SNV Digitalisation of Agriculture Opportunity: Narrowing the Digital Divide

CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF CV

Contracting & Procurement Department

SNV

Disclaimer

The call for submission of CV does not constitute a commitment to contract on the part of SNV, which reserves the right not to accept any application submitted in whole or in part.

We do not appreciate third-party mediation based on this assignment.

SNV will award the contract once the consultant has been selected, after final negotiations.

Contents

Part 1 - Introduction

The overall objective of this assignment is "to develop 'building blocks' as input into an overall SNV positioning in Digitalization for Agriculture (D4Ag), focused specifically on narrowing the Digital Divide and that includes strategies, exchange learnings, and define (potential) partnerships.

For this assignment, SNV is looking for an individual consultant or an assigned consultant from a firm.

If you believe that you have the required credentials as in the outlined Terms of Reference (Part 3), SNV invites you to respond to the Instruction to Consultants (Part 2).

SNV

CORE-Africa (COVID-19 Response and Resilience Initiative for Food Value Chains in Africa - CORE) is an "SNV Netherlands Development Organisation" or "SNV") initiative that aims to strengthen responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and overall resilience across 8 DGIS funded (and SNV implemented) agriculture and value chain projects in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), particularly in ways that contribute to resilient agri-food systems and strengthen the coping ability of actors in those systems.

CORE has five overlapping components:

1. Resilience of farmer/SME inputs and services.
2. Resilience of market channels to consumers and various segments among them.
3. Integration of Hygiene, Health, and Safety arrangements in food VCs.
4. Use of Digitalisation for Agriculture (D4Ag) for strengthening resilience.
5. Understanding and operationalizing resilience, across several of the above areas.

As specified in the ToR, this assignment is focussing on the fourth component with a mapping of practical strategies and approaches that will enable SNV, to ensure that digitalisation will support an inclusive agricultural transformation, by specifically addressing the structural challenges in narrowing the Digital Divide. This is expressed by the gaps in (1) access, (2) use, (3) quality of use and (4) supportive policies and regulations of the internet and ICTs between individuals, organisations, and enterprises.

Background

Several sources[1] indicate that in agriculture, investments in digitalisation can be a game-changer in boosting productivity, profitability, employment,

[1] CTA, 2019. The digitalisation of African agriculture report 2018- 2019
- FAO, 2019. Digital technologies in agriculture and rural areas, status report
- Malabo Montpellier Panel Report, 2019. Byte by Byte
- GIZ 2018. Harnessing the chances of digitalisation for rural development
- USAID 2018. Digital farmer profiles: reimagining smallholder agriculture

resilience to climate change, and more recently COVID-19 specific responses. A digitally enabled agricultural transformation can help achieve meaningful livelihood improvements for Africa's smallholder producers, agri-pastoralists, and pastoralists. It can drive greater engagement in agriculture from women and youth by creating employment opportunities within agri-food and market systems. All this is driven by the fact that Digitalisation for Agriculture (D4Ag) has the potential to enhance efficiency, inclusiveness, and risk reduction in a combined way.

While access to the internet and related infrastructure, devices, and knowledge, has allowed many of us to continue with our lives despite the COVID-19 lockdowns, it had not been the same for many others, who did not have similar access. According to the report[2] from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), an estimated 4.9 billion people have been using the Internet in 2021 - roughly 63 per cent of the world's population. This is an increase of almost 17 per cent since 2019, with almost 800 million people estimated to have come online only between 2019 and 2021. However, this still leaves about 2.9 billion people offline, with 96 per cent of them living in the developing world. While virtually all urban areas in the world are covered by a mobile broadband network, many gaps persist in rural areas. In Africa, 18 per cent of the rural population has no mobile network coverage at all, and another 11 per cent has only 2G coverage. This means that almost 30 per cent of the rural population cannot access the internet. GSMA (2020)[3] estimates that if no action is taken, 40 per cent of the population in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) will still be offline in 2025.

Digitalisation for Agriculture (D4Ag)
is the use of digital technologies, innovations, and data to transform business models and practices across the agricultural chains and address bottlenecks in, inter alia, productivity, postharvest handling, market access, finance, and supply chain management so as to achieve greater income for smallholder farmers, improve food and nutrition security, build climate resilience and expand inclusion of youth and women (CTA 2019).

Hence notwithstanding the high hopes and potential, digitalisation meets important structural challenges. In general, digital solutions in developing countries still lack sustainable and inclusive business models with the access, expansion and reach remaining patchy[4]. Access to digital solutions among the population in developing countries remains low, while the sophistication of digital solutions has begun to outpace the readiness of the actors to embrace and leverage them. This lack of digital literacy creates not only entry-level barriers for digital solution providers, to scale the adoption and use of their solutions, but is structurally divided along with gender, age, income, (dis)ability, communities, and geographies. It indicates that investors and, to a somewhat lesser extent, enterprises are still risk-averse and likely prioritize the easiest-to-reach markets. If the access to digital resources and the related digital skills and literacy are not addressed there is

[2] ITU, 2021. Measuring digital development, Facts and figures
[3] GSMA (2020) The State of Mobile Internet Connectivity Report 2020
[4] CTA, 2019. The digitalisation of African agriculture report 2018- 2019

a high risk that existing gaps will remain or even widen. This is commonly expressed by the term "Digital Divide". The risk of the Digital Divide is that development interventions in agriculture will have the following interrelated negative consequences:

- The exclusion of specific groups and enterprises from the agricultural transformation process, instead of enhancing the inclusion.
- The transaction risks remain too high to effectively increase the demand for digital solutions in the selected market systems.
- The outreach is too limited to establish viable and inclusive business models for digital solutions in farm advisory and others.
- The increase in access to and use of private and public digital solutions and partnerships is limited.
- The targeted positive impact in terms of poverty reduction is not achieved.

Digital Divide Terminology

The concept of the Digital Divide has been evolving over the years with manifold definitions, all with slightly different emphasis, which is evidenced by related concepts like digital inclusion, digital discrimination, digital participation, digital skills, and digital accessibility. All conceptualising it through addressing the questions of who (e.g., divide between individuals, organisations, enterprises, or countries), with which kinds of characteristics (e.g., gender, income, geography, or age), how to connect (e.g., mere access or effective adoption), and to what to connect (e.g., phones, Internet, or digital TV).
The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) defines the Digital Divide as the inequality in physical and material access to the internet and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The Digital Agrifood Collective (DAC, 2021)[5] defines the Divide as digital inclusion, making digital solutions accessible, understandable, and affordable for as many low-income producers, consumers, and enterprises as possible in a way that everyone can benefit from the digital transformation of the agri-food sector, regardless of their age, gender, location, (dis)ability, education, and prior experience with digital solutions.

The challenges: The Digital Divide and why it Causes Inequality

The Digital Divide was initially attributed to underdevelopment and was perceived as something temporary that would disappear with the popularization of technology. Instead, the fracture persists today despite the massive commercialization of electronic devices with internet access. The causes can range from the high price of devices to the lack of knowledge about their use, perceived relevance, or the lack of infrastructure for their access.

[5] https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/229/Digital_Agrifood_Collective_Session_on_Tackling_the_Digital_Divide.pdf

In line with this, we can identify the following gaps[6] in the Digital Divide:

Access gap: This is the most visible Digital Divide. It refers to the socioeconomic and other differences among people, organisations or enterprises and the impact on their ability to afford the devices necessary to get in an effective way connected to networks[7]. Acquiring affordable physical and material access to the Internet is still very different in countries and populations. Physical access refers to actual hands-on, on-site access to mobiles, computers or other devices and network hardware, or other parts of a hardware installation. Moreover, physical access to the Internet is not equal to material access. Material access includes all costs related to the use of feature phones, smartphones, computers, connections, peripheral equipment, software, and solutions. These costs are diverging in many ways, and people, organisations or enterprises with physical access have a very different computer, Internet, and other digital media expenses[8]. Therefore, even while countries are investing in the physical infrastructure for improving access, the problem of material access for parts of the population, organisations or enterprises might become more serious, reinforcing inequalities.

Usage gap: This refers to the difference in the level of skills possessed by individuals, organisations, or enterprises. There is a generation gap when it comes to the skills necessary to use the Internet[9]. It is also affected by the quality of education. Younger, educated people tend to have more skills than older, less educated ones. A gap exists in the ability of people, organisations, and enterprises to interpret and understand the information presented once they are connected to the Internet. Although comprehensive data on mobile skills are lacking, according to estimates by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU 2019), just 45 per cent of the global population have basic digital skills. Different categories of populations, organisations and enterprises have anywhere between no skills or rudimentary skills (such as using a laptop or mobile phone for simple messaging or browsing) to advanced ICT skills (e.g., developing software applications). With the COVID-19 pandemic prompting organisations, enterprises, and governments to move their products and solutions online, the need for a digitally skilled population amplified. However, the lack of digital skills and literacy among different sets of populations, based on age, disabilities, gender, income, geographical location, and other socio-economic factors, widened the already existing usage gap amongst them.

The quality-of-use gap: This refers to the different ways that people use the Internet and the fact that some people are far more able to get the information they need and benefit from it than others[10]. Some Internet resources are

[6] https://www.iberdrola.com/web/quest/compromiso-social/que-es-brecha-digital and GSMA (2021) Accelerating mobile internet adoption Policy considerations to bridge the Digital Divide in low- and middle-income countries

[7] https://www.investopedia.com/the-digital-divide-5116352

[8] https://www.utwente.nl/en/centrefordigitalinclusion/Blog/02-Digitale_Kloof/

[9] https://www.investopedia.com/the-digital-divide-5116352

[10] https://www.investopedia.com/the-digital-divide-5116352

more beneficial or advantageous for Internet users than others. Some offer users more chances and resources to move forward in their business, career, work, education, and societal position than others that are mainly consumptive or entertaining. Further, groups, organisations, and enterprises with fewer forms of capital are likely to be affected in negative ways by the Internet: solutions and products cannot be ordered or are sold out, and jobs will be taken. Therefore, the usage gap exists also when individuals, organisations or enterprises use the Internet in capital-enhancing ways, while others either do not use it or use it in less effective and less profitable ways, making the use, less relevant to them.

Supportive policy and regulation gap: There is a gap in the overall public or public-private enabling investments in digital inclusion of individuals, organisations or enterprises and a vacuum in the governance of digital technologies to which some prospected users are more sensitive and that needs to be addressed to protect human rights and assert the mandate of democratic institutions over corporate interests. Addressing privacy, safety, security, equitable access, and harassment in digital development involves careful consideration e.g., which data are collected and how data are acquired, (re-)used, stored, and shared[11]. This requires new rules e.g., social contracts[12] .

Consequences of the Digital Divide

In the last 25 years, the categories of individuals, organisations, and enterprises on the 'right side' of the Digital Divide were young with well-educated occupations, in many circumstances male dominated, part of the ethnic majority in an urban environment of more developed countries/ circumstances. The categories of individuals, organisations and enterprises on the 'wrong side' of the Digital Divide were traditional with low-educated occupations or unemployed, in many circumstances female dominated, part of ethnic minorities in a rural environment of less developed countries/circumstances. Further, between 1995 and 2010 the digital gaps between these categories were only widening. Currently, some of the gaps are slowly closing in terms of motivation and physical access while the gaps in digital skills and usage are still widening[13].

The Digital Divide constitutes a form of poverty and social exclusion, by depriving individuals, organisations, and enterprises of essential resources to develop and generate wealth or well-being. This has been observed frequently during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many organisations, enterprises, students, and workers find it difficult to telecommute. The main effects of the Digital Divide can be presented as follow[14]:

[11] https://digitalprinciples.org
[12] https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2021
[13] The Deepening Divide, Sage Publications and Jan van Dijk (2020). The Digital Divide, Polity Press.
[14] https://www.iberdrola.com/social-commitment/what-is-digital-divide

Becoming incommunicado and increased isolation: less connected individuals, organisations and enterprises are not reached by the Internet and consequently are more isolated from sources of information. As an example, older people in both urban and rural areas could suffer more from a lack of access to critical public services, which have moved online. Organisations not connected to the internet cannot make use of opportunities to improve their service provision. The same can be said for enterprises missing business opportunities and reducing competitiveness when not well connected.

The barrier to studying and acquiring knowledge: The coronavirus crisis has (even more sharply) shown the effects of the Digital Divide in education: teachers and students are out of the game due to a lack of technology and sufficient digital skills. In certain environments for example private schools could move online while public schools did not have the means to do so.

Accentuates social differences: Digital illiteracy reduces the options of finding work or accessing quality employment, which hurts workers not being able to make use of the opportunities of the digital economy. Further, the Digital Divide reduces the social and cultural capital of already disadvantaged populations due to a lack of access to social networks and can thus reinforce social differences.

Gender discrimination: Globally, 62 per cent of men use the Internet compared with 57 per cent of women[15]. Apart from a slight reduction in South Asia, the gender gap[16] in mobile ownership remained largely unchanged since 2017 across LMICs, with women seven per cent less likely than men to own a mobile phone. Women are now 15 per cent less likely to use mobile internet than men[17]. While the Digital gender Divide has been narrowing in many regions, there are significant variations between countries in men's and women's mobile ownership and mobile internet use, and the resulting size of the gender gap[18]. Women remain digitally marginalized in many of the world's poorest countries, where having access to technology would greatly enhance their livelihoods. It would mean access to critical health solutions and opportunities for education, civic participation, employment, entrepreneurship, and access to finance for women, women-led organisations, and women enterprises. The gender Digital Divide in terms of skills and policies/regulations can potentially threaten a woman's safety and wellbeing – through technology-facilitated Gender-Based Violence (GBV), cyberattacks, data risks, privacy breaches, and reinforcement of gender stereotypes and inequalities. Similar arguments could be made for excluded communities, older persons and persons with disabilities.

[15] https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/FactsFigures2021.pdf
[16] Gender gap in ownership/use (%) equals ((male owners/users (% of male population) – (female owners/users (% of female population))) / (male owners/users (%of male population))
[17] https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2021.pdf
[18] https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2021.pdf

SNV Requirements

This assignment is therefore to position SNV in supporting governments, civil society, the private sector, producers, consumers, and donors, ensuring that digitalisation will support an inclusive agricultural transformation, by specifically addressing the structural challenges in narrowing the Digital Divide.

Part 2 - Instructions to Consultants

Conditions

SNV invites interested applicants to submit their ***Cover letter, Curriculum Vitae, and references*** highlighting the most relevant experience in the context of the TORs, its methodology, and deliverables.

The following outline conditions that consultants shall be considered before sending their application:

1. **Type of consultant:** For this assignment, SNV is looking for an individual consultant or a consultant which is assigned by a firm (organisation)**.**
2. **Cover letter:** The Cover letter need to be well written and should highlight the most relevant experience in the context of the TOR.
3. **Curriculum Vitae (CV) content:**

   The CV of the consultant needs to be well written and shall show essential characteristics of the knowledge, relevant professional experience in similar works, performance, conditions, and quality assurance mechanisms.
4. **References:** The professional references need to provide the contact details of 2 selected relevant and recent assignments.
5. **CV of individuals:** When firms or organisations are assigning an individual, only the CV of the individual shall be used in the selection process, and the firm or organisation's experience shall not be considered.
6. **Consultant conditions:** The consultant listed must be available for the assignment, association between consultants will not be accepted and the consultant may not subcontract any portion of the work.
7. **The application submitted**: The consultant commits for 90 calendar days ("Period of validity"). However, if necessary, SNV may ask the consultant to extend the validity period for their application. The consultant has the right to refuse to extend the validity of their application.
8. **Cover Letter format**: Applicants are free to use their format.
9. **Letter and CV language**: English language.

Activity	Deadline
Call for submission of CVs release date	05-07-2022
Deadline for submission of applications	24-07-2022
Communication to shortlisted candidates	26-07-2022
Interviews with the shortlisted candidate	28/29-7-2022
Communication to selected candidate	03-08-2022
Contract negotiation	05-08-2022
Contract signing	09-08-2022
Start date selected consultant	15-08-2022

10. **Application validity**: Only consultants that comply with the minimum eligibility evaluation (see Part 4), will be part of the short-listing and subsequent interviews

11. SNV may ask for hard copies of certifications, diplomas, contracts, or other documents described on the Cover letter and CV of the shortlisted consultants.

Timeline

The selection will follow the tentative timeline. At any time before the application deadline, SNV may modify the request for submission of the CV by any means of amendment. Any amendment is communicated to the consultants by any means.

Data protection

It is understood and agreed that the data on prospective applicants will be used by **SNV** in determining, according to its sole judgment and discretion, the qualifications of prospective applicants to perform the assignment. It will be kept secure in line with SNV's commitment to EU GDPR 2018, and only used for programming purposes. It will be destroyed after seven (7) years in line with data requirements.

Additional inquiries

The contracting and procurement team will address any inquiry related to this sourcing process by emailing globalprocurement@snv.org.

Part 3 – Terms of Reference (TOR)

The assignment rationale

The potentially transformative nature of D4Ag, further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, provides not only a driver but also a necessity for SNV to position itself well regarding digitalisation for agriculture. This is driven by the potential contribution of D4Ag to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), its specific focus on agricultural sector development, the priorities of development partners and the overall trends towards digitalisation. The earlier paragraphs demonstrate that the Digital Divide, expressed by the gaps in (1) access, (2) use, (3) quality of use, and (4) supportive policies and regulations of the internet and ICTs between individuals, organisations, and enterprises, is a major challenge. The overall Divide is only slowly closing but there are additional risks of even widening again for certain people, organisations and enterprises, especially in the developing countries and economies in transition, where SNV operates.

Detailed assignment objectives

To develop 'building blocks' as input into an overall SNV D4Ag positioning (separate trajectory), addressing specifically the structural challenges in narrowing the Digital Divide in D4Ag and that includes strategies, exchange learnings, and define (potential) partnerships linked to:

Technical qualifications

Consultants who are qualified in the field of Digitalisation for Agriculture (D4Ag) and more specifically with strategies and approaches to narrow the Digital Divide.

- Specific products in the ongoing positioning of agri-food systems i.e., productive, and resilient agri-food landscapes, inclusive agri-food markets and green investment, healthy diets for all, opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship, and food security and healthy diets in fragile settings (see appendix 2).
- Specific results as there are (not exhaustive) * increased network coverage, * relevant and affordable digital use cases/solutions, * increased and equitable access to and use of digital solutions, * digital skills/literacy, * policies and regulations dealing with enabling public investments in digital inclusion and addressing privacy, safety, security, and harassment in digital development and * specific knowledge agenda.

Scope of work

A mapping of practical strategies and approaches that will enable SNV to address the digital divide, by offering specific and targeted support to potentially the public sector, Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), private enterprises, consumers, or producers. The work will include the following activities with tentative consultancy days allocation:

1st intervention: 5 – days phase
Review and presentation of a general understanding of the ToR in terms of problem sketching (key drivers of the Divide), mapping ongoing initiatives of addressing the Digital Divide, strategies/approaches, and partnerships.

2nd intervention: 7 - days phase
Identify/formulate possible strategies, approaches and partnerships that are relevant to SNV, as an implementing organisation with specific products in the ongoing positioning of agri-food systems: productive and resilient agri-food landscapes, inclusive agri-food markets and green investment, healthy diets for all, opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship, and food security and healthy diets in fragile settings (see appendix 2).

3rd intervention:: 7 - days phase
Propose key scenarios for SNV to consider in positioning itself in addressing the Digital Divide with indications of pros and cons.

4th intervention: 2 - days phase
Facilitate three (or four) strategic discussion sessions with selected participants to solicit inputs and feedback on SNV's positioning, strategic choices, and partnerships.

5th intervention: 4 - days phase
Document the results as 'building blocks' as input into an overall SNV D4AG position paper (separate trajectory) in the different formats as specified in the deliverables (including background materials).

The methodology

The main methodology is a desk review of experiences and knowledge from:

- External initiatives with D4Ag and the Digital Divide (see Appendix 1 for some initial examples).
- Ongoing SNV processes on agri-food systems development and the role of D4Ag.

There will be three strategic sessions with a reference group:

- The first session will discuss the general understanding of the ToR.
- The second session will provide comments, and feedback and make choices in the findings of the first drafts.
- The third session will agree on the final products.

A session with French translation/ in French is proposed with the project managers "GARBAL" related projects and other projects based on the findings in the first draft or final documents (TBC).

The deliverables

The main deliverable is a document describing the 'building blocks' as input into the overall SNV D4AG position paper specifically addressing the Digital Divide:

1. Content of the building blocks:

- Problem sketching in terms of reasons for the Digital Divide.
- Mapping ongoing external initiatives.
- Strategies and approaches addressing the Digital Divide.
- Scenario's for SNV to consider with pros and cons, including partnerships.
- Proposed scenario(s) identified in the strategic sessions.

2. **Facilitated 3-4 strategic sessions**: being the understanding of ToR, the first draft of the documentation, and the final documentation.

3. **Documentation:**

- The main document of max 15 pages excluding background material in an annex.
- A PPT for the different strategic sessions and final deliverable.
- An easy-to-communicate visual overview of major findings and principal strategies/approaches.
- Reports of strategic discussion sessions.
- Documents will be translated into French.

The framework of the service

SNV outlines certain details in which the consultancy service will be performed.

- **Expected duration of work**: maximum 25 consultancy days.
- **Target start day**: 15 August 2022
- **Date of completion**: End of September/latest beginning October 2022.
- **Supervisor of the service provider**: Piet Visser, Senior Value Chain Advisor.
- **Global group reference**: Product Owners, Walter van Opzeeland, Catherine Le Come, Jennifer Linkletter, Vandana Thottoli, Piet Visser and Jan Ubels.
- **Resource person/project:** "GARBAL" projects and other relevant projects
- **Type of contract**: consultancy contract or contract for professional services.
- **Contract end date**: 31 October 2022

Qualification of the consultant

Knowledge:

- The minimum qualification is a master's level degree in Data Science and Society, Applied Economics (and management) or social sciences with additional IT-related subjects or any other relevant field or any other relevant field or combinations of fields.
- Solid knowledge of inclusion strategies and approaches of major development partners in D4Ag and more specifically the Digital Divide of individuals, organisations, and enterprises.

Professional experience:

- A minimum of 5 years of experience and track record in D4Ag, Digitalisation for Development (D4D) and Digital Divide (DD) with the actual implementation of strategies and approaches with a specific focus on SSA.
- Experiences with the public sectors and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in digitalisation.
- Access to data/information/network outside SNV

Skills:

- Aware of / sensitive to social and cultural diversity – have an inclusive attitude.
- Strong analytical and reporting skills.
- Proficiency in oral and written English.
- Bilingual abilities in English and French would be an advantage and much appreciated.

Notes: The qualification of the consultant described above will be part of the technical evaluation.

Part 4 – Criteria Evaluation of the Consultant

Applications that comply with both the eligibility criteria and a minimum score of technical criteria will be part of the short-listing and subsequent interviews before the negotiation and contracting take place.

Eligibility criteria

To consider any application, the consultant or firm must submit or assure the legal status of the consultancy service. Therefore, the consultant or firm shall provide the following documentation or equivalent (when applicable) to pass the minimum *eligibility evaluation criteria*.

A- Copy of certificate of incorporation or extract from the Chamber of Commerce or equivalent emitted by the country of origin.

B- VAT registration certificate or equivalent.

C- Extract of Ultimate Beneficial Owner (UBO) or equivalent declaration, if applicable.

D- Copy of Trade licence/business permit, when applicable.

Individual consultants can present A or D documentation. Please attach the Self-Declaration form (see annex 1) to the Cover letter. Additionally, if there is any conflict of interest, adverse action, and missing information the consultant can fill the related information on each provided form (see annex 1) and also attach these to the Cover letter.

If an individual consultant is contracting from among a firm or organisation's permanent staff, associates, or other experts it may recruit, then the eligibility requirements will apply to the firm or organisation concerned. To consider any application, the consultant or firm must submit and assure the legal status for the consultancy.

Technical criteria for contract award

	Criteria	Max score
1	Knowledge of the consultant	25
2	Expertise – provided experiences relevant to Digitalisation for Agriculture (D4Ag) and more specifically with strategies and approaches to narrow the Digital Divide.	50
3	Skills[19]: analytical, verbal and written English and overall sensitivity to social and cultural diversity.	25

The top-ranked consultants above 80% of the maximum score based on the cover letter content and CV review will continue the process of evaluation with individual interviews to clarify or validate any information and establish the final score.

For the short-listed consultant that ranked highest, the Procurement Committee performs a reference check.

If positive the consultant will propose its fees (see paragraph on consultancy

[19] Verbal communication skills will be tested in the interviews.

fees) for this consultancy assignment and enter the negotiation process.

After successful negotiation with the highest-ranked consultant, SNV will award the consultancy contract. If the negotiation fails, the process will repeat with the consultant with the second highest ranking above 80%.

If a firm or organisation cannot provide the agreed consultant, they will lose the contract and the next ranked consultant will be invited.

Consultancy fees

The consultancy fees will be paid based on days worked within the longer time frame of the consultancy of 2 months, with a maximum as per the indicated level effort of 25 consultancy days.

For a selected non-NL-based consultant the fees are excluding VAT and the invoices will be with VAT reverse charge. On the contrary, for a selected NL-based consultant the fees include VAT.

Selection process steps

SNV summarises the steps involved in the selection process as follows:

1. The shortlisting of consultants is based on Cover letters and CVs, having **at least 80% of the maximum score**.
2. The eligibility checks or due diligence on shortlisted consultants are performed (see annex 1).
3. The interviews are held with top-ranked consultants to clarify or validate any qualifications, expertise, and behavioural and communication skills.
4. Based on the interviews the final score is determined.
5. The reference check on the winning /highest ranked consultant (>80%) is performed.
6. If positive the highest-ranked consultant will be contacted to inquire about their consultancy fee expectations per consultancy day for this assignment, including or excluding VAT (see paragraph on consultancy fees).
7. The negotiation starts with the highest-ranked consultant.
8. If the negotiation is successful, the contract is signed.
9. SNV will notify other candidates on the shortlist that they were unsuccessful.

Annex 1: Due Diligence compliance

As part of our commitment to our donors as well as to the delivery of quality services and projects, SNV conducts due diligence checks on prospective consultants, vendors, and partners.

The due diligence checks aim to ensure compatibility between the values of SNV and those of prospective consultants, vendors, and partners. It also ensures that we are responsible for the use of funds that are entrusted to us by our donors.

If an individual consultant is contracting from among a firm or organisation's permanent staff, associates, or other experts it may recruit, then the eligibility requirements will apply to the firm or organisation concerned. To consider any application, the consultant or firm must submit and assure the legal status for providing the Service.

To consider any application, the consultant or firm must submit or assure the legal status for providing the service. Therefore, the consultant or firm shall provide the following documentation or equivalent (when applicable) to pass the minimum eligibility evaluation criteria.

A- Copy of certificate of incorporation or extract from the Chamber of Commerce or equivalent emitted by the country of origin.
B- VAT registration certificate or equivalent.
C- Extract of Ultimate Beneficial Owner (UBO) or equivalent declaration, if applicable.
D- Copy of Trade licence/business permit, when applicable.

Please include a duly signed Self-Declaration form. Additionally, if there is any conflict of interest, adverse action, and missing information the consultant can fill in the related information on each provided form:

If you are not able to provide any of the requested documentation, please provide SNV with written justification using the earlier forms annexed.

The data received shall be validated by SNV through remote and/or physical checks and processed following SNV's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) framework (which complies with the European Union's GDPR 2018), the hardcopy and electronic data you provide will be kept secure and will only be processed by SNV for procurement and project execution purposes.

The data will be kept for 7 years, after which they will be destroyed by SNV. By submitting your signed self-declaration and participating in the SNV process, you agree with this data use, storage, and processing of the data provided.

SNV Due Diligence Self-Declaration Form (Individuals)

I, Insert name of Individual hereby declare to Stichting SNV Nederlandse Ontwikkelingsorganisatie (SNV) that:

a. I am not debarred, sanctioned, or included in any ineligibility lists established by the EU, UN, UK, USGOV or the World Bank.
b. I have not been the subject of legal proceedings for insolvency, bankruptcy, or receivership nor have I had my activities suspended for related reasons.
c. I am not bankrupt nor in the process of being declared bankrupt, having my affairs administered by the courts, have not entered an arrangement with creditors, have not suspended business activities, am not the subject of proceedings concerning the foregoing matters, and am not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national or international legislation or regulations.
d. I am solvent and, can continue doing business for the period stipulated in the contract after the contract signature if awarded a contract by SNV.
e. I have not been convicted of an offence concerning my professional conduct by a final judgment.
f. I have not been the subject of a final judgment or a final administrative decision for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization, money laundering, terrorist-related offences, child labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, or any other illegal activity.
g. I am compliant with all my obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes following the national legislation or regulations of the country in which I am established.
h. I am not subject to an administrative penalty for misrepresenting any information required as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply such information.
i. I have no conflict of interest or have declared to SNV any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest concerning the current procurement process. If the latter, please complete Annex A - Conflict of Interest Form.
j. no adverse action has been taken against me, including contract termination for poor performance or I have declared to SNV any adverse actions against us in the last five years. If the latter, please complete Annex B - Adverse Action Form.
k. I have not granted and will not grant, have not sought, and will not seek, have not attempted, and will not attempt to obtain, and have not accepted and will not accept any direct or indirect benefit (financial or otherwise) arising from this procurement process or the contract if awarded a contract by SNV
l. I have zero tolerance for and do not engage in sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse, and
m. I shall notify SNV in case any of changes to any of the declarations above.

I understand that a false statement or failure to disclose any relevant information which may impact SNV's decision to award a contract may result in my disqualification from the bidding exercise and/or the withdrawal of any offer of a contract with SNV.

/...

Furthermore, in case a contract has already been awarded, SNV shall be entitled to terminate the contract with immediate effect, in addition to any other remedies which SNV may have by contract or by law.

Signed by:

Legal Name:	
Trading name (if different from above)	
Business registration number and country of registration	
Address:	
Postal address (if different from above):	
E-mail address:	
Date:	Monday, 04 July 2022
Signature:	

Annex A - Conflict of Interest Form

I, Insert full legal name hereby declares to Stichting SNV Nederlandse Ontwikkelingsorganisatie (SNV) that there is a potential or actual conflict of interest.

The questions and answers below provide additional information on the nature of the conflict of interest:

To the best of your knowledge, have you or any employee or staff member of your organisation or firm, ever been employed by SNV?	*Yes or No*
If yes, provide the name of the person in your organisation, and a description of the employment period, including job title, the duration of the employment period, and the country of employment.	*Provide details*
Is any employee or staff member of your firm, company or organisation related (by blood, marriage or otherwise) to any employee of SNV?	*Yes or No*
If yes, please provide the name of your staff and the name of the SNV staff member they are related to. State the nature of the relationship.	*Provide details*
Are there any other potential conflicts of interest between you/your firm, company, or organisation and SNV or any of our donors, partners, staff, offices, contracted consultants, or vendors?	*Yes or No*
If yes, please provide further information here.	*Provide details*
Any other relevant disclosures	*Provide details*

_____ _____ _____

Full Name Signature Date

Annex B – Adverse Action Form

I, Insert full legal name hereby declare to Stichting SNV Nederlandse Ontwikkelingsorganisatie (SNV) that adverse action has been taken against our establishment.

The questions and answers below provide additional information on the nature of the adverse action:

Provide details of adverse action(s)	
Any other relevant disclosures?	*Provide details*

_____ _____ _____

Full Name Signature Date

Annex C – Missing Document Declaration

I, Insert the name of Consultant (Firm), Vendor or Partner hereby declare to Stichting SNV Nederlandse Ontwikkelingsorganisatie (SNV) that I am unable to provide the following requested documents for the reasons provided below:

Name of the document(s)	*Reasons why the documents were not provided*
Name of document	*Provide details*
Name of document	*Provide details*
Name of document	*Provide details*
Name of document	*Provide details*
Name of document	*Provide details*

_____ _____ _____

Full Name Signature Date

Appendix 1: External initiatives with D4Ag and the Digital Divide.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA/DGIS), The Netherlands

Main development partners for SNV such as DGIS and the EU have extensive digitalisation agendas, which will certainly be the same as other major donor policies and programmes.

The effect of digitalisation on the Netherlands Digital Agenda for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation which includes specific references to the Digital Divide and is as follows:

- Internet access and digital technology are growing, including in developing countries.
- Online security and reliability of information are very important.
- Opportunity for the Sustainable Development Goals: innovation, emancipation, and an inclusive approach.
- A Digital Divide based on income, age, geography, or gender is a risk.
- New opportunities for businesses, a new phase of globalization characterized by digital trade.
- Now invest in the right framework conditions to exploit opportunities for digitalization, from its international perspective.

Recently a digitalisation strategy 2021 for The Netherlands[20] was published indicating for foreign trade and development cooperation the following priorities:

- Opting for a limited but appropriate government role in internet governance for an open, free, and safe global internet (no splinter networks with own rules).
- More international cooperation.
- Joint approaches lead to a more coherent action, for example through investments in education, digital entrepreneurship, digital trade, infrastructure investment, security, and online freedom to reduce the digital gap between the developing and developed countries.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships between governments, civil society, businesses, academia, and the technical internet community as an approach to internet governance pursuing an open, free and safe internet.
- Telecommunications and internet standardisation organisations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) safeguard public values and prevent undesirable manipulation by large multinational tech companies who have gained the upper hand.

Efforts of the Digital Agri-Food Collective (DAC) to Narrow the Digital Divide

The Digital Agrifood Collective (DAC)[21] is a collective of organisations that exchange learnings and align strategies to collectively remove barriers that stand between newly developed digital solutions and the thousands of agribusinesses and millions of low-income producers (and consumers) that could benefit from these. By removing barriers together, the collective aims to accelerate the digital transformation of agri-food value chains across Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia and make this transformation inclusive for all.

[20] file:///C:/Users/667/Downloads/210621-min-ezk-digitaliseringstrategie-en-v03%20(2).pdf
[21] https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/food-systems-transformation/comm-of-practice/digital-agrifood-collective/

Within the Digital Agri-Food Collective (DAC) SNV has signed a pledge to narrow the Digital Divide with the following goals and principles:

Goals	Principles
1. Digital literacy and tech awareness	- We need to facilitate lower literacy by choosing devices and channels that people are comfortable using. - We need to facilitate the delivery of digital skills-building training at scale, especially for women and other marginalised groups. - We need to exchange our targets on women's inclusion and keep each other accountable for this.
2. Relevant use cases and content	- We need to make sure mobile solutions are solving an actual need, are easy to use, and are offered in local languages. - We need to facilitate the bundling of solutions to cater for all user challenges such as combining remote agri-input training with a finance solution for purchasing those inputs. - We need to support tailored onboarding and after-sales support to (marginalised) groups that have difficulties using a solution.
3. Inclusive business models	- We need to explore new (economic) incentives to help entrepreneurs include marginalised groups that are more costly to onboard as users. - We need to explore and test more innovative strategies for revenue generation and cost-sharing (e.g., public/private or start-up/MNC). - We need to facilitate the creation of favourable conditions for digital solutions and enterprises to grow in underrepresented countries.
4. Standardising inclusivity/impact metrics	- We need to align the impact metrics (and similar M&E approaches) to measure the inclusivity of our work. - We need to use standard metrics to be able to compare our work so we can learn which digital inclusion interventions are more effective than others.

European Union (EU)

The EU document Digital4Development[22]: mainstreaming digital technologies and services into the EU Development Policy (D4D) as a cross-cutting tool in the EU development interventions. With the New Africa-Europe Digital Economy Partnership[23], the Commission is mainstreaming digital technologies across four main priority areas of which digital literacy is one:

- Promote access to affordable and secure broadband connectivity and digital infrastructure, including the necessary regulatory reforms.
- Promote digital literacy and skills.
- Foster digital entrepreneurship and job creation, and
- Promote the use of digital technologies as an enabler for sustainable development.

[22] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=SWD(2017)157&lang=en
[23] https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/africa-eu-partnership

Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA)

SNV can build on the GSMA[24] report on policy considerations to address the main barriers to mobile internet adoption and use, to ensure that everyone can participate in an increasingly connected world. The report also provides a framework for action with policy priorities determined by the country's local context and level of digital development, taking into consideration the circumstances, challenges, and needs of the different segments of the population, and including a focus on gender equality and disability inclusion.

This requires the collection and publication of granular and reliable data following international guidelines and standards. Barriers to mobile internet adoption and use are to be addressed holistically through a well-defined, collaborative governance model that involves all relevant stakeholders. Regular impact evaluations are to be built into policy plans to better understand which interventions have the greatest impact and to ensure that the targets and approach can be adapted based on the latest insights and developments. GSMA identified the following 5 barriers to mobile internet adoption and use and formulated policy consideration as follow:

Barriers	Policy considerations
Access: Individuals do not have access to networks and enablers, such as electricity and formal IDs or devices and solutions are not accessible enough.	• Implement policies that improve access to mobile broadband and electricity. • Ensure that sales and training facilities are accessible for underserved populations, including women and persons with disabilities. • Ensure inclusive and transparent registration processes for mobile and digital solutions. • Support the development of simplified designs and accessibility features for persons with low literacy and disabilities.
Affordability: Individuals cannot afford devices, data plans or other solution fees.	*Handset affordability:* • Remove sector-specific taxes and fees on handsets. • Refrain from imposing costly barriers to importing handsets to incentivise local production. • Enable innovative financing mechanisms for devices. • Partner with the industry to provide device subsidies to targeted user groups. *Data affordability:* • Create an enabling environment for mobile operators to achieve operational and other cost efficiencies. • Adopt tax principles that promote uptake of mobile data solutions. • Enable innovative data pricing strategies and pricing flexibility in competitive markets. • Consider data subsidies for targeted user groups.
Knowledge and digital skills:	• Focus digital skills strategies on use cases that help targeted user segments meet their life goals and needs.

[24] https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Accelerating-Mobile-Internet-Adoption-Policy-Considerations.pdf

Barriers	Policy considerations
People are unaware of mobile internet and its benefits or do not have the necessary skills to use digital technology.	• Use a comprehensive framework focused on competency areas and proficiency levels to design effective digital skills training programmes. • Adapt digital skills strategies to local contexts to reflect how most users access the internet, which in LMICs is through a mobile device. • Launch awareness campaigns on both the benefits and potential risks of using mobile internet and how to address them. • Invest in training and capacity-building initiatives, including through win-win partnerships with the private sector. • Incorporate digital skills development across education policies at all levels and provide students with access to suitable devices to practice and learn.
Relevance: Local digital ecosystems are underdeveloped, and there is a lack of content, products and solutions that meet user needs and capabilities.	• Create an environment for digital businesses to thrive. • Enable the digital transformation of priority sectors and SMEs. • Facilitate the growth of start-up ecosystems. • Accelerate the digitalisation of public solutions
Safety and security: Individuals and communities are concerned about the negative aspects and risks of the internet, such as harassment, theft, fraud and online security.	• Put appropriate mechanisms in place to address online safety concerns, including disinformation, harassment, and child sexual abuse. • Implement horizontal data privacy frameworks that protect the fundamental right to privacy while also giving organisations the flexibility to provide innovative solutions in a responsible and accountable manner. • Support individuals to protect personal information and recognise fraud. • Implement effective strategies to tackle handset theft and the trading of counterfeit devices. • Refrain from the use of restriction orders, such as mandated network or solution shutdowns.

GSMA[25] in their mobile gender gap report for 2021, identified top barriers to mobile internet use in surveyed countries among mobile users who are aware of mobile internet but do not use it. For Sub-Saharan Africa, literacy and skills, and affordability were the dominant barriers as defined by both men and women.

Overall recommendations for all stakeholders to close the mobile gender gap were:

- Ensure there is a focus on gender equality and reaching women at an organisational and policy level through senior leaders championing the issue and setting specific gender equity targets.

[25] https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2021.pdf

- Understand the mobile gender gap by improving the quality and availability of gender-disaggregated data and understanding women's needs and the barriers they face to mobile ownership and use.
- Explicitly address women's needs, circumstances and challenges in the design and implementation of mobile-related products, solutions, interventions, and policies. This includes addressing the barriers women face related to access, affordability, safety and security, knowledge and skills, and the availability of relevant content, products, and solutions.
- Collaborate and partner with different stakeholders to address the mobile gender gap. Targeted intervention is needed from industry, policymakers, the development community, and other stakeholders to ensure that women are no longer left behind.

GSMA[2627] made several publications on digital literacy and even a specific training guide for mobile money agents and digital literacy change agents.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Furthermore, SNV can build on the technical notes of USAID (2020)[28] on the Gender Digital Divide. USAID identified similar barriers as GSMA does and developed gender divide technical analysis and risks mitigation technical resources[2930] primarily focussed on gender and girls and aligned to USAID strategy and policy documents[313233]. To this end, the development community must address the barriers to women's inclusion in their programming.

USAID[34] considers the key reasons why the gender Digital Divide exists is for women's and girls' limited access to, and use of, mobile technology and the Internet are interrelated and complex but are grounded in global gender inequality.

It defines the main barriers categorized into four broad areas:

- **Affordability**: Because of social norms, women are often less financially independent than
  men and have lower levels of income. Since women are thus more price-sensitive than men, they tend to have less sophisticated devices and poorer user experiences. They also have less
  disposable income to spend on mobile or Internet services.
- **Availability:** Low levels of network quality and coverage create additional barriers for women and girls. Women's choice of network is often restricted by factors such as more basic handsets (or lower-end smartphones), cost of data, and fewer choices of SIM.
- **Ability.** Women's use of mobile and Internet platforms is often limited by their lower levels of technical and digital literacy skills, as well as by their lack of confidence in using technology and the lack of relevant content for women's needs, especially in local languages. There is strong evidence that mobile and Internet access and use

[26] Accelerating Digital Literacy: Empowering women to use the mobile internet
[27] Digital Literacy Training Guide: A Guide for Mobile Money Agents and Digital Literacy Change Agents March 2020
[28] https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/DAI-1089_GDD_Primer-web_rev1_9.6.21.pdf
[29] https://www.marketlinks.org/sites/default/files/media/file/2021-03/GDD_GATR_How_To_Use-with%20links_updated%203.17.21.pdf
[30] https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XDWD.pdf
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[32] https://www.marketlinks.org/weege-wiki/weege-technical-guide
[33] https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USAID_Digital_Strategy.pdf.pdf
[34] https://www.marketlinks.org/sites/default/files/media/file/2021-03/GDD_Desk%20Review_final-with%20links_updated%203.18.21.pdf

follow broader social patterns of deep social exclusion of women and girls; women are disadvantaged in their access and use of technology because of underlying social conditions, including lower levels of education.

- **Appetite:** Safety, security, and harassment is increasingly a major concern for women more than for men, and it acts as a serious deterrent to women's and girls' technology use. This includes a fear of harassment from strangers (such as unsolicited calls, unsolicited SMS, unsolicited online messages, or cyberbullying and harassment), as well as concerns about online data security and privacy. Women also tend to report a lower level of understanding of the potential of the Internet, and a perceived lack of value[35]

As compared with GSMA, USAID under "ability" put increased emphasis on social norms and underlying gender Inequality as an important reason why there is restricted access and use of mobile and internet technology.

Implementers need to focus on the following as they look to bridge the gap and increase women's participation in the digital ecosystem:

- *Uncover core issues and fears about women's technology use in the community* – what is the root cause of the issue? Has the community effectively addressed other gendered concerns such as child marriage, girls' education, or other inequities? Can these approaches be applied?
- *Work directly with community leaders to create compelling cases for women's technology use* – under what conditions would women be allowed to use the Internet? How can this allowance be expanded over time? Are there technologies or policies that can uniquely support these "use cases"?
- *Ensure that programs are designed to consider the safeguarding of women and girls* so that they can responsibly access and use ICTs. While developments in digital technologies open new pathways for gender inclusion, great attention must be paid to the potential harms or negative impacts on vulnerable populations.
- *Find and support positive deviance* – champion the people and institutions that are willing to challenge the status quo.
- *Work with women to understand not only their information needs, but their aspirations* for themselves, their children, and their communities. These are effective entry points for digital inclusion efforts.
- *Tie ICT use to new income-generation opportunities* and local concerns that require effective mobilization to address.
- *Work with gender and development organizations* that have had decades of experience conducting social norms work, including local organizations with a deep context of local norms and past development projects.

SNV main Digitalisation Projects

The SNV implemented "GARBAL" projects in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have a specific focus on pastoralists, agro pastoralists, and to a lesser extent the agriculturists. To avoid exacerbating the Digital Divide, the barriers to accessing digital solutions are addressed through awareness-raising and a livelihood risk-reducing combination of digital and traditional information services related to herd management, livelihood diversification and livestock sector coordination.

[35] The term "appetite" comes from Huawei 2015 and refers to the "awareness, desire, and fear" around use of mobile technology and the Internet.

Other Initiatives

Several other initiatives have been launched to facilitate access to ICTs. Here are some of the most relevant are mentioned:

Targeted digital literacy programs. They instruct the less favoured in the use of the Internet to improve their well-being.

Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI). This project, led by an international coalition of governments, companies and civil society, seeks to lower the cost of broadband in specific areas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Free Basics. This initiative, promoted by Facebook and six other technology companies, aims to provide free access to a series of websites through a mobile application.

Star link. This project, promoted by tycoon Elon Musk, is launching satellites into space to offer high-speed Internet and global coverage at affordable prices.

How countries are trying to reduce gaps:
https://www.undp.org/blog/evolving-digital-divide
examples of India, Google Next Billion, China's telecom broadband around Africa, SpaceX

Appendix 2: SNV's Agri-Food Systems' main Intervention Areas

SNV's expected Intervention Areas in the context of Agri-Food Systems

The present internal processes on food systems strategies identify 5 intervention areas, which could benefit from addressing the Digital Divide in D4Ag (see table below more information is provided at the beginning of the assignment).

SNVs main intervention areas in agri-food systems
Productive and resilient agri-food landscapes
Inclusive agri-food markets and green investment
Healthy diets for all
Opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship
Food security and healthy diets in fragile settings

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