

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – CONSULTING FIRM)

Assignment Title: Law Firm for RIMES

Reference No. RIMES-JA-016-2024

1. RIMES now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services to be shortlisted for providing the consultancy services under the above consulting services assignment.

The law firm engaged by RIMES will provide comprehensive legal support, including advisory services on compliance with international, regional, and local laws; drafting, reviewing, and negotiating contracts and other legal documents; representing RIMES in litigation, arbitration, and dispute resolution; ensuring regulatory compliance and monitoring legislative changes; and conducting legal training and capacity building for RIMES staff. These services aim to safeguard RIMES's interests and ensure the organization operates within legal frameworks pertinent to climate and disaster risk management.

The law firm will be expected to provide the following services:

- **Advisory Services**
 - Provide legal advice on compliance with international, regional, and local laws and regulations.
 - Advise on the legal implications of RIMES's projects and programs.
- **Contractual and Transactional Services**
 - Draft, review, and negotiate contracts, MoUs, and other legal documents.
 - Ensure that all agreements are legally sound and protect RIMES's interests.
- **Litigation and Dispute Resolution**
 - Represent RIMES in legal proceedings including litigation, arbitration, and settlements.
 - Provide strategies for dispute resolution and manage ongoing legal cases.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Support**
 - Assist in ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
 - Monitor changes in legislation that may affect RIMES's operations.
- **Training and Capacity Building**
 - Conduct legal training sessions for RIMES's staff as required.
 - Develop legal awareness materials and tools for capacity building.

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It is difficult to estimate the total number of assignments to be undertaken annually under this Framework Agreement, but it is expected that it will be approximately X-X per year. Assignments can vary in duration and complexity and may involve travel within the region.

It should be noted that the Framework Agreement will not include any guarantees of the volume of services to be required/ provided.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the primary procurement stage for the assignment are attached to this request for expressions of interest or can be found at the following website: www.rimes.int or via the address given below.

The Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES)
2nd Floor, Outreach Building,
Asian Institute of Technology Campus,
Klong Nung, Klong Luang, Pathumthani 12120
Thailand

Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the “QCBS (Quality and Cost-Based Selection)” method set out in the Procurement Regulations and to be specifically set out in the Request for Expressions of Interest during the second phase after completion of first phase of shortlisting and after submission of Proposals by the shortlisted bidders

2. Each EOI needs to include the following elements:

- a. Profiles of key team members involved in the engagement.
- b. A portfolio of relevant past work and references.
- c. Company Registration document
- d. Up to date tax payment certification and VAT registration certificate
- e. Audited Financial Statement (last 03 Years)
- f. Any additional information that supports the firm’s suitability for this engagement.

3. The short-listing criteria are as following:

- a. Expertise and experience of the firm and its team members.
- b. References and past performance.

4. Guidance to submit EOI:

EOI can be submitted both in hard and/or soft copies within the stated deadline. If being sent only in soft copy, all pages need to be signed and scanned when sending.

EOI shall be written in English. Supporting documents and printed literature that are part of EOI may be in another language provided they are accompanied by an accurate translation of the relevant passages in English, in which case, for purposes of interpretation of the EOI, such translation shall govern.

EOI must be delivered in written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by **27 June 2024**.

Further information can be obtained at the address below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Bangkok Standard Time (BST).

The Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES)

Attn: Thiti Palasuwan, Procurement and Administration Officer,

2nd Floor, Outreach Building, Asian Institute of Technology Campus,

Klong Nung, Klong Luang, Pathumthani 12120, Thailand

Tel: +66 (0) 2 516 0120

Fax: +66 (0) 2 516 5762

E-mail: hq.rimesprocurement@rimes.int



**Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System
Program Unit/ Early Warning Facility**

2 nd Fl. Outreach Bldg., AIT Campus, Klong Nung, Klong Luang, Pathumthani 12120, Thailand
(t) +66 2516 0120 (f) +66 2516 5762 (e) rimes@rimes.int (w) <http://www.rimes.int>

Terms of Reference for Framework Agreement Hiring of a Law Firm for RIMES

1. Background

RIMES is an international and intergovernmental institution that is owned and managed by its 48 Member and Collaborating States for building capacities in the generation and application of user-relevant multi-hazard early warning information. RIMES was established on 30 April 2009 through the signing by collaborating countries of the RIMES regional cooperation agreement. RIMES was registered with the United Nations under Article 102 of the UN Charter on 1 July 2009. RIMES operates from its regional early warning center, located at the campus of the Asian Institute of Technology in Pathumthani, Thailand.

RIMES aim is to provide early warning services according to differing needs and demands of its Member States, for enhanced preparedness and response to and mitigation of natural hazards. Specifically, it:

- a) Facilitates establishment and maintenance of core regional observing and monitoring networks to ensure data availability for early warning;
- b) Provides earthquake and tsunami services within the framework of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO);
- c) Supports National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) for providing localized hydro-meteorological risk information within the framework of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO); and
- d) Enhances warning response capacities at all levels (national to community) within each national early warning framework.

RIMES is governed by a Council, composed of heads of NMHSs/ national scientific and technical agencies that generate multi-hazard early warning information, empowered to make policy decisions on behalf of governments concerning regional early warning arrangements. A Secretariat carries out the decisions and tasks assigned by the Council, and provides support to the Program Unit in managing the regional early warning facility. Currently, the Government of India serves as Council Chair, and Maldives as Secretariat. The RIMES Ministers Conference, established in 2012, provides policy and resource mobilization support. The Program Unit is responsible for day-to-day operation and management of the regional early warning facility, and implementation of programs and activities. The Program Unit has financial and administrative autonomy through powers delegated by the RIMES Council. The Program Unit is co-located with RIMES regional early warning facility in Thailand.

RIMES provides the following services to its Member and Collaborating States:

- 1) Earthquake and tsunami services for National Tsunami Warning Centers, under IOC-UNESCO framework: seismic, sea level, and deep ocean monitoring; data exchange, processing, analysis, and archiving; and provision of earthquake alerts, potential earthquake damage, and regional tsunami bulletins.
- 2) Ocean, weather, water, and climate services for NMHSs, under WMO framework: generation of localized and tailored short-term ocean, weather, and flood information, including severe weather information, for users' contingency planning; medium-term weather and flood information for users' logistics planning; and seasonal climate and hydrological outlook for users' longer-term resource planning and management; analysis of risks to climate variability and change, and identification of

risk management and adaptation options; development of decision-support tools; and development of new-generation risk information products.

- 3) Capacity building services for national and local level institutions on end-to-end early warning, within each countries' early warning framework: assistance in establishing and maintaining observing and monitoring stations that are of regional benefit; training of scientists, both in-country training and through secondment arrangement at RIMES regional facility; development of decision-support tools and capacity building for their application; application of tailored risk information at different time scales in planning and decision-making; strengthening national early warning provider and user interface at national and local levels; enhancing community responses to early warning; and early warning system audit.

Delivery of the above-listed services is through the following RIMES operational units:

- 1) Societal Applications, which looks into societal problems associated with natural hazards and solutions to address these
- 2) Ocean, Weather, Water, and Climate Services, which identifies promising new and emerging technologies and products of research, and translates these into operational forecast products in support of NMHSs and into decision-making tools for institutions, for reducing ocean-, weather-, water-, and climate-related disaster risks
- 3) Earthquake and Tsunami Services, which provides earthquake and tsunami bulletins, and develops new tools for assessing potential impacts
- 4) Systems Research and Development, which plans, designs, develops, tests, and validates new systems, solutions, and processes to make science-based information usable in planning and decision-making. This includes Impact Forecasting for transforming science-based forecasts into sector-specific impact forecasts to enhance forecast integration into decision-making.
- 5) Program Management, which develops need-based programs and projects, and mobilizes resources; ensures that programs and projects take credible approaches, employ best practice methodologies, and address societal needs; and integrates feedback and lessons learned into program and project design, planning, and implementation strategies.

Current number of full-time technical and administrative staff is 27 in Head Quarter and 47 in-Countries Office. RIMES' financial resources come from Member State contributions and projects that are funded by Member States and development partners.

2. Objective

The primary objective of this engagement is to engage law firms that can provide comprehensive legal support to RIMES. The selected firm will assist in legal matters including but not limited to compliance, contracts, litigation, regulatory advice, and other legal issues related to the organization, projects, areas related to climate and disaster risk management etc.

3. Scope of work

The law firm engaged by RIMES will provide comprehensive legal support, including advisory services on compliance with international, regional, and local laws; drafting, reviewing, and negotiating contracts and other legal documents; representing RIMES in litigation, arbitration, and dispute resolution; ensuring regulatory compliance and monitoring legislative changes; and conducting legal training and capacity building for RIMES staff. These services aim to safeguard RIMES's interests and ensure the organization operates within legal frameworks pertinent to climate and disaster risk management.

The law firm will be expected to provide the following services:

- **Advisory Services**
 - Provide legal advice on compliance with international, regional, and local laws and regulations.
 - Advise on the legal implications of RIMES's projects and programs.
- **Contractual and Transactional Services**
 - Draft, review, and negotiate contracts, MoUs, and other legal documents.
 - Ensure that all agreements are legally sound and protect RIMES's interests.
- **Litigation and Dispute Resolution**
 - Represent RIMES in legal proceedings including litigation, arbitration, and settlements.
 - Provide strategies for dispute resolution and manage ongoing legal cases.

- **Regulatory and Compliance Support**
 - Assist in ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
 - Monitor changes in legislation that may affect RIMES's operations.
- **Training and Capacity Building**
 - Conduct legal training sessions for RIMES's staff as required.
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4. Work Process

The work process for the law firm engaged by RIMES involves several key steps:

- **Initial Consultation and Planning:** The law firm will begin with an in-depth consultation with RIMES to understand the organization's specific legal needs, projects, and operational context. This will involve reviewing existing legal documents, understanding regulatory environments, and identifying potential legal issues.
- **Advisory Services:** The law firm will provide ongoing legal advice to ensure compliance with international, regional, and local laws. This includes advising on legal implications of RIMES's projects and programs, helping navigate complex legal environments, and providing updates on relevant legislative changes.
- **Contractual and Transactional Services:** The firm will draft, review, and negotiate contracts, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), and other legal documents to ensure they are legally sound and protect RIMES's interests. This involves close collaboration with RIMES's management to align legal documents with organizational objectives.
- **Litigation and Dispute Resolution:** If legal disputes arise, the law firm will represent RIMES in legal proceedings, including litigation and arbitration. They will develop and execute strategies for dispute resolution, aiming to achieve favorable outcomes while minimizing disruptions to RIMES's operations.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Support:** The firm will assist RIMES in ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, monitoring changes in legislation, and advising on necessary adjustments to operations. This proactive approach helps prevent legal issues before they arise.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** To build internal legal capacity, the law firm will conduct training sessions for RIMES's staff on relevant legal topics, develop legal awareness materials, and provide tools for ongoing legal education and awareness.
- **Regular Reporting and Feedback:** Throughout the engagement, the law firm will deliver periodic reports and updates, documenting legal activities, outcomes, and recommendations. This ensures transparency and keeps RIMES informed of all legal matters.

5. Deliverables

The selected law firm will be required to deliver the following:

- **Periodic Legal Reports and Updates:**
 - Detailed reports on compliance with international, regional, and local laws and regulations.
 - Regular updates on legislative changes and their implications for RIMES operations.
 - Summaries of legal advice provided on RIMES's projects and programs.
- **Drafted and Reviewed Legal Documents:**
 - Comprehensive drafts of contracts, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), and other legal agreements.

- Reviews and revisions of existing legal documents to ensure legal soundness and alignment with RIMES's interests.
- Negotiation records and finalized legal documents, ensuring all agreements are properly executed.
- **Representation in Legal Proceedings:**
 - Documentation and records of all litigation, arbitration, and settlement proceedings.
 - Legal strategies developed and implemented for dispute resolution.
 - Reports on outcomes of legal proceedings, including any settlements or judgments.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Support:**
 - Compliance checklists tailored to RIMES's operational requirements.
 - Advisory notes and recommendations on regulatory changes affecting RIMES.
 - Documentation of compliance audits and reviews conducted.
- **Training and Capacity Building:**
 - Training materials and manuals developed for RIMES's staff on relevant legal topics.
 - Records of training sessions conducted, including participant lists and feedback.
 - Legal awareness materials, such as guidelines, handbooks, and toolkits.
- **Consultation and Planning Documentation:**
 - Initial consultation reports outlining RIMES's specific legal needs and potential issues.
 - Detailed legal action plans based on initial consultations and ongoing needs assessments.
 - Reports on follow-up consultations and adjustments to the legal strategy.
- **Advisory Services Documentation:**
 - Advisory memos and opinion letters on specific legal issues and queries.
 - Records of meetings and discussions with RIMES's management on legal matters.
 - Recommendations for mitigating legal risks associated with RIMES's projects and programs.
- **Regular Progress Reports:**
 - Monthly or quarterly progress reports summarizing all legal activities undertaken.
 - Status updates on ongoing legal cases, compliance efforts, and document reviews.
 - Summary of legal support provided, including any emerging issues or potential risks.

6. Duration of Contract

The engagement will be required on an occasional basis, with compensation based on the number of hours and days of engagement and personnel proposed. RIMES will issue call off order for each request for the legal firm to issue financial quote. The initial framework contract period will be two years, with the possibility of extension based on performance and mutual agreement.

7. Independence and Qualification

Independence

The law firm must maintain complete impartiality and independence throughout the engagement. The firm should not have any financial, professional, or other interests that could conflict with its duty to RIMES. Specifically, the law firm must ensure that:

- No member of the legal team is employed by or serves as a director for RIMES or has any financial or close business relationships with senior participants in RIMES's management during the engagement period.
- Any potential conflicts of interest are fully disclosed in their proposal. The Organization reserves the right to reject proposals that may lead to a conflict of interest.
- The law firm adheres to the highest ethical standards, ensuring that all information provided by RIMES during the engagement is kept confidential and not disclosed to any third parties without prior written consent.

Qualification

The law firm must meet the following criteria to be considered for this engagement:

- Extensive knowledge of international, regional, and local laws applicable to RIMES's operations.
- Legal working experience and/or presence in certain countries such as Thailand, India, Bangladesh will have an added advantage.
- Demonstrated ability to handle complex legal issues, including compliance, contracts, litigation, and regulatory advice.

- Experience dealing with donors funded program with agencies such as World Bank, UN agencies etc. are preferred.
- Proven track record of providing advisory services to similar international and intergovernmental organizations.
- Experience in representing clients in legal proceedings, including litigation, arbitration, and dispute resolution.
- Availability of a dedicated team of qualified lawyers with relevant expertise and experience.
- Detailed profiles of key team members who will be involved in the engagement, including their qualifications, experience, and roles within the firm.
- Curriculum vitae (CVs) of the principal lawyer responsible for signing off on all major deliverables, as well as the CVs of managers, supervisors, and key personnel proposed as part of the legal team.
- Clear understanding of RIMES's needs and the scope of work, demonstrated through the proposed methodology and approach for delivering the services.
- Ability to develop and implement effective legal strategies tailored to RIMES's operational context and objectives.
- Financial proposal to indicate hourly rates for each level of personnel.
- Transparency in billing practices and a commitment to providing high-quality legal services within the agreed budget.