landscapes related investment operations in 12 countries, collectively referred to as the World Bank-GEF Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP) in support of the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI). The Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), and the West and Central Africa office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are the regional centers of excellence in charge of the implementation of BRICKS in collaboration with the project teams and stakeholders of the 12 SAWAP countries. Each center of excellence is responsible for implementing discrete activities related to land and natural resources management in the Sahel and West Africa region, focusing on biodiversity, crop, range, and forest management in multi-functional dryland, sub-humid and humid landscapes in 12 Sahelian and West African countries. CILSS is responsible for knowledge management and dissemination, OSS is in charge of geo-spatial applications and monitoring and evaluation of the project portfolio and IUCN is leading the fields of biodiversity and communication strategies. The BRICKS project implementation unit (PIU), which is responsible for coordinating all project activities, is hosted and led by CILSS.

The AGRHYMET Regional Centre's (ARC) team, based in Niamey, Niger, will be responsible for supervising the creation and will subsequently ensure the management, updating and maintenance of the web portal, under the overall guidance of the BRICKS PIU at CILSS. It will implement a web-based hub for SAWAP projects in the 12 participating countries. This web portal will support a community of practice and be a communication and knowledge sharing hub gathering all relevant information on a single, multidisciplinary website, with a special focus given to information access by the local level actors, key stakeholders in the implementation of the SAWAP portfolio.

Objective, Scope and Framework

The objective of the consultancy will be to establish a regional decision support web portal that will serve as a one-stop shop for institutions and individuals working on the 12 SAWAP projects and could also be a model for the broader Great Green Wall Initiative led by the AU. The web portal will gather all relevant knowledge resources, including geospatial and M&E information

(with links to the SAWAP Program-level M&E system that is now under development). Information will include best practices, from a variety of sources (inside and outside CILSS, IUCN, OSS, country teams, World Bank, GGWI partners, African and international NGOs, etc.) in relevant topics, such as (but not limited to):

- Climate-smart agriculture,
- Dryland forest management,
- Agro- pastoral strategies,
- Soil and water conservation,
- Land use and watershed planning.

The web portal will be linked to each of the 12 SAWAP projects' information systems related to knowledge management, M&E, geospatial data and analysis, and project management, as well as existing national knowledge platforms (e.g. Mali SLM web portal supported by TerrAfrica) and regional knowledge generation (e.g. CILSS database on soil fertility, the World Bank-financed West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program, and the existing TerrAfrica SLM Knowledge Base, etc.). It will also include interactive and peer-to-peer functions.

The consultancy will be carried out in the following phases:

1. **Web portal design phase:** The web portal design should be based on intensive discussion with the Best Practices Working Group and in consultation with the 12 SAWAP country teams, where the following should be taken into consideration:

- *Defining the target audience.* The users of the portal need to be defined precisely in order to make sure the content responds to expectations and needs. The SAWAP community brings together a wide array of stakeholders, each with specific needs and potentialities that ought to be taken into account in the design phase to ensure the ownership of the program and its implementation. As a starting point, the consultant(s) will take into consideration the outcomes of the Experts' Communication Workshop held in Ouagadougou on May 26-28 and, specifically, the stakeholders mapping developed by each country team.

- *Identifying relevant content and feeding mechanisms.* The web portal should include:

  o A catalogue of operational tools and services relevant to the SAWAP program.

  o An overview of and detailed information on climate, hydrology, economic, social, and environmental aspects for each SAWAP Country project.

  o Key documents (including reports, presentations, 3-D and animation visualizations, factsheets, brochures, modeling documentation, photographs, videos and other multi-media communication products, etc.) and web links (to external documents and key institutions of relevance to the SAWAP Program).

- o Online Training Module: The Portal should include a mechanism to add, update, and view training material, presentations, streaming video/audio, etc. for a variety of training events that will be associated with the BRICKS project.

- o Online GIS: The Portal should integrate an online GIS platform to be able to visualize and interact with spatial information. The consultant(s), in close collaboration with OSS and CILSS, will support procurement of appropriate online GIS hardware and software based on appropriate analysis of options (e.g. servers/cloud, consideration of operational requirements) to be able to serve up customized and professional maps on a variety of themes for the region and to allow for simple spatial overlays and analysis. The information on the online mapping and spatial analysis platform should include information on basic climate, topography, hydrology, social, economic, environmental, infrastructure, and institutional aspects of relevance to the SAWAP Program. Efforts should be made to integrate the online mapping with other relevant institutional web platforms in this regard. The online portal should be able to visualize information required to support further analysis.

- o Social Media/User-Generated Content: The portal should allow for a moderated platform where users can upload and access "crowd-sourced" information (e.g. photographs, videos, datasets, information products, models, other documents, links, etc.) and facilitate feedback, blogs and social networking (e.g. on Facebook, twitter) on issues of relevance.

- o The portal administration (with associated training) should allow for easy updates of all content – including spatial data, documents, text, graphs, documents, models, links, etc.

- o Support for interim hosting of the web portals and provide troubleshooting and helpdesk services for the duration of this contract. The potential of using cloud hosting services to host the web portal should also be explored.

- *Defining the Content Management System (CMS) that will be used*, specifying the related organizational/HR framework and taking into account that the functionality required for the portal is as follows:

  - o Flexible presentation of featured content
  - o Smoother user-interaction (simplified navigation, fluid scrolling, easy viewing and downloading documents)
  - o Visually enhanced content presentation
  - o Printer friendly pages
  - o Full integration with social networks (notably, Facebook Twitter and LinkedIn) to enable a certain level of interactivity

- Full integration with the GGWSSI platform developed by the Global Mechanism and the CILSS platform on climate change and sustainable land management, in terms of graphic design, visual identity and technology
- Full integration with feeds from relevant websites (i.e. FAO/GGWSSI, NEPAD knowledge platform, TerrAfrica, WB, GM/SLM-Finance), meaning that it will allow for some automatic import functionality from selected feeds, in addition to being populated (manually) with some content that can be selected by the webmaster(s)
- Accessibility to users with slow connection and accessibility from smartphones and tablets;
- Presentation in two languages (French and English).

2. **Web portal demo phase:** A first prototype of the web portal will be created (version 1.0), presented and shared with all relevant stakeholders for their assessment, review and feedback.

3. **Web portal finalization and roll out phase:** Stakeholder feedback is discussed in detail and incorporated in the final design of the web portal.

4. **Web portal hosting**: To ensure the accessibility of the web portal, the bandwidth of AGRHYMET Center should be assessed and recommendations made for its improvement

5. **Web portal maintenance phase:** To ensure sustainability of the web portal, consultant(s) will train relevant AGRHYMET staff in updating and maintaining the web portal. Following the training, staff should be able to:

- Ensure sharing and dissemination of BRICKS Project findings at both regional and national levels,
- Closely monitor information and knowledge collection in SAWAP countries to feed into the web portal on a daily basis,
- Monitor information and knowledge research at the international level on BRICKS Project themes and disseminate them on the portal,
- Manage the automatic device for SAWAP countries' data dissemination,
- Gather best practices on BRICKS Project themes and ensure sharing and dissemination on the portal,
- Facilitate discussion forums and/or social networks on the BRICKS portal and provide summary reports,
- Develop and disseminate BRICKS notes on lessons learned to strengthen the capacity of countries,
- Establish synergies between the BRICKS Portal and those dealing with similar themes at the national or international level, and
- Ensure international visibility of the portal through its widespread dissemination, production of various materials and presentation of scientific papers at international meetings.

In addition, consultant(s) will also provide procurement support. This will include any specifications, TORs, satellite imagery, hardware, software, communications, printing, etc. These should be in accordance with World Bank Procurement Procedures applicable to this project.

Reporting and working conditions

The consultant(s) will work together with the AGRHYMET Regional Centre's (ARC) team and under the supervision of the Head of the Information and Research Department and the Director General of the AGRHYMET Regional Centre. The latter is expected to work in close collaboration with the Best Practices Working Group, IUCN, OSS, and in consultation with the 12 SAWAP Country project teams.

Duration

The consultancy will be conducted in 5 phases (see table below)

Phase	Activity	Duration (days)
1	**Web portal analysis and design**	**20**
2	**Web portal development (1st prototype)**	**30**
3	**Web portal finalization and roll out**	**15**
4	**Web portal implementation and hosting**	**15**
5	**Web portal maintenance phase (training)**	**10**
	Total (days)	**90**

Submission of proposals:

o The firm should provide the resume of the team leader and team members.
o The firm must submit technicaland financial proposals.

Submission deadline : Monday 15th December 2014, 04 PM GMT +1.

Address for submission:

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