

## ***Request for Proposals for mid-term evaluation PUM programme 2023 – 2030***

<b>Programme title</b>	<i>PUM Programme: NL Employers 4 SDG8 2023 - 2030, Energising Businesses and Business Ecosystems DGIS: activiteitnummer 4000006606</i>
<b>Geographical coverage: global; region; countries</b>	<i>See website <a href="#">PUM</a> Case studies in two or three countries</i>
<b>Program/project lifespan</b>	<i>The programme implementation period runs from 1 January 2023 until 31 December 2030. The period covered under the assignment is 1 January 2023 to mid/end 2025</i>
<b>Evaluation budget</b>	<i>The maximum budget is set on € 130,000 Euro (exclusive of VAT). This includes logistics expenses</i>
<b>Submission final report</b>	<i>15 June 2026</i>
<b>Deadline to apply</b>	<i>18 June 2025</i>
<b>Contact details</b>	<i>Rens Rutten at <a href="mailto:Midtermevaluation@pum.nl">Midtermevaluation@pum.nl</a></i>

### **Abbreviations and acronyms**

BSO	Business Support Organisation
BMO	Business Membership Organisation
DECP	Dutch Employers Cooperation Programme
DDE	Sustainable Economic Development Department
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PRIME	Pioneering Realtime Impact Monitoring and Evaluation (survey) (now WISE)
RfP	Request for Proposals
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
ToR	Terms of Reference
WISE	Weighing Impact on Sustainability and Effectiveness (used to be PRIME survey)

## 1. Introduction

PUM is a Dutch NGO headquartered in The Hague and was founded in 1978 by the confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW), with financial support from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). PUM's ambition is to empower ambitious entrepreneurs in building a structurally better future for their community: socially, ecologically and economically. PUM works with small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as entities that support them.

Over the past 45 years, PUM has collaborated with more than 40,000 businesses worldwide. PUM currently maintains an expert pool of 1,100 professionals who provide voluntary advice across more than 30 sectors of the economy. With a presence in over 30 countries, PUM undertakes about 1,500 projects annually, supported by a vast global network comprising more than 160 representatives. In January 2023 PUM merged with the Dutch Employers Cooperation Programme (DECP). DECP was founded in 2006 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and employers' organisation VNO-NCW. By offering advice, workshops, and networks, DECP has supported employers' and entrepreneurial organisations in 22 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, contributing to sustainable economic development.

The current subsidy provided by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS), through the Sustainable Economic Development Department (DDE) of the MoFA, consists of a total of EUR 77 million for the period 2023 – 2030. The subsidy period of the programme *Energising Businesses and Business Ecosystems* has two phases: from 2023 to the end of 2026, and from 2027 to the end of 2030. The available subsidy amounts are € 41,250,000 and € 35,775,000 respectively. This mid-term evaluation will be used to provide input for the second phase of the subsidy period and should therefore be completed by summer 2026 at the latest.

The mid-term evaluation of the PUM programme is intended to provide key insights, reflections and recommendations on its effectiveness, sustainability, relevance, efficiency, additionality and coherence, with the following objectives:

1. Assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and likelihood of impact from the first two and a half years of implementation of the new PUM programme.
2. Provide feedback on the assumptions underlying the Theory of Change and learnings about what works, why and under what circumstances.
3. Identify the factors contributing to, or hindering, successful implementation of the programme, to draw lessons for adaptation and improvement, especially with regards to PUM's support to business ecosystems, as well as taking into account a stronger emphasis on Dutch economic and geopolitical interests.

## 2. Background information

PUM's goal is to contribute to SDG 8: promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. That entails that economic growth – or the growth of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) – results in more employment; better paid, more secure, and safer employment for all groups in society; and doing this while reducing, rather than increasing the ecological footprint of SMEs. PUM distinguishes three strategies to reach this goal: a) providing SMEs with practical hands-on advice to improve their practices, b) working with Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and business membership organisations (BMOs) to improve the services and enabling environment for SMEs, c) strengthening business ecosystems and facilitating social dialogue between employers and employees. A business ecosystem is defined as *“a longer-term collaboration between at least one supporting organisation and multiple SMEs, to address the shared challenges of SMEs in a structural way, and to create more economic, social and ecological impact”*. PUM experts collaborate with ambitious entrepreneurs and share their experience to strengthen business ecosystems. The collaboration can be on location or remote, and can include webinars or seminars, and trade promotion.

Currently, PUM employs 39 paid staff members and 84 voluntary staff. Through a network of 164 representatives in 36 countries, PUM identifies potential clients by connecting directly with entrepreneurs, business support organisations and partners locally. For the advisory services, PUM works with more than 1100 experts who share their knowledge on a voluntary basis. The advice given to the clients is on a cost-sharing basis to ensure commitment from the client. PUM pays for the ticket, insurance and other expenses, the client pays for accommodation and local transport. The countries and sectors in which PUM is active and the criteria for client selection can be found on the [website](#).

### 2.1. Development of the PUM programme

The subsidy proposal for the current programme was submitted to the MoFA in May 2022, with an addendum in October 2022 (annex I). In the meantime, some adaptations have been made to the original proposal (Annex IV). While the original proposal included three strategies, namely Vibrant Business Systems, Cluster Focus and Programmatic Approach, the shift that is also reflected in the Theory of Change is the focus on Business Ecosystems, pulling these three strategies together into one core strategy. The Theory of Change has also been adapted at the end of 2023, reflecting these changes in strategies and pathways of change (annex II).

The concept of a programmatic approach was already introduced in 2018 and was aimed at integrating the services of PUM in a more clustered and cohesive manner, focusing on a smaller number of countries and sectors. The concept of business ecosystems was further developed at the end of 2023, based on the baseline evaluation conducted in the first half of 2023 ([SEO, 2023](#)).

Now, two years later, this shift to working more on systemic change was implemented with a bottom-up perspective, ensuring it is practical and adaptable for countries and sectors in their unique contexts. Some promising business ecosystems have been supported, and at the same time PUM is working on a further improvement and strengthening of this approach.

Through the merger with the Dutch Employers Cooperation Programme (DECP) in 2023, a stronger focus was placed on advancing social dialogue - an approach rooted in the Dutch 'polder model'. Social dialogue<sup>1</sup> fosters structured collaboration between employers, employees, and governments to achieve sustainable solutions for labour and economic issues. Over the years, PUM has increasingly partnered with BSOs and BMOs in this endeavour, focusing on building trust, refining strategies, and creating structures that support long-term progress.

Since 2022 PUM's sectors have been organised under three overarching themes: Food Security, Industry, Trade & Environment, and Services and Business Environment. In April 2025 PUM introduced a new sector structure with 13 focus industries, grouped by Food and Non-food, and 9 accelerating skills (annex V). Within the focus industries sectors PUM offers strategy & business planning and technical assistance. With the accelerating skills, PUM will be strengthening the core industries on a specific topic and play key roles within the chosen ecosystems.

The cross-cutting themes gender equality, youth employment, climate change and social dialogue continue to be central in PUM's approach. Two other topics that were brought forward as cross-cutting topics in the subsidy proposal are embedded in the sector strategies: as of April 2025, 'digitalisation and innovation' will be covered by the focus sector ICT & Incubators, and the enabling sector Finance & IT will stimulate digitalisation in the focus sectors.

As a result of the revised Theory of Change, the monitoring and evaluation approach, as well as the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) have been adapted (annex III). Before the summer in 2025, PUM will finalise a process to have a more coherent and clear definition of its support to business ecosystems, which will lead to a redesign of the Theory of Change and of the monitoring and evaluation of business ecosystems.

## **2.2. Institutional context – MoFA policy and DDE Theory of Change**

PUM's programme is firmly rooted in the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development and the adapted Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Private Sector Development policy agenda for 2030. ([Policy Document for Foreign Trade and Development, October 2022](#)). The Theory of Change for Private Sector Development, developed in 2022 by DDE, describes how private sector development will lead to stronger MSMEs that can promote jobs and sustainable economic development, to contribute to the overall goal of reduced poverty and inequality ([Theory of Change - Private Sector](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex II PUM Theory of Change for a definition of Social Dialogue

Development October 2022). The PUM programme contributes to Portfolio 1: Strengthening the business climate in focus countries, with shared outcomes related to strong (M)SMEs and favourable business climate.

The Dutch government is in 2025 further shifting development cooperation/aid away from global solidarity and explicitly linking it to national economic and geopolitical interests (Beleidsbrief ontwikkelingshulp, februari 2025). This implies a key role for Dutch companies, aiming for their active involvement in project execution to secure direct economic benefits for the Netherlands. The focus will be on three key Dutch interests: trade & economy, security & stability, and migration. Subsequently, programmes will center around themes where the Netherlands has a lot of expertise: water management, food security, and health. The cooperation with the Dutch business community is intensifying, contributing to innovation and the resolution of local challenges. This cooperation is designed to help Dutch businesses strengthen their market positions in emerging markets, creating opportunities for PUM as we demonstrate the benefits Dutch companies gain from our projects in these regions. As such, PUM will approach more companies with a shared vision to collaborate and strengthen supply chains together.

### **3. Objective and scope of the mid-term evaluation**

This mid-term evaluation primarily serves three objectives: accountability, learning and inform programme improvement. The accountability objective is to assess the results thus far, to account for the use of public funds. The learning objective is to offer insights into why results were, or were not, achieved, and to draw on these lessons to improve the programme. The programme improvement refers to the recommendations for adapting the programme to remain relevant, effective, efficient, and sustainable.

#### **Objective**

The PUM mid-term evaluation will:

- Analyse the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the PUM programme for the period 2023 – mid/end 2025.
- Analyse progress and challenges with the business ecosystems approach and identify learnings and best practices.
- Provide recommendations and suggested adaptations to reach the intended objectives of the PUM programme and to remain relevant in the light of the new MoFA policy and to uphold sustainability in response to new (external policy) developments.

#### **Users of the evaluation**

The mid-term evaluation is expected to present evidence, recommendations and learnings for PUM that will be used for potential adaptations and new elements of the ongoing PUM programme for the remaining years of the ongoing framework and potentially the next framework.

The mid-term evaluation will be shared with DDE who is the main donor for the PUM Programme.

## **Scope**

This evaluation covers the programme *NL Employers 4 SDG8 2023 – 2030*, funded by DGIS-DDE, that started 1 January 2023 and will cover the period from 1 January 2023 until the starting date of the mid-term evaluation. All three pathways of the Theory of Change will be leading, with a strong focus on the pathway of strengthening business ecosystems to collect lessons learnt from this period. The changes to the submitted programme as described in annex IV should be considered.

The mid-term evaluation will concentrate on evaluating the interventions and outcomes of the programme, funded by DGIS-DDE, in the countries of operation. The desk research can analyse the interventions in all countries; the field study should be looking at a selection of countries and interventions. The sample of countries and interventions will be made by the consultant during the inception phase, based on the criteria mentioned in section 5. approach and methodology.

## **4. Evaluation questions**

Strengthening (entrepreneurship of) SMEs through the sharing of knowledge is PUM's core business since its foundation. In the last 20 years, four external evaluations have been conducted on the PUM programme, and one on the DECP programme (see annex VI). These evaluations share similar conclusions on the effectiveness of the strengths and limitations of the PUM approach. The midterm evaluation will be most useful when focusing on the recommendations from previous evaluations, and on the recently introduced business ecosystems approach. The proposed questions can be seen as indicative for addressing the four evaluation criteria.

### **1. Relevance**

- a. To what extent is PUM relevant to the countries, sectors and regions in which it operates?
- b. What are the stakeholder and client perceptions on PUM's relevance and expertise?
- c. How does PUM ensure the relevance in the context of its activities and programmes to the specific country, sectors, and local ecosystem dynamics?
- d. To what extent does PUM work with clients who need its support the most and that can contribute to more inclusive and sustainable growth?
- e. To what extent are cross-cutting dimensions (gender equality; inclusion of

- youth; social and environmental improvements) reflected in the projects? Have these cross-cutting issues been relevant to achieving the goals and results of the programme?
- f. To what extent do PUM's activities contribute to the policy objectives of MoFA on private sector development and how can PUM improve its alignment with the new MoFA policy?

## **2. Effectiveness and sustainability**

- a. To what extent is PUM on track to achieve the output and outcome objectives?
- b. To what extent does PUM contribute to sustainable improvements in the performance of SMEs and to systemic change?
- c. How, and under what conditions, can PUM with its business ecosystem approach contribute to more sustainable impact?
- d. To what extent are PUM's projects on social dialogue, contributing to improved collaboration on matters of growth, decent work and environmental sustainability?
- e. To what extent is PUM effective in coaching the clients remotely?
- f. Can any unintended positive or negative effects be observed because of PUM's projects and its approach in business ecosystems?
- g. What are the lessons learned on the current strategy for working with business ecosystems, what changes are needed to increase the effectiveness?

## **3. Coherence and additionality**

- a. To what extent do PUM's subsidised advice services provide added value relative to local and international market alternatives, and other similar organisations/programmes?
- b. What is the effect of PUM's shift towards business ecosystems for its added value relative to local and international alternatives? Are there relevant examples from which PUM could learn from?
- c. To what extent is PUM coherent with, and additional to other PSD-interventions financed by the Netherlands MoFA or other donors in the sectors and countries PUM is active in (e.g. CNV, NL embassy, RVO)?
- d. What are the possibilities for PUM to strengthen its collaboration with Dutch companies to enhance the impact for entrepreneurs in the PUM countries, and what is needed to achieve this?

## **4. Efficiency**

- a. How cost-effective are PUM and its specific activities in achieving the intended outputs?

- b. Does the use of a business ecosystem approach lead to increased efficiency and broader impact?
- c. How can PUM improve its data collection and methods for monitoring, evaluation and learning in relation to the theory of change?

## 5. Approach and methodology

The evaluation will start with an inception phase, in which the consultants are asked to develop the methodology for the evaluation, taking the stipulations in this chapter into account. The evaluation coordinator and the PUM internal reference group will support this phase by offering support, information, data, and validation of tools and processes. At the end of the inception phase the consultants are expected to submit an inception report, which will contain at least:

- A detailed evaluation approach/framework, using a theory-based evaluation approach. This framework will map out the final evaluation questions, related indicators, and data sources to guide data collection and design data collection tools.
- A proposal for the sample of two or three countries, clients and business ecosystems.
- A proposal for in-depth case studies and possible field visits;
- A proposal for stakeholders to be interviewed;
- A proposal for data analysis;
- A detailed schedule of work (working plan), including proposed clients/projects to be evaluated, and a list of main persons/organisations to be interviewed.
- Any further data requirements from PUM to fulfil the evaluation.

For the evaluation itself, it is expected that it will consist of desk research, interviews including field visits, in-depth case studies, data analysis, and a literature review.

The consultants are asked to interview and gather information from PUM management, relevant staff members, region- and country managers (volunteers), theme- and sector managers (volunteers) and experts. Representatives, clients and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. PSD-partners, similar organisations to PUM, NL embassies, and business support organisations) should be included in the interviews.

The selection of countries and case studies should be based on the following criteria:

- Countries with a substantial number of PUM clients and projects
- Countries that have not been selected in former programme evaluations
- At least one least developed or fragile country
- At least one country with a 'mature' business ecosystem programme
- Case studies that cover different sectors
- Countries with more than 50% of funding from the MoFA



Primary data to be made available to the consultants will include project data (CRM system), project reports, project evaluations, country and sector plans, PRIME and WISE survey data<sup>2</sup>, and external evaluations. Case studies of projects, clients and business ecosystems are to be conducted in a selection of countries. These case studies will be mainly based on qualitative methods, like interviews with clients and other stakeholders, such as partners and embassies, while the project data can be used to cross-check the findings.

The use of comparison groups is not required for this evaluation.

In the methodological proposal, it is important to consider that the evaluation will be used by PUM for learning how to effectively work in business ecosystems. The aim is to ensure generation of interesting and useful learnings to help PUM develop the approaches and inform possible adaptations or scale-ups.

*Table 1: Information sources as input for the proposal*

Documents	Source
PUM Programme: NL Employers 4 SDG8 2023 – 2030 “ <i>Energising Businesses and Business Ecosystems</i> ” and addendum	Annex I.a. Annex I.b.
PUM Theory of Change	Annex II
Monitoring, evaluation and KPIs	Annex III
Description of changes to the submitted programme 2023-2030	Annex IV
Core industries and accelerating skills per 1 April 2025	Annex V
External evaluations of the PUM programme 2002 - 2022	Annex VI.a - VI.e.
Policy Document for Foreign Trade and Development October 2022	<a href="#">Website MoFA</a>
Theory of Change - Private Sector Development October 2022	<a href="#">Website MoFA</a>
Beleidsbrief Ontwikkelingshulp February 2025	<a href="#">Website MoFA</a>
Annual report 2024	<a href="#">Website PUM</a>
Annual report 2023	<a href="#">Website PUM</a>
Baseline evaluation 2023 SEO	<a href="#">Website PUM</a>

## Limitations to the mid-term evaluation

The start of the current programme was in January 2023, which means that the programme has only been running for 2,5 years. In particular, the shift towards working in business ecosystems is a new approach, which requires some time to develop and measure outcomes. The mid-term evaluation should be used to assess whether PUM is on the right track to make this shift, whether

<sup>2</sup> For a summary of the PRIME survey see chapter 4 in annual report 2023; and for the WISE survey chapter 4 in annual report 2024.

PUM is expected to deliver more tangible outcomes in the coming years, and how PUM can adapt the programme to increase the effectiveness and efficiency.

## 6. Planning, management and risk analysis

### 6.1. Planning

The mid-term evaluation will commence in August 2025 with the inception phase and will be finalized in June 2026. Below is a tentative timeline for the mid-term evaluation.

Table 2: Planning of evaluation

What	When
Start of assignment	15 August 2025
Inception phase	August – September 2025
Delivery inception report	5 October 2025
Data collection, interviews, in-country research and interviews	November 2025 – March 2026
Delivery draft evaluation report	30 April 2026
Delivery final evaluation report	15 June 2026

### 6.2. Deliverables

This evaluation expects to deliver the following products:

Table 3: Products

Product	
Inception report  Max 25 pages	Inception report outlining the scope and approach of the assignment clearly outlining timelines, process, and research design, including detailed data collection methodology, sampling strategy, evaluation matrix, evaluation tools, fieldwork plan, data analysis plan and outline of the evaluation report. The inception report needs to be approved by PUM.
Draft report  Max 40 pages	The draft report should be comprehensive, and include at least the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive summary</li> <li>• Introduction and background description of the evaluation assignment and context relevant to the evaluation</li> <li>• Evaluation methodology and limitations</li> <li>• Findings aligned to each of the key evaluation questions</li> <li>• Conclusions outlining implications of the findings Recommendations</li> <li>• Annexes detailing data analysis, raw data, and list of stakeholders consulted</li> </ul>
Final report  Max 40 pages	A well-organized final narrative mid-term evaluation report incorporating changes requested in draft review. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive summary</li> <li>• Introduction and background description of the evaluation assignment and context relevant to the evaluation</li> <li>• Evaluation methodology and limitations</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings aligned to each of the key evaluation questions</li> <li>• Conclusions outlining implications of the findings</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> </ul> Annexes detailing data analysis, raw data, and list of stakeholders consulted
Power point presentation	Power point presentation of the mid-term evaluation findings and recommendations for dissemination to stakeholders.

### 6.3. Management of the evaluation

The PUM Senior PMEL Officer will act as the evaluation coordinator to manage the evaluation process and support the consultants where needed. An internal reference group led by the evaluation coordinator has been set up to support the selection of the consultants, to support the inception process and provide feedback on the above-mentioned products.

Next to this, an external reference group has been installed, consisting of representatives of DDE, PUM and two external content experts, and led by the evaluation coordinator. The objective of this group is to ensure the quality of the evaluation process and the final evaluation report. Group members will advise the evaluation coordinator on specific deliverables through meetings and review of documents.

## 7. Consultant profile

We are looking for a team of consultants who can demonstrate the following:

- Strong technical knowledge and practical experience of working on private sector development, as well as experience with system change;
- Extensive experience of conducting evaluations of similar focus and scope in development contexts;
- Extensive experience of developing and applying methodological approaches including quantitative and qualitative elements;
- Excellent understanding of the thematic priorities under the PUM programme, including sustainable economic development, women and youth entrepreneurship, social dialogue, system change.
- Excellent communication and report-writing skills;
- Ability to gather data and conduct in-country visits in our programme countries;
- Fluency in English is essential, and some proficiency in French an advantage.

## 8. Proposal requirements

Interested parties are required to submit a technical and financial proposal covering the following aspects:

- Proposed methodology and approach, data collection instruments, information sources and procedures for analysing data, proposed approach for reporting findings, including a list of deliverables.
- Detailed financial budget in Euros that includes level of effort and daily rate for each consultant (including VAT), travel costs, field visits (estimation, to be further detailed in inception report, within the maximum of Euro 130.000 excluding VAT).
- Brief overview of your organisation and/or team, including track record and expertise in relevant areas of work.
- Summarised CVs for team leader and key team members (max 2 pages each)
- Sharing references of at least 3 similar assignments in the last five years.
- Proposals can be submitted to the coordinator of the evaluation Rens Rutten at [midtermevaluation@pum.nl](mailto:midtermevaluation@pum.nl), no later than Wednesday 18 June 2025 23:59 CET.

### 8.1. General tender procedure

The tender procedure will be as follows:

1. Publishing the tender and inviting evaluation consultants to submit a proposal based on this ToR.
2. Interested consultants can send their organised and compiled questions on the ToR once by e-mail until 25 of May 2025 to [midtermevaluation@pum.nl](mailto:midtermevaluation@pum.nl).
3. The submitted questions will be grouped, anonymized, and combined in an information notice. This notice will be sent on 4 June to all consultants in a reply to the e-mail in which the questions were submitted.
4. Deadline to submit the proposals is 18 June 2025
5. Decision on the selection of the consultant is based on the evaluation criteria explained in 8.3. The assessment will be done both by an internal and an external reference group for the evaluation.

*Table 4: Tender process and timeline*

#	Process	When
1.	Publication ToR	12 May 2025
2.	Deadline to submit questions on the ToR	25 May 2025 23:59 CET
3.	Sending information notice by PUM	4 June 2025 23:59 CET

4.	Deadline for submitting proposals	18 June 2025 23:59 CET
5.	Selection of consultant	4 July 2025
6.	Contracting	4 July – 15 August
7.	Start of assignment	15 August 2025

## 8.2. Evaluation quality

PUM adheres to the evaluation criteria of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (IOB). The IOB's [guidance](#) is leading for this evaluation.

## 9. Grounds for exclusion

1. Applicants shall be excluded from participation in this tender procedure if:

- a. they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b. they or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c. they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which PUM can justify;
- d. they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, or with those of the Netherlands or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e. they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization, money laundering or any other illegal activity.

Applicants must confirm in writing that they are not in one of the situations as listed above.

2. Applicants shall further observe the highest standards of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts, including without limitation:

- a. Not making use of child labour or forced labour and/or practice discrimination and respecting the right to freedom of association and the right to organize and engage in

collective bargaining, in accordance with the core conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

- b. Respecting basic social rights and environmental aspects.
- c. Having zero-tolerance for corruption and financial irregularities.
- d. Having zero-tolerance for inaction to sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH).

## Conflict of interest

Applicants shall not have a conflict of interest in submitting a tender application to PUM. Conflict of interest refers to any situation where an Applicant's application may be compromised or not impartial and objective for reasons involving family, personal life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other connection or shared interest with another person. Should the Applicant suspect any potential conflicts of interest on its part, it shall submit a written statement setting forth all conditions and circumstances of such potential conflict(s) of interest to PUM together with its application. A conflict of interest that cannot be solved effectively by less restrictive means constitutes an optional exclusion ground to an applicant, pursuant to article 2.87(1)(e) of the Dutch Procurement Act.

## 10. Evaluation of the proposals

The proposals will first be tested for completeness:

- The absence of the documents referred to in Section 8 of this document can lead to exclusion from further participation in the tender procedure. This is also the case when minimum requirements listed in this ToR are not met.
- If the proposal is complete, the selection committee will evaluate the proposal based on the criteria as set forth in this section.

PUM will reject the proposal if any illegal or corrupt practices have taken place in connection with the award or the tender procedure.

The proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Component	Criteria	Weighing (%)
<b>Vision and understanding of the assignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear presentation of an understanding of the assignment and the context of the evaluation. Suggestions for adjustments of questions are encouraged</li> </ul>	20
<b>Quality of the proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and suitability of the evaluation approach and methodology</li> <li>- Clear explanation of the proposed approach and methodology</li> </ul>	20

<b>Experience and knowledge of the team leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrated experience and competence with leading similar evaluations</li> <li>- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in private sector development and system change</li> </ul>	20
<b>Composition of the team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Description of the team composition, evaluation skills and relevant experience of team members and time allocation per team member.</li> </ul>	20
<b>Quality of project management arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of implementation plan, detailed planning</li> <li>- Clear process for feedback and communication</li> </ul>	10
<b>Financial proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detailed budget (cost per deliverable, travel expenses, contingency budget) and clearly indicate the total amount of the offer</li> <li>- Elaboration of working days, the rate per expert mobilized, transport and mission expenses, etc.</li> </ul>	10

#### **Scoring of the proposals:**

The evaluation of the proposals will be done evaluation will be done by the internal and external reference groups, using the criteria and weighting explained in the table. Each criterion will be scored with a maximum grade of 10. The assignment will be awarded to the consultant with the highest scoring. If scores of proposals are equal, priority will be based on the total scores that were given for the criteria “quality of proposal” and “experience of team leader”. The assignment will be awarded to the consultant that has received the highest score for these two criteria. If this does not lead to a distinction, the score for the component “composition of the team” will be decisive. If this does not lead to a distinction, the ranking will be determined by the drawing of lots.

#### **Awarding process**

Once PUM has selected the consultant to which it intends to award the consultancy, a written notification thereof is sent to all applicants.

### **11. Budget**

The budget available for the assignment does not exceed 130.000 Euros, including all costs including international travel costs, but excluding VAT.

## **12. Confidentiality**

The documents provided by or on behalf of PUM will be handled confidentially. Applicants will also impose a duty of confidentiality of any parties that it engages. Any breach of the duty of confidentiality by an applicant or its engaged third parties will give PUM grounds for exclusion of the applicant, without requiring any prior written or verbal warning. All information, documents and other requested or provided data submitted by the applicant will be handled with due care and confidentiality by PUM. The provided information will after evaluation by PUM be filed as confidential. The applicants will also impose a duty of confidentiality on any parties that it engages. Any breach of the duty of confidentiality by the applicant or its engaged third parties will give PUM grounds for exclusion of the applicant, without requiring any prior written or verbal warning.

## **13. Disclaimer**

PUM reserves the right to update, change, extend, postpone, withdraw, or suspend the RfP, this tender procedure, or any decision regarding the selection or contract award. PUM is not obliged in this tender procedure to make a contract award decision or to conclude a contract with a participant.

Participants in the tender procedure cannot claim compensation from PUM, any affiliated persons or entities, in any way, in case any of the afore-mentioned situations occur.

By handing in a proposal, participants accept all terms and reservations made in this RfP, and subsequent information and documentation in this tender procedure.

## **14. Contact information**

Evaluation coordinator: Rens Rutten at [midtermevaluation@pum.nl](mailto:midtermevaluation@pum.nl)