



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Belize Social Investment Fund

Assignment Title: Independent Audit of Belize Social Investment Fund for fiscal years ending March 31st 2021, 2022 and 2023

Reference No. (As per Procurement Plan): BZ-SIF-215951-CS-LCS

The Government of Belize has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project; the Caribbean Development Bank toward the cost of the SIF Third Loan and BNTF 9th Programme; and CARICOM Development Fund toward the cost of 'the upgrade of Rudimentary Water Systems'; and intend to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Social Investment Fund (SIF) became a legally established institution in May 1996. SIF's mission is to respond to the basic human needs of the poorest of the poor in Belize in an efficient, transparent and ethnically sensitive manner utilizing an approach that is participatory, collaborative and demand driven. SIF is not meant to replace the established mechanism for delivering social services, i.e., the ministries and departments, but rather it would work in coordination with these institutions and complement their activities to the under-served. SIF is charged with introducing a community-based approach to delivering services which is more sustainable in the medium to long term, especially considering the geographic spacing, ethnic diversity of the poor in Belize, and gender equity.

In January 2002, SIF was given the responsibility by MED to undertake the functions of the defunct Basic Needs Trust Fund Office. As a result, projects that were under implementation and those in the pipeline were managed by the SIF. The Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) is funded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) through a series of grant agreements, and only the BNTF 9th Program is currently under implementation. SIF was also made the implementing agency for projects funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) through the Commonwealth Debt Initiative Arrangement and the UK/Belize Basic Needs 2000 and Hurricane Iris Reconstruction Project Grant 2001.

On February 3, 2015 World Bank and GOB signed a loan for US \$30,000,000 to enhance the resilience of road infrastructure against flood risk and impacts of climate change; and to improve the Borrower's capacity to respond promptly and effectively in an eligible crisis or emergency. In March 2020 the Government of Belize made a request to the World Bank to trigger the Contingent Emergency Response Component of the CRIP, to assist with alleviating the negative effects brought about by COVID-19 pandemic on the country. In compliance with requirements of the CERC, specific Emergency Action Plans and CERC Operations Manual were developed and provide necessary guidance for implementation of CERC activities. The revised end date for the CRIP is August 30, 2021. The SIF has been designated as the executing agency for this loan.

On June 8, 2017 CDB and GOB signed a loan of US \$10,000,000 to finance social and economic infrastructure, social services and organizational strengthening sub-projects (small to medium size) in poor rural communities of Belize. The implementation of the loan is designed for a period of five (5) years and the SIF is the designated executing agency for the loan on behalf of Government of Belize.

On July 16, 2020 CARICOM Development Fund and GOB signed a Grant Agreement for US \$800,000 to assist in financing the project, namely ‘the upgrade of Rudimentary Water Systems’, which is expected to be completed by 31 July 2022. The SIF is the executing agency for this grant on behalf of the GOB.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include the **independent audit of the Social Investment Fund for three fiscal years ending on March 31st 2021, 2022 and 2023**. The draft audit is due by May 31st of each year.

The Belize Social Investment Fund (BSIF) now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

- (a) at least 10-year experience in conducting independent audits
- (b) have conducted at least 2 audits in accordance with terms and conditions of programs financed by International Financing Institutions (“IFIs”) such as the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, etc.;
- (c) hold current license/practicing certificate from Institute of Chartered Accountants of Belize to practice as chartered accountants in Belize;
- (d) Demonstrate that firm has ACCA, CPA or other relevant capabilities to legally perform independent audits.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers (“Consultant Guidelines”) dated January 2011, setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. Consultants should indicate the form of the association (joint-venture or sub-consultancy; member in charge; other member(s) and/or sub-consultants).

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Least Cost Selection method** set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours Monday – Friday 08:00 a.m. - 04:00 p.m. (Belize time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by 3:00pm (Belize time) on February 26th, 2021.

The Procurement Officer
Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project
Belize Social Investment Fund
3rd Floor, 1902 Constitution Drive
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