

Questions and Answers to Request for Proposal (RFP)

MAAN-PROG-RFP-2024-002

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Technical Questions

Part One:

1. Are there any existing digital complaint systems used by the targeted water directorates, and if so, what is the envisioned strategy for integrating DCCMS with these existing systems?
 - A) There is no existing digital complaint system, the targeted water directorates in Iraq primarily rely on paper-based complaint management systems.
2. What timeline does Ma'an foresee for the DCCMS's expansion to cover additional services and potentially achieve Iraq-wide deployment (i.e., Stage 2)?, and give examples of additional services that could be added to the solution.
 - B) The Digital Citizen Complaint Management System (DCCMS) will be designed with a scalable and adaptable framework. Initially, it will focus on water service in six provinces, but its flexible structure will enable the addition of other services (Like: Solid Waste Management and Sewage) and a potential expansion nationwide. The timeline for this broader rollout will be decided by the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities, and Public Works (MoCHMPW) upon receiving the DCCMS from Ma'an.
3. Could you detail the specific data security and privacy protocols that Ma'an expects the DCCMS to comply with, including alignment with standards such as GDPR or HIPAA, if relevant?
 - A) Ma'an expects the DCCMS to implement robust data security and privacy protocols to protect user data and ensure system integrity, adhering to relevant standards such as GDPR or HIPAA where applicable. Key protocols include:
 - Encryption: All data, whether in transit or at rest, should be encrypted (e.g., SSL/TLS) to protect sensitive information.
 - Cyberattack Protection: Measures must be in place to guard against cyber threats such as Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) and Cross-Site Request Forgery (CSRF).
 - Authentication Mechanisms: Secure user access is mandatory, with strong authentication protocols such as multi-factor authentication (MFA) for user verification.
 - Session Management: Implement strict session management policies to monitor user access and prevent unauthorized or prolonged access to the system.

These protocols will ensure that DCCMS meets high standards of data privacy and security.

4. Are there defined accessibility standards or guidelines that mobile and web applications should adhere to, ensuring usability for all citizens?
 - A) Mobile and web applications should follow accessibility standards to ensure they are usable by all, including individuals with disabilities, while also focusing on creating a user-friendly and intuitive interface that is simple, consistent, and provides clear feedback.
5. Will Ma'an provide any initial datasets, like user feedback, complaint logs, or other resources, to guide the development phase?
 - A) Ma'an currently has no initial datasets available. The subcontractor will be responsible for gathering necessary data through stakeholder consultations and workshops, working directly with relevant parties to obtain accurate information for the DCCMS development.
6. Is there a preferred software development methodology (e.g., Agile, Waterfall) that Ma'an envisions being applied throughout the project?
 - A) Ma'an does not mandate a specific software development methodology; however, an Agile approach is preferred due to its flexibility, iterative progress, and ability to incorporate feedback from multiple stakeholders throughout the project. Agile's collaborative and adaptable nature aligns well with Ma'an's objectives for the DCCMS, especially given the anticipated need for adjustments based on stakeholder input and evolving requirements. However, the subcontractor may propose a different methodology if it aligns well with the project's goals, and Ma'an will review it accordingly.
7. Is there is DR-HA implementation required, and where is it hosted (on-premise or cloud).
 - A) Yes, implementing Disaster Recovery (DR) and High Availability (HA) measures is required to ensure system resilience and minimize downtime. Since the server will be hosted within the Ministry's infrastructure, the DR and HA implementation must integrate with the Ministry's hosting environment. This setup should include mechanisms for data backup, failover support, and rapid recovery to maintain continuous service availability.
8. How many users expected to use the system, and what are the concurrent users.
 - A) We expect the system to accommodate between 100 to 1,000 concurrent users at the start.
9. What is your preferred technology stack?

Front-end: ReactJS
Back-end: Node.js, ASP.NET Core, or PHP Laravel
Database: MySQL, MongoDB, or PostgreSQL
Mobile App Development: Native Swift or Kotlin for native development and React Native or Flutter for cross-platform development.

Part Two

10. Future Scalability of DCCMS Project: Is the DCCMS project expected to be scaled up in the future, or could it be extended to other utility services?

- A) The Digital Citizen Complaint Management System (DCCMS) will be designed with a scalable and adaptable framework. Initially, it will focus on water service in six provinces, but its flexible structure will enable the addition of other services (Like: Solid Waste Management and Sewage) and a potential expansion nationwide. The timeline for this broader rollout will be decided by the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities, and Public Works (MoCHMPW) upon receiving the DCCMS from Ma'an.

11. Server Capacity: Do the servers at MoCHMPW have sufficient capacity to host such a large-scale project?

- A) The subcontractor will provide the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities, and Public Works (MoCHMPW) with two high-capacity servers. Each server will be equipped with dual Xeon Gold processors, 128 GB of RAM, and six 960 GB SSDs configured in a RAID setup, as specified in the Terms of Reference (TOR). MoCHMPW's data center already meets international standards, and the supplied servers will be integrated to support the Ministry's infrastructure, ensuring dedicated and reliable performance for DCCMS operations.

12. Annex 2 – Background, SoW, Deliverables, Functional Requirements (Mobile Application): How will citizens register in the system? Will they use citizen ID, phone numbers, or email for registration?

- A) This will be decided later in collaboration with stakeholders during the workshop on functional and non-functional requirements.

13. Data Management and Integration: The requirements mention integrating the mobile app with the website through an appropriate infrastructure. Could you specify any API standards or third-party software dependencies?

- A) The integration between the mobile app and website will use a unified database with RESTful APIs for seamless synchronization between the two platforms. This allows real-time data sharing and enables administrators to manage and update information across both systems in one panel.

14. Data Protection Laws: Are there any data protection laws in Iraq other than GDPR?

- A) Iraq doesn't have specific data protection laws beyond general compliance with international standards like GDPR.

15. QR Code/Barcode Tracking: The document states that citizens should be able to track their complaints via QR code or barcode, but it does not specify how these will be generated. Could you provide more details?

- A) Upon submission, the DCCMS will generate a unique barcode or QR code for each complaint. This code will be provided to the citizens, allowing them to track the complaint's progress by scanning it. The code is generated automatically within the DCCMS and shared via

the app or printed on complaint forms for easy access. In Iraq, where a paper-based system is commonly used for handling complaints, the administrative employee responsible for receiving the complaint will use the DCCMS panel to print it out and present it to the manager for action, if necessary.

16. System Backup Frequency: How frequently should the system be backed up?

A) This will be identified during the requirement gathering workshop with the stakeholders.

17. The Total Qty. of hardware?

A) As outlined in the TOR, the hardware requirements include two servers for hosting and eight laptops, which will be distributed across MoCHMPW and the water directorates in six targeted provinces.

18. The End-user information of hardware: “ its very important information for the HW & Software vendors”

A) The specific end-user information for hardware provision includes:

End-User Name: MoCHMPW and relevant water directorates.

Contact Person: Omar Mohammed Salih, Director of IT Center at MoCHMPW,

Address: Baghdad - Al Karkh - Al Saliheia,

Phone: 07901602137,

Email: cois@moch.gov.iq,

Website: <https://www.moch.gov.iq>

19. Any option to hosting on cloud like AWS or others cloud ?

A) Hosting will be on-premises hosting at MoCHMPW's data center.

20. For the Mobile App. hosting, the registration its will under developer information or end-user information?

A) The mobile application hosting registration should be under the end-user information.

21. How many years we should host the app on Apple & google, we should cover the first year and then the second year covered by the end-user.

A) The subcontractor will cover the first year, with subsequent hosting potentially managed by MoCHMPW.

22. For the warranty and support for the HW, how many years and what kind of warranty and support?

A) The TOR specifies a one-year maintenance period for software and hardware warranty and support duration.

Part Three

24. How should citizens be able to submit complaints?

A) Citizens will have access to several channels for submitting complaints to ensure inclusivity and ease of access:

1. Web Portal: Available on any internet-connected device, allowing users to log complaints online.
2. Mobile App: Designed for smartphone users, with added features such as GPS location tagging and photo uploads to enhance complaint specificity.
3. Telephone (Hotline and WhatsApp within the Mobile App): Provides a phone-based option for citizens who prefer voice communication or do not have internet access, including options for both voice complaints and text messaging.

This multi-channel approach ensures accessibility across various user preferences and technological capabilities.

25. Who are the primary users of the system?

A) Primary Users of the DCCMS:

1. Citizens:
 - Submit complaints related to water services.
 - Track the status and progress of their complaints.
 - Provide feedback on the resolution of their complaints.
2. Government Officials:
 - Water Directorate staff who are responsible for managing, tracking, and addressing complaints.
 - Ensure timely resolution and communication with citizens regarding the status of their complaints.

26. Which specific Iraqi provinces or regions are targeted for this project?

A) Baghdad, Basrah, Anbar, Najaf, Karbala and Wasit.

27. What types of complaints will the system handle?

A) The DCCMS will primarily handle complaints related to water services, including:

1. Water Quality Issues: Complaints regarding the cleanliness, safety, and potability of water.
2. Access to Water: Issues related to availability, coverage, or equitable distribution of water.
3. Service Disruptions: Complaints about interruptions or outages in water supply.
4. Distribution Problems: Issues related to the distribution network, such as low pressure, leakages, or blocked pipes.

While the system will initially focus on water-related complaints, there is potential for future expansion to accommodate other utility-related complaints.

28. Will the system be available in multiple languages?

A) Arabic only.

Part three:

29. On page 8, the Key Personnel list includes "DCCMS Developers' Advisors and Utility Experts". The details of these positions on page 9 imply that these are the developers of the system itself rather than Advisors and Utility Experts. Do the requirements apply to the developers themselves or to an advisory role to the developers? Related, it specifies 3 people in this position. Is 3 a hard limit or a suggestion?

A) The RFP revised. 3 developers is a minimum limit.

30. On page 12, the Staffing Plan required CVs for all staff members (not just Key Personnel). What are the expectations if staffing needs to change over the course of the project, for example to address project challenges or respond to attrition?

A) If staffing changes are required during the course of the project, either due to addressing unforeseen project challenges or responding to attrition, the following steps and expectations will apply:

1. Notification and Approval: Any staffing changes will be communicated to the relevant stakeholders, particularly the project's key personnel or project management team, with sufficient notice. The subcontractor will be required to submit updated CVs for any new staff members who are proposed to fill roles within the project.
2. Replacement Criteria: When replacing personnel, the qualifications and experience of the new staff member will be evaluated to ensure that they meet the necessary skill sets and expertise for the role. The qualifications should align with the project's requirements, particularly in the case of technical roles or key personnel.
3. Role-Specific Adjustments: For changes that affect key personnel or essential project roles, the subcontractor must ensure that the new staffing assignments will not disrupt the project's progress. If needed, a temporary transition period may be arranged to ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities.

4. Continuous Monitoring: Staffing needs and performance will be continuously monitored throughout the project. Any changes will be evaluated and managed to ensure that project timelines, deliverables, and quality standards are maintained.
5. Documentation: The subcontractor will keep updated records of all staffing changes and ensure that CVs and other necessary documents are submitted to the client as per the contract's requirements.

31. Page 20, is our understanding correct that the majority of the cost to develop the product is to be captured under Deliverable 4?

A) Correct.

32. According to the current project schedule:

- Deliverable No. 3, which includes Task 5 "Develop a prototype (paper prototype and demo software)," is scheduled from Weeks 7-10. This deliverable concludes with a one-day workshop intended to finalize the prototype and gather critical stakeholder feedback before coding begins.
- Deliverable No. 4 then encompasses Task 6 (Design and Build the Mobile and Web App Product), Task 7 (Testing), and Task 8 (Deployment), all scheduled between Weeks 11-16.

Given the complexity involved in designing, building, testing, and deploying a comprehensive software system such as the DCCMS, I am concerned that the five-week period allocated in Deliverable No. 4 might be quite challenging to meet without compromising the quality and thoroughness of the project. Could you please confirm if this timeline is accurate and intended as per the project scope?

A) The timeline will be amended. Please see the updated RFP.

33. Does the application need to support languages outside of English and Arabic?

A) Only Arabic.

34. In reference to requirement 7: *Must allow for notification via GPS and integration of mobile phone location.*

- a. Is location required for all complaints? Yes.
- b. Are all complaints viewable by others or only those that have a location in the map? Yes.
- c. Can a location be entered that is different from the current GPS location? Yes.

35. Does the one-year maintenance window commence during the pilot phase in the six provinces, or does it begin post-pilot?

A) The one-year maintenance window will commence post-pilot phase. While the pilot phase focuses on testing the system, identifying any potential issues, and making necessary adjustments, the maintenance window will begin after the system has been fully deployed and is operational across the six provinces. This will allow for a more accurate assessment of the system's functionality and ensure that the maintenance phase addresses any issues that arise once the system is fully in use.

During the pilot phase, support and troubleshooting will still be available, but the formal maintenance period, which includes system updates, bug fixes, and other operational improvements, will begin once the system has been implemented and finalized across the provinces.

36. Chemonics is not mentioned in Annex 2. What role will they have during execution and acceptance of the project?

A) Chemonics is the implementing partner of Iraq Ma'an project.

37. Is our understanding correct that the web interface is only for administrators and not citizens and that citizens are expected to use the mobile app only?

A) Please see answer to question 24.

38. On page 2, section D, can we get more specific on the responsibilities of Ma'an and the responsibilities of the selected subcontractor?

A) Responsibilities of Ma'an:

- Project Oversight and Coordination: Ma'an will provide overall project management, coordination, and strategic direction to ensure the DCCMS aligns with the project objectives. Ma'an will also be responsible for approving the subcontractor's deliverables.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Ma'an will be responsible for engaging and managing key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities, and Public Works (MoCHMPW), relevant government agencies, and local water directorates.

39. Considering "Ma'an will design and implement an interactive mobile application that will...", it's our understanding that the selected subcontractor will be responsible for the design and implementation of the mobile application and that Ma'an will have oversight and approval responsibilities.

A) Correct. The selected subcontractor will be responsible for the design and implementation of the mobile application and Ma'an will have oversight and approval responsibilities.

40. Considering "Ma'an ...will coordinate with these entities to get their requirement to be considered", based on the details for Task 3 and Task 4 on pages 3 and 4, this also seems to be the responsibility of the subcontractor, with oversight and approval from Ma'an.

A) Correct.

41. Considering "Ma'an will pilot and deploy the DCCMS", it isn't as clear where the division of responsibility lies for these tasks.

A) Same answer to question 38.

42. Page 3 indicates that Ma'an will provide MEL requirements during the kick-off meeting. Is it possible to get a high-level description of these requirements, perhaps from a prior project, so that we can understand expectations as we formulate our bid?

A) While the detailed MEL requirements for this project will be discussed in the kick-off meeting, here is a high-level overview based on prior projects:
Ma'an's MEL requirements include tracking attendance, engagement, and outcomes for events, trainings, and meetings, as well as providing weekly updates on progress, challenges, and key metrics to ensure project accountability and continuous improvement.

43. Task 7 on page 10 specifies "this stage refers to the testing-only stage of the product where product defects are reported, tracked, fixed, and retested until the product reaches the quality standards defined in the Software Requirement Specification". We didn't find "Software Requirement Specification" referenced elsewhere in Annex 2 or the RFP. We would expect to naturally produce it as a deliverable out of Task 4. In addition to quality standards and a prioritized list of detailed functional and nonfunctional requirements, does

Ma'an have other content expectations in the Software Requirement Specification? Is there a template or example Ma'an can provide?

A) No specific template or example Ma'an can provide.

44. Task 8 on page 10 covers Deployment, but is sparse on details of what needs to be done, inferable acceptance criteria, and who is responsible for what. Can we get more details on this? For example,
 - a. Does Ma'an have a duration or number of incident reports in mind for testing in the real environment? A) The subcontractor should propose a duration or number of incident reports for testing in the real environment.
 - b. Does Ma'an have specific acceptance metrics in mind, or should the subcontractor propose them? A) The subcontractor should propose an acceptance matrix.
 - c. Which entity is responsible for "Implement marketing strategies..."? A) Ma'an.
45. Regarding Task 10 Provide Equipment, our preference will likely be to procure a server during development to extend the period of time we have a test environment similar to the deployment environment. Is Ma'an willing to fund equipment before Task 10?

A) The subcontractor should strictly follow the RFP guidelines and implement the project in alignment with the specified tasks.
46. Does Ma'an have a process or preference for how Ma'an and the subcontractor evaluate requested changes to determine whether to implement them, considering factors such as whether they are in scope of the project, cost vs. benefit trade-offs, the complexity vs. benefit trade-offs, UX consistency, etc? The question is motivated by statements such as
 - a. Task 11: "Following this, the maintenance period commences during which all modification requests, such as deletions, additions, updates, or insertions, are addressed." A) Correct.
 - b. Page 15 "Address and repair all the recommendations and feedback" for Deliverable No. A) Yes, this include any recommendation during the testing workshop.
47. To be clear, we fully understand that the software development process involves making changes in response to what is learned throughout the project. It's also the case that in our experience, careful consideration needs to be given to the costs, benefits, and potential detriments to making changes and we'd like to understand how we would work with Ma'an to decide what to do and what not to do.

A) To address this, a structured change management process will be established, allowing for collaborative decision-making with Ma'an. As part of this process, any proposed adjustments will be evaluated carefully based on factors like cost implications, expected benefits, and potential impacts on project scope or timeline. Regular review meetings will provide opportunities for both the subcontractor and Ma'an to discuss these considerations transparently, ensuring changes align with project objectives. This approach allows to remain agile while minimizing risks and maintaining a balanced scope.
48. 13. Page 13 states "implementation period (anticipated duration nine months/36 weeks)". The schedule runs 26 weeks. What is the expected duration?

A) The SOW is updated.

Administrative Questions

1. The whole team CVs together should not exceed 5 pages?
 - a. As mentioned in the RFP, CVs are not counted in the pages count.
2. Profile of team should only be within those identified or we can add further i.e. UI/UX designer, DevOps...etc. or they go under Development?
 - a. Should be as outlined in the RFP, however, you are welcome to add more if you find necessary

3. Consortium/joint venture is allowed?
 - a. Yes, however, Ma'an will only enter into a subcontract with a single entity that is legally authorized to operate in Federal Iraq
4. is a combination of international and local consortium adding value or not necessary?
 - a. We have not requested any such arrangements, the offeror is allowed to submit the proposal based on it is most suitable. All proposals will be evaluated based solely on the criteria and the requirements outlined in the RFP
5. Any chance to extend bid submission deadline?
 - a. It will be extended by 8 days.