



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP A FOUR YEAR (2024-2027) GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) STRATEGY FOR THE CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM)).**

Client: DefendDefenders (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project)

Lotis Towers,  
Plot 16, Mackinnon Road, Nakasero  
P.O.BOX 70356, Kampala Uganda.

**February 2024**

**Request for Proposals**

The DefendDefenders, requests for proposals/bids for consultancy to develop a four-year (2024-2027) gender equality and social inclusion (gesi) strategy for the consortium for human rights and media in sub-saharan africa (charm).

The request for proposal document is attached to this call.

In response to this request, the bidder must submit a technical and financial proposal.

Both the technical and financial proposals should be addressed to and sent to:

**Head of Procurement**

**DefendDefenders**

**Lotis Towers, Plot 16 Mackinnon Road, Nakasero**

**P.O.BOX 70356 Kampala Uganda**

**Email: [procurement@defenddefenders.org](mailto:procurement@defenddefenders.org), CC in [MariaK@defenddefenders.org](mailto:MariaK@defenddefenders.org)**

Proposals/bids should be submitted before **5:00PM** (Ugandan local time) **on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

*Late submissions shall not be accepted.*

Thank you.

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**Head Procurement**

## **1.0 Instructions to Proposers**

The bidder is to read carefully the instructions set out below. No claim will be entertained on the grounds of failure either to read or comply neither with the instructions nor for any alleged misunderstanding of their meaning.

### **1.1 Request for Clarifications**

For any inquiries regarding this request write to the Procurement Team on email address is [MariaK@defenddefenders.org](mailto:MariaK@defenddefenders.org) cc, [Procurement@defenddefenders.org](mailto:Procurement@defenddefenders.org), provided your request does not concern the prices for these services. This request must be sent prior to 12.00hrs on **Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

Should there be any doubt or obscurity as to the meaning of any word or phrase or terms or conditions in the request for proposals document or anything to be done or not to be done by the eventual contractor, or to these instructions, or as to any other matter or anything pertaining to the eventual contract, the bidder must submit such doubt or obscurity in writing. Any clarification so issued will form part of the contract documents.

DefendDefenders is not obliged to provide explanations regarding requests made after the closing date. Results will not be made public. **Any lobbying will lead to automatic disqualification.**

### **1.2 Cost of Preparing the Proposals**

The proposer shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of his/her proposal and DefendDefenders will in no case be responsible or liable for these costs regardless of the conduct or outcome of the proposal's solicitation process.

### **1.3 Taxes and Duties**

DefendDefenders will withhold 6% tax for Ugandan based consultants or 15% for foreign consultants except for those with WHT exemption from Uganda Revenue Authority. Your offer should, therefore, be inclusive of all taxes and any other levies.

### **1.4 Format and Signing of Proposals**

The proposer shall prepare the **Technical Proposal** and the **Financial Proposal**. The proposals shall be typed and signed by the person or persons duly authorised to bind the bidder to the eventual contract. The **Proposal** shall be signed as per the prescribed **Proposal Submission Form** without alterations, except those in accordance with instructions issued by DefendDefenders.

### **1.5 Examination and Evaluation of Proposals**

Information relating to the examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of proposals and recommendations for award shall not be disclosed to bidders or any other persons not officially

concerned with such processes until the award to the successful proposer has been announced. Any effort by the proposer to influence DefendDefenders' processing of the proposals or award decisions will result in automatic rejection of his proposal.

To assist in the examination, evaluation, and comparison of the proposals, DefendDefenders may, at its discretion, ask any proposer for clarification of their proposal including breakdown of the unit rates. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing, but no change in the price or substance of the proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted except as required to confirm the correction of arithmetic errors discovered by DefendDefenders in the evaluation of the proposals.

## **1.6 Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation methodology to be used for the evaluation of bids received shall be the Quality and Cost Based selection (QCBS) methodology. The Quality and Cost Based selection methodology recommends the highest scoring bid, which is substantially responsive to the technical and financial requirements of the Bidding Document where Technical Shall be 70% and financial 30%. The evaluation shall be conducted in two sequential stages-

- a) The technical quality of bids against set criteria on a merit point system, to determine the technical score of each technical bid.
- b) A financial comparison to determine the financial score of each financial bid, and to determine the total score of each bid.
- c) For any financial proposals that shall not be in United Dollars/ USD the Prevailing info Euro rate for the deadline day shall be used to convert the proposal for purposes of evaluation.
- d) The **minimum technical score** required to pass the technical evaluation is: 50 points. **Bids scoring less than this will be rejected.**

### **1.6.1 Determination of Best Evaluated Bidders**

That bid achieving the highest combined technical and financial score shall be the Best Evaluated Bid.

### **1.6.2 Determination of responsiveness**

Prior to the detailed evaluation of the proposals, DefendDefenders will determine whether each proposal is substantially responsive to the requirements of the request for proposals. A substantially responsive proposal is the one, which conforms to all the terms, conditions, and terms of reference of the request for proposals without material deviation or reservation. A material deviation or reservation is one:

- a) Which affects in any substantial way the scope, quality, or performance of the services.
- b) Which limits in any substantial way, inconsistent with the request for proposals, DefendDefenders rights or the proposer's obligation under the eventual contract?
- c) Whose rectification would affect unfairly the competitive position of other proposers presenting substantially responsive proposals.

If a proposal is not substantially responsive, DefendDefenders will reject it.

### **1.7 Correction of Errors**

Proposals determined to be substantially responsive will be checked by DefendDefenders for any arithmetic errors in computation and summation. Errors will be corrected as follows: The corrected errors, with the concurrence of the proposer, shall be binding upon the proposer. If the proposer does not accept the corrections made of the proposal, his/her proposal will be rejected.

### **1.8 Technical and Financial Proposals**

The technical proposals shall be submitted guided by the Terms of Reference and Application Format for the technical Proposal in the RFP. The financial proposal shall be submitted guided by the budget format.

DefendDefenders reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal and to annul the solicitation process without incurring any liability to the affected bidders or any obligation to inform them of the grounds for DefendDefenders' action.

### **1.9 Signing of the Contract**

After DefendDefenders notifying a successful proposer that his/her proposal has been accepted, DefendDefenders will send a copy of the contract to the successful bidder and within **10days** of receipt of the contract, the bidder shall sign and date the contract and return it to DefendDefenders.

### **1.10 Proposal Validity**

The proposals shall remain valid and open for acceptance for a period of **30 days** from the date of closing.

### **1.11 CURRENCY OF PROPOSAL**

**Offers are to be made in United states Dollars/USD.**

Please note that the prospected contract will be in USD, any proposals or offers that shall be made is a currency other than the one specified shall be converted to USD using the info Euro exchange rate on the Date of Bid closing.

### **1.12 Summary of the Procurement Timelines**

<b>No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Issuing of a Request for Proposal</b>	<b>21/02/2024</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Deadline for any inquiries and clarifications</b>	<b>8/03/2024</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Bid Closing Date</b>	<b>15/03/2024</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Evaluation of Proposals</b>	<b>22/03/2024</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Contract Negotiation and final selection/ award of a contract</b>	<b>03/04/2024</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Start date of a contract</b>	<b>04/04/2024</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>End date of a contract</b>	<b>30/06/2024</b>

**Proposals Submission Form**

We understand and agree to the request for proposal with all the terms and conditions as stipulated in the instructions to bidders, the terms and conditions of the contract and the Annexes.

We undertake that if our proposal is accepted, and the contract is awarded to us, we shall start offering the services immediately in accordance with the contract commencement date and shall render the whole services required in this contract.

We understand that DefendDefenders is not bound to accept the lowest financial proposal or any proposal you may receive and DefendDefenders shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by us in the preparation of these proposals.

We agree that the prices we have quoted are to be fixed and valid from the date of submission of the proposals and not subject to variation throughout the eventual contract period.

We further agree that we shall follow all the security and other DefendDefenders requirements as will be directed by DefendDefenders in the implementation of the contract.

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Title.....

For and on behalf of.....

(Name of Proposing Firm).



# CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP A FOUR YEAR (2024-2027) GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI) STRATEGY FOR THE CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM)

## Terms of Reference

### 1.0. Introduction.

DefendDefenders was established in 2005 as the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project and registered as a regional Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Uganda. DefendDefenders exists to strengthen the work of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in the sub-region by reducing their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and by enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights. The core mandate of DefendDefenders is to promote the safety, security, and wellbeing of HRDs. To achieve this, DefendDefenders' work has to date focused on protection and security management, capacity building, technology development, as well as advocacy, research, and communications. DefendDefenders establishes and supports national coalitions of HRDs in various countries through which HRDs can come together and claim their rights at the national level. DefendDefenders also serves as host of AfricanDefenders (the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network) secretariat. AfricanDefenders is a network of five sub-regional organisations, dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights Defenders (HRDs) across the African continent.

DefendDefenders is hosting the Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa (CHARM) that aims to promote and protect human rights and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa. CHARM is a partnership of **CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network**. The partnership acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust democracies and the promotion of national development. The consortium has been operating since October 2019.

DefendDefenders is seeking a qualified consultant to develop a **GESI Strategy for CHARM**, with a primary focus on human rights, civic space, and media. The consortium is a collaborative initiative involving multiple organizations dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights, enhancing civic space, and supporting media freedom.

### 2.0. Contextual Background to CHARM Project

The Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa (CHARM) aims to promote and protect human rights and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa. The partnership of CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network acknowledges the

role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust and inclusive democracies and the promotion of sustainable national development. Together as a consortium, these organisations offer a strong and unique contribution in the following areas: **Civil society building and civic space advocacy; Safety and protection of women/human rights defenders (W/HRD) and activists; Integration of gender equality and social inclusion; Media development and protecting/expanding media freedoms; Tech, innovation, and digital activism advancements; Inter-state and regional collaboration through consortium synergy effects.**

CHARM engages with civil society and media who support W/HRDs and their organisations and journalists, particularly those that represent constituencies with the most limited access to resources and opportunities in their unique contexts (such as women, young people, sexual minorities, people living with disabilities, racial and ethnic minority groups, Indigenous people, among others). Together, the consortium will contribute to change across four strategic outcome areas through **six pathways of change related to civic space, public support (to marginalised and traditionally excluded groups), coalition building, and access to better resources to sustain the work of civil society and media in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).**

As CHARM has been operational for four years, the consortium has learned a variety of lessons to improve, expand, and sustain its impact. Among the key recommendations was to develop a GESI Strategy. This will serve as a guiding document, outlining essential steps for mainstreaming GESI in CHARM programming.

### **3.0. Objectives**

To develop a comprehensive Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy for the CHARM program, integrating human rights and media development, through a thorough analysis of existing frameworks, stakeholder perspectives, and cross-cutting issues.

#### **3.1. Specific Objectives**

##### **3.1.1 Conduct a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis:**

- Utilize a combination of approaches, including the CHARM Results Framework and other relevant tools.
- Perform desk reviews of key CHARM strategy documents to identify existing gender and social inclusion considerations.
- Conduct virtual interviews with stakeholders, constituents, development partners (SIDA), and program team to gather diverse perspectives.

##### **3.1.2 Apply a Multi-disciplinary Approach:**

- Integrate multiple disciplines to ensure a holistic understanding of gender and social inclusion dynamics within the CHARM program.



- Explore intersections with human rights and media development to address interconnected challenges and opportunities.

#### 3.1.3 Cover Relevant Cross-cutting Issues:

- Identify and analyze cross-cutting issues such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, and other factors influencing gender and social inclusion within the context of CHARM.
- Ensure a nuanced understanding of intersectionality in the development of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.

#### 3.1.4 Collaborative Engagement with CHARM Partners and Stakeholders:

- Foster collaboration with CHARM partners, stakeholders, and relevant entities to gather diverse insights.
- Engage in participatory processes to incorporate the perspectives of various stakeholders in the strategy development.

#### 3.1.5 Validation Workshop and Strategy Finalization:

- Organize a validation workshop with CHARM partners and stakeholders to present and refine the findings of the gender analysis.
- Utilize feedback from the workshop to finalize the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.
- Ensure alignment with the validated analysis report and incorporate insights gained during the workshop.

#### 3.1.6 Prepare and Share Detailed Methodology:

- Develop a detailed methodology for the consultancy, outlining the step-by-step process for conducting the gender analysis.
- Share the methodology with the Coordination team for review and approval through an inception report.

### 4.0. Methodology

To develop the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy, the consultant(s) will be required to conduct a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion analysis, which will help in building the actual Gender strategy. Specifically, the consultant is expected to employ a combination of approaches with reference to the CHARM Results Framework among other appropriate tools and conduct desk reviews of the key CHARM strategy documents, virtual interviews with the stakeholders including constituents, development partners (SIDA), project team among others.

The analysis shall be carried out in a multi-disciplinary manner and cover relevant cross-cutting issues. The consultant(s) will have to work in a collaborative manner and will have to engage CHARM partners and other stakeholders as deemed necessary. After the finalisation of the gender analysis, a validation workshop will be held with CHARM partners and stakeholders to finalise the gender analysis report and also inform the development of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy. The selected consultant will prepare a detailed methodology and share with the Coordination team for review and approval through an inception report.

## **5.0. Scope of Work**

The consultant shall undertake the following activities:

### **5.1 Inception Phase:**

- Review and analyse existing CHARM strategy documents, including the Gender analysis, Results Framework, proposal and evaluation reports to understand current gender and social inclusion considerations.
- Develop a detailed methodology for the consultancy, encompassing the analysis approach, tools, and stakeholder engagement plan.
- Share the methodology with the Coordination team for review and approval through an inception report.

### **5.2 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis:**

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- Perform desk reviews and virtual interviews with stakeholders, including constituents, donors (SIDA), and program staff.
- Apply a multi-disciplinary approach, integrating perspectives from human rights and media development.
- Explore and analyse cross-cutting issues such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, and other relevant factors.

### **5.3 Stakeholder Engagement:**

- Collaborate with CHARM partners and stakeholders, ensuring a participatory process.
- Facilitate virtual workshops/meetings to gather insights and perspectives.
- Establish a communication plan to keep stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the consultancy.

### **5.4 Strategy Development:**

- Synthesize findings from the gender analysis to inform the development of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.
- Ensure alignment with CHARM's overarching goals and objectives. Address intersectionality and cross-cutting issues in the strategy formulation.

### **5.5 Validation Workshop (virtual):**

- Organize a virtual validation workshop with CHARM partners and stakeholders.
- Present the preliminary findings of the gender analysis and seek feedback.
- Use workshop insights to refine and finalize the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.

### **5.6 Strategy Finalization:**

- Incorporate feedback from the validation workshop into the final strategy document.

- Ensure the strategy aligns with best practices, international standards, and the specific context of the CHARM program.
- Provide a clear roadmap for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the strategy.

### 5.7 Reporting and Documentation:

- Prepare a comprehensive consultancy report documenting the entire process, from inception to finalization.
- Include detailed findings, methodologies, stakeholder feedback, and the finalized Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy.
- Provide actionable recommendations for CHARM to enhance gender and social inclusion in its program activities.

### 5.8 Knowledge Transfer:

- Convene virtual knowledge-sharing sessions with CHARM team to facilitate a smooth transition and understanding of the developed strategy.
- Provide training on the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the strategy.

### 6.0. Key Deliverables

The consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

- **An Inception Report:** An initial report outlining the approach, methodology, and work plan for the strategy development within two weeks of contract commencement.
- **A draft Strategy Document:** A comprehensive draft strategy document within six weeks of contract commencement.
- **Final Strategy Document:** A revised and finalized strategy document, incorporating feedback and recommendations from consortium members within 8 weeks of contract commencement.
- **Implementation Plan:** A detailed plan for executing the strategy, including activities, timelines, responsible parties, and budgets.
- **A GESI monitoring and evaluation framework.**

### 7.0. Timeline

The consultant is expected to complete the project within **90 (ninety) days** from the contract signing date. A tentative timeline should be proposed in the Inception Report.

### 8.0. Qualifications and Expertise

The consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- a) A strong background in human rights, civic space, and media development in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience.
- b) Proven experience in developing GESI strategies for similar organizations or consortia.
- c) Excellent research and analytical skills.
- d) Strong facilitation and engagement skills.

- e) Strong writing and communication skills in English and French
- f) Familiarity with the global and regional human rights and gender landscape.

### 9.0. Reporting and Communication

The consultant will report to **Ms. Maria Kaddu, Project Coordinator-CHARM** on email [mariak@defenddefenders.org](mailto:mariak@defenddefenders.org), and copy in [procurement@defenddefenders.org](mailto:procurement@defenddefenders.org), and [patrickd@defenddefenders.org](mailto:patrickd@defenddefenders.org). Please do include **GESI Strategy-CHARM** in the email subject line.

### 10.0 Evaluation Criteria

Below is the detailed summary of the Technical and Financial Evaluation:

Evaluation Criteria		Max Score
<i>Criteria and maximum scores as listed in the terms of reference</i>		
<b>A</b>	<b>Methodology and Understanding of the work</b>	<b>35</b>
	Understanding of the project's objectives	15
	Clarity and feasibility of the work plan	10
	Methodology and proposed approach	10
<b>B</b>	<b>Relevant experience and qualifications</b>	<b>20</b>
	A strong background in human rights, civic space, and media, with a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience	8
	Proven experience in developing strategic plans for similar organizations or consortia	7
	A deep understanding of human rights, gender and human rights principles	5
<b>C</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>15</b>
	Excellent research and analytical skills	5
	Strong facilitation and communication skills	5
	Familiarity with the global and regional human rights and gender landscape	5
<b>Totals</b>		<b>70</b>

### 11.0 Financial Evaluation.

The proposal with the lowest evaluated price shall be given a full score and the other proposals shall be given financial scores that is inversely proportional to the lowest price proposal using the formula below:

Financial score= Lowest price proposal/Proposal Price X 30

## **12.0 Budget**

- Entire consultancy to be conducted virtually, including interviews and validation workshop.
- **Proposed budget range: \$5,000 to \$6,000, inclusive of all costs.**
- Budget covers consultancy fees, virtual meeting platforms, workshop expenses, and applicable taxes.

## **13.0 Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality**

The consultant shall adhere to ethical standards and respect human rights principles during the project. The consultant shall treat all information provided by the consortium as confidential and may not disclose any details to third parties without written consent.

## **14.0. Prohibition of Corruption**

The Consultant shall not engage in any form of bribery and corruption in relation to the services under these TORs, including but not limited to offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting any form of undue advantage, whether in cash or in-kind, to or from any person, whether within or outside the Client's organization.

## **15.0 Contract and Disclaimer**

The selected consultant will enter into a formal contract with DefendDefenders that outlines the terms and conditions of the engagement. DefendDefenders reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal received and is not bound to accept the lowest or any proposal.

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