



Information for Development Program

Request for Expression of Interest

Independent Evaluation of Information for Development (infoDev) Global Trust Funded Program *Results Assessment, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations to Governing Body for Improving Effectiveness and Development Impact*

Country:	International
Notice/Contract Number:	1271
Publication Date:	April 11, 2006
Deadline:	April 26, 2006
Funding Agency:	<i>infoDev</i>
Implementing Organization:	<i>infoDev</i>

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. They should have a minimum of eight years of experience in program evaluation, preferably including global partnership programs supporting knowledge creation and dissemination, policy improvements and innovation.

Expression of Interest (EOI):

infoDev invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing expert services to perform the following study on the “Independent evaluation of Information for Development (infoDev) Global Trust Funded Program: Results Assessment, Lessons Learned and Recommendations to the Governing Body for Improving Development Outcomes and Impacts.”

infoDev, a multi-donor global program, was founded in 1995 to “to promote innovative projects on the use of information and communication technologies for economic and social development, with special emphasis on the needs of the poor in developing economies.” The *infoDev* program has gone through several transitions, including:

- Startup (1995 – 1998)
- Y2K emphasis (1998 – 2000)
- Return to focus on knowledge dissemination, partnerships, and flagship initiatives (2002-2003) including the Japan-funded small business incubator program
- Recent transformation into a more strategic, knowledge-based organization providing services to donors and clients on ICT for development (2003 – present)

infoDev receives funding both from the World Bank's Development Grant Facility (DGF) and from external donors who support it through trust funds administered by the World Bank.

DGF policies require an independent evaluation once every three years. Under *infoDev's* Governance Arrangements, the Donors' Committee supports this requirement. The last full program evaluation was completed in 2002 with recommendations approved by the Donors' Committee. This proposed evaluation, to cover a significant period of transition from 2003 – 2005, will cover all aspects of the work program, including performance of the Secretariat and the Governance Body. Standard criteria of relevance, efficacy/effectiveness, and efficiency will be used as measures, as well as innovativeness and sustainability. In general, the evaluation will cover:

- a) the degree to which the program has met its objectives;
- b) the degree to which recommendations of the last evaluation were carried out (or rendered obsolete);
- c) concrete examples of positive outcomes and impacts of the program's activities, including examples where impact might have been higher or costs lower with a different approach;
- d) summary of lessons learned from both positive and negative experiences, in terms of selection of grants; activity design; implementation of grants and supervision; and definition and use of monitorable indicators of results;
- e) recommendations for the programs' Governing body (Donors' Committee) to increase results or effectiveness in the future.

We specifically request the submission of a five page note that provides in greater detail how the consultants would conduct this assignment if selected. The note should include the following:

- a) an analytical framework and a process by which the evaluation of the work program over the last three years would be conducted;
- b) a description of recommended sampling methodology (or selection criteria for projects/activities/products to be looked at in more detail) for assessing results and deriving lessons learned;
- c) suggestion of relevant indicators for judging outcomes, impacts, and their sustainability;
- d) a timeline that demonstrates the consultants' ability to meet the deadlines as noted in the Terms of Reference below;
- e) a brief narrative on resource allocation; and
- f) brief summaries of experience of key personnel to be involved in the work, particularly that which directly relates to the 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 this note, should not exceed 25 pages in length.

Timeline: The assignment is expected to be completed within six months from the date of signing the contract agreement and within the available budget of US\$150,000 (includes all fees, travel, audit, and all other related expenses).

infoDev now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. 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. 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 may be submitted either as a Microsoft Word or PDF file.

Please send your email submission to Joan Hubbard by April 26, 2006 before 23:30h Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below from 10:00am to 5:00pm US Eastern Daylight Time.

Joan Hubbard
(202) 473-5847
jhubbard@worldbank.org

Terms of Reference

Independent Evaluation of Information for Development (*infoDev*) Global Trust Funded Program Results Assessment, Lessons Learned and Recommendations to Governing Body for Improving Effectiveness and Development Impact

Introduction and Background

infoDev was founded in 1995 to “to promote innovative projects on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for economic and social development, with special emphasis on the needs of the poor in developing economies.” *infoDev* is a partnership of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, working in close cooperation with partners from other international organizations, civil society and the private sector. The *infoDev* program receives funding both from the World Bank’s Development Grant Facility (DGF) and from external donors via trust funds administered by the World Bank. The secretariat is located in the World Bank Group’s Global ICT Department. Since its founding, *infoDev* has issued close to 400 grants which support innovative pilot projects, wide-ranging policy dialogues, and the preparation and dissemination of valuable information, knowledge, and best-practice guidance on the role of ICT in development and poverty reduction.

The work of *infoDev* is rooted in the conviction that information and communication are indispensable elements of effective and responsive institutions, including governments, markets, and societies. Empowering people and the institutions and markets that serve them with effective ICT tools is a critical element in the fight against poverty and the effort to realize the Millennium Development Goals. Innovation enabled by new technologies can be used to address the specific needs of poor people and their communities and thus promote private sector-led, pro-poor innovation for the benefit of developing countries.

The last two program-level formal independent evaluations were undertaken in 1999 and 2002. Several researchers were a part of both teams, providing continuity and allowing the latter evaluation to be more succinct. In 1999, the external evaluators confirmed that *infoDev* was fulfilling a unique function, and that it was appropriate for it to be located in the World Bank. It recommended that *infoDev* increase the dissemination of the lessons learned from its projects, find new ways to engage the private sector, and increase efforts to reach out to stakeholders in recipient countries. The 2002 evaluation concluded that the earlier purpose of *infoDev* — to convince the development community that ICT was integral to development — had been largely successful and that *infoDev* needed to capitalize on the legitimacy and intellectual reputation it had established, by incorporating a strong focus on knowledge capture and dissemination, and by reducing pilot project activities. As a partial response to this recommendation, a separate exercise focusing on the micro level was conducted in 2003. A case study methodology was used to evaluate 17 pilot projects representing a cross-section in terms of time, geography and type of ICT used to improve the situation of the poor. Outcomes from this study were disseminated in late 2003.

Transition to a New Strategy

The current evaluation should focus on the most recent three years since the last evaluation—2003-2005—a period during which there were considerable changes to *infoDev*’s governance structure and strategic focus. *infoDev* shifted its approach from open-ended support for pilot ICT projects to a thematically focused blend of support for ICT innovation, research and analysis, and knowledge management. The shift to more targeted activities has enabled *infoDev* to devote more rigorous attention to understanding “what works and why” in mainstreaming ICT in development programs. This has also allowed it to pursue themes of special importance to the donors and developing country clients: enabling environments, the balance of public and private sector roles in promoting ICT access and applications in developing societies, and ways to promote ICT-related private sector innovators and entrepreneurs in developing countries.

After considerable strategic dialogue in 2003 – 2004, these new directions were formally presented to the Donors in February/March, 2005 in a research paper “Harnessing ICTs to Fight Poverty and Promote Development, an *infoDev* Research Strategy and Work Plan, 2005 – 2007.” They were further refined in the Business Plan, presented in August, 2005. *infoDev*’s research strategy now focuses on three themes:

- mainstreaming ICT as tools of development and poverty reduction
- enabling access for all
- innovation and entrepreneurship in developing countries.

In focusing on these themes, *infoDev* emphasizes:

- generation and dissemination of knowledge—research and analysis of best practices in applying ICT to global development challenges
- promoting policy and regulatory frameworks conducive to expanded ICT development, use and access by the poor
- testing innovative applications of ICT that respond to the specific challenges of poor people and their communities and documenting critical conditions for success; and
- understanding and researching the most effective strategies for scaling up ICT-enabled development solutions

Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the performance of the entire *infoDev* program, e.g. the major activities financed, the performance of the Secretariat and the governance framework, i.e. the Donors’ Committee, with a particular focus on the three years of the strategic transition, 2003-2005. The evaluation will analyze the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the *infoDev* program and make recommendations to the Donors’ Committee on how to improve them, taking account of the external environment in which *infoDev* operates, and the priorities of the donors and development community.

Relevance

Is *infoDev* responding to the right questions with the right tools? Is it responding according to its comparative advantage, vis-à-vis other actors in the sector? Is it exploiting all opportunities for partnership? Are the program-level and individual activities funded responsive to the strategic directions and, more broadly, to the Millennium Development Goals? This discussion should build on an analysis of the development community’s objectives on ICT for development (ICT4D), taking account of the rapidly changing technology and landscape. The discussion should also treat the subject of whether the winding down of the previous *infoDev* pilot activities has had any adverse effects or represented any lost opportunities to address key ICT challenges.

Effectiveness or Efficacy

To what extent are the program-level and individual activities achieving their intended objectives, outcomes, and impacts? This analysis will require establishment, in coordination with the *infoDev* Secretariat, of the set of activities to be the focus of the evaluation. A representative sample which covers the three new themes, and the previous core program, is recommended, making sure also that key knowledge products and “business lines” are covered, e.g. knowledge map, country framework paper, toolkit, workshops, etc. The evaluation will not independently analyze the incubator program, but will draw on findings of a separate evaluation being conducted in parallel, with preliminary results expected in June-September, 2006. Among program-level activities that should be evaluated for effectiveness are: donor relations and services, including a comparison of the results of the program with the donors’ own expectations and assessments of its success; reporting; the annual symposia; outreach and resource mobilization; and dissemination of the knowledge being generated from funded activities.

Efficiency

This section should comment on efficiency both at the program level (e.g. governance arrangements, secretariat support) and at the activity level. The evaluation should assess the degree to which the governance arrangements are effective in terms of the four principles of good governance: clear roles and responsibilities, transparency, fairness, and clear accountability. To what extent is the authorizing environment for the program effectively derived from those with a legitimate interest in the program (including donors, developing countries, clients, and other stakeholders, including the private sector)? To what extent do developing and transition country partners, clients, and beneficiaries participate and exercise effective voice in the various aspects of the program, including design, governance, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation? To what extent are the benefits of the program-level and individual activities commensurate with inputs (staffing, cost, and time of implementation)? Has the program achieved, or does it expect to achieve benefits more cost-effectively than providing the same service on a country by country basis, and more cost-effectively than if the individual contributors to the program had acted alone? Finally, this section should discuss the degree to which program activities provide value for money, and make any recommendations for improvement. It should also comment on the relative share of various funded activities and their contribution to the benefits, as well as the appropriateness of administrative expenses.

Innovativeness

In addition to the above standard ingredients for program evaluation, this evaluation should discuss the degree to which *infoDev* has developed new approaches or models to support ICT for development. In other words, what has been *infoDev*'s value added in this field, relative to other similar organizations. (See Annex A for a list of other organizations involved in ICT for development)

Financial Sustainability

Also, the evaluation should assess the financial sustainability of *infoDev*—its ability to sustain and grow support from traditional and non-traditional donors, and to achieve the targets in its latest Business Plan. This should include an evaluation of the degree to which the recommendations of previous evaluations to reach out increasingly to the private sector were implemented, bearing in mind other priorities and the fact that the benefits in such outreach lie not only in meeting financial targets. With respect to the involvement of the private sector, has the potential for conflicts of interest been effectively dealt with?

Results Framework

Finally, to the degree that the team does not find the stated objectives, outputs, expected outcomes and impacts, and indicators used to assess performance to be adequate or clear enough, the team will present recommendations for the use of *infoDev* and future evaluators.

Deliverables

The deliverables are set out with the timeline below. The evaluation team will provide an inception report and a preliminary de-briefing as laid out in the timeline below which will include their proposed approach to the study. It is expected that the time spent on the evaluation would not exceed 30 staff weeks, and that at least 40% of this time should be invested by the principal evaluator. It is expected that the team will have used the greatest part of the allocated time budget (approximately 18 staff-weeks) before the Interim Report at July 24. The team will report the initial findings and recommendations to the Secretariat for clarification purposes. However, the evaluation team will provide its formal recommendations directly to the Donors' Committee, in a report written in English not to exceed 60 pages, excluding appendixes. Throughout the preparation of the study, the evaluation team will be supported by the Secretariat on administrative and logistical matters, including arrangement of videoconferences with the Donors' Committee as desired.

Methodology

The methodology will be set out in the consultant team's proposal and will be further developed by the consultants and presented in the inception report. The methodology should include, but not be limited to:

- Desk Review of *infoDev* key documents including the Charter, the Annual Reports for the years 2003 – 2005, the Research Strategy, the last evaluation report, the Case studies report, newsletters to donors, the latest Business Plan, and any other documents judged relevant by the Secretariat or the Donor's Committee.
- Review of material on ICT4D objectives and programs;
- Personal interviews with Secretariat staff at its Washington D.C. office
- Interviews and/or survey questionnaires of representatives of the *infoDev* stakeholders and constituencies: Donors' Committee; other key partners (ITU, UNESCO); implementation task managers when not *infoDev* staff; grant recipients, including consultants implementing *infoDev* contracts, as well as NGOs, private firms and universities associated with *infoDev* grants; country partners associated with Grant activities (e.g. for country studies); Bank country staff in countries where grants were funded; private sector and foundation leaders in the ICT field who have an awareness of *infoDev* or who have participated in *infoDev* activities; and to the extent possible, former Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) members and former evaluators.
- Optional visits (or videoconferences) as necessary to judge the outcomes and impacts of the agreed sample of *infoDev* activities, probably to include activities in at least two regions;
- Quantitative methods, when feasible;
- Any additional sources of information or procedures necessary to obtain views and feedback on *infoDev* that the reviewer feels to be necessary in order to accomplish the tasks set forth in these terms of reference, including the option to sub-contract certain task or topics to recognized experts in these fields.

Obligations of *infoDev* Secretariat

- Provide key documents
- facilitate contacts with *infoDev* constituents and members of Donors' Committee
- provide temporary office space during week of first consultations and after interim report; any other proposal would need to be discussed further
- facilitate access to World Bank videoconference facilities, if useful.
- ensure independence of the evaluation

Obligations of Consultant

- Inform secretariat in timely fashion of all contacts made with *infoDev* constituents
- Treat documents in confidential manner, when appropriate
- Not publish evaluation results or output without permission from the Secretariat
- Return all *infoDev* documents used in the evaluation
- Report on a timely basis any possible conflicts of interest.

More information

Background information on the *infoDev* program can be obtained from its website www.infodev.org