

Terms of Reference: Catalysing procurement reforms and reducing corruption

1. Introduction

The CoST International Secretariat is seeking a consultant(s) to investigate the linkages between greater infrastructure transparency and procurement reforms aimed at curbing corruption.

The Infrastructure Transparency Initiative (CoST) promotes an institutional approach to integrating improvements in transparency, participation and accountability into public procurement systems. This approach involves governments who join CoST as members mandating the public disclosure of infrastructure data at each stage of the project cycle, including procurement data. It also involves government integrating the Open Contract for Infrastructure Data Standard or CoST Infrastructure Data Standard into e-procurement systems or open data platforms and training government officials to publish good quality infrastructure data.

CoST has documented examples of where procurement reforms have led to cost savings and market improvements. For example, the [Thai Ministry of Finance](#) has reported that greater transparency during the procurement process has led to lower bid prices, and savings of over US \$ 460 million, whilst [procurement reform in Uganda](#) helped increase the number of firms bidding for works contracts. There is also anecdotal evidence that the impacts were due to transparency and the procurement reforms having a deterrent effect, changing the behaviour of public officials responsible for public procurement and of companies bidding for public works contracts and potentially reducing corruption in the process.

However, it is often a challenge to obtain evidence that clearly demonstrates this causal relationship. To that end, CoST is commissioning a learning paper to explore the extent to which its approach has been a catalyst of procurement reform and long-term positive change in the sector.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the learning paper are as follows.

- Establish how CoST influences procurement reform and document examples of the types of procurement reforms and innovations that it has helped to generate and sustain.
- Assess the extent to which adopting CoST and [its core features](#) has contributed towards improvements in procurement practice based on procurement indicators promoted by the GPP MDTF and [worldwide governance indicators \(WGI\)](#).
- Identify linkages and causal relationships between greater transparency, procurement reforms and changes of behaviour by public officials and private sector actors that reduce corruption.
- Capture examples from CoST member programmes of behavioural change that can improve governance and help reduce corruption.

3. Evidence gathering and methodology

The consultant(s) will have access to CoST member progress reports and key public documents such as procurement legislation that has adopted the CoST approach. In terms of the methodology, we envision a combination of a desk review and surveys addressed to procurement offices and other key stakeholders in CoST member programmes to understand the breadth of where CoST has contributed to procurement reform and behavioural change. In-depth interviews with procurement officials and other key stakeholders are also encouraged as part of the methodological approach. Applicants are free to propose a case study approach, or to adopt a broad-based approach with a focus on some selected countries.

The research should capture the lessons from the CoST experience which will be shared globally, especially with organisations focused on procurement reform, transparency, open government and open contracting.

4. Budget and deliverables

The total available budget for this assignment is GBP 25,000. This is inclusive of all costs, including any professional fees, travel expenses, printing of any materials, and all relevant taxes.

We expect the successful applicant(s) to deliver:

- A research outline
- An initial draft
- A final draft in the form of a learning paper that will capture the lessons from this experience
- A virtual presentation summarising the main findings

All submissions must be electronic and in the English language. They must be proofread, spell and grammar checked with the final document ready for publication. The assignment should be carried out between February and June 2023, with the final draft to be submitted by 12 June 2023.

Payment will be made in instalments, according to the following schedule:

- 30% on approval of the research outline
- 40% on presentation of the initial draft
- 30% on approval of the final draft

5. Key delivery dates

Tasks	Delivery Dates
Initiation of work	15 February 2023
Research outline	1 st March 2023
Feedback on outline	15 March 2023
Initial draft submitted	15 May 2023
Feedback on draft from CoST	29 May 2023
Final version submitted	12 June 2023
Approval of the final draft	19 June 2023
Online presentation	26 June 2023

6. Application process

If you are interested in this assignment, please submit a 2-page CV for each proposed consultant and a short proposal, no longer than 4 pages that includes the following:

- Your relevant knowledge and experience including any examples of similar work. Knowledge in areas such as civic participation, open government, anti-corruption, procurement, governance and or infrastructure are recommended.
- A proposed methodology including the process of evidence gathering, as well as any associated risks and mitigation measures.
- A work plan and budget, including the daily rates of the proposed individuals and the role they will each play within the team.

Please send the CVs and proposal to Maria Prado (m.prado@infrastructuretransparency.org) by **10am GMT, Monday 30 January 2023**. Short-listed applicants will be notified by Friday 3 February 2023 with interviews taking place in the week commencing Monday 6 February 2023.