

IDEA Project: Reques For Information (RFI)

Background

1. The Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC) will be issuing over a period of five years ISO ID-1/CR-80 size, laser-engraved, polycarbonate-based or equivalent high-security identification cards to 90-95 million voters presently registered in a Voter Registration Database. Thereafter and for the foreseeable future the BEC will need to issue approximately 5-10 million cards per year for new voters and card replacements.

2. The National ID-Card will be the official identification mechanism for all citizenship-based transactions between government and the public and it is expected that it will also be increasingly used for all transactions in society where positive identity verification is required. Consequently the configuration, issuance, distribution, and replacement of ID cards must be done at the highest level of transparency, quality, reliability and security, while ensuring appropriate privacy and confidentiality safeguards.

3. As in other countries, this requires a strategic framework of governance, institutions, resources and technology which in Bangladesh is being put in place as follows:

1. The recent National Identity Registration Act of 2010 already provides the basic legal and institutional elements of the framework, the latter through the creation of the National ID Wing (NIDW) under the BEC organization.
2. On financial grounds a tentative decision has been made that the initial bulk production and distribution of cards will be financed entirely by the government and that user charges will only apply during a second phase of regular new production and replacement of cards.
3. Under the Preparation of Electoral Roll with Photographs (PERP) Project, the BEC, in cooperation with the UNDP, is creating centralized facilities and systems as follows:
 - A highly reliable and accurate data base of 85 million voters, 18 years or older.
 - The applications systems to manage this data base and to provide for its ongoing maintenance and expansion through decentralized, country-wide new voter enrolment.
 - An information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure consisting of a wide area network and specialized workstations in over 600 administrative units nationwide.
 - State-of-the-art data centre, network operations control and disaster recovery facilities

4. In accordance with a National ID Master Plan being developed, the BEC is considering a managed service contract with an experienced card production vendor as the preferred option for management of the entire life-cycle of ID Cards, from raw material sourcing to card replacement and disposal. As presently envisioned, the general vendor responsibilities under such contract would involve (i) design supply, installation and commissioning of a card production facility; (ii) initial production and distribution of 85 million cards; (iii) ongoing production of approximately 8 million cards per year for a period of time, (iv) transfer of knowledge for long-term operation of the facility to a local organization.

The BEC is interested in considering not only alternative public-private partnership arrangements but different managed service contract designs to maximize efficiency, reliability and economy of the card production and life-cycle management process.

5. The same Master Plan has tentatively proposed the following physical, functional and procedural requirements:

The new national ID cards shall the following features

- Be able to last at least 10 years under normal low intensity usage by the citizens
- Be ISO ID-1/CR-80 size

Be of Polycarbonate and shall be laser engraved

In addition, the new ID cards may include the following:

- - Have the following security features to deter counterfeiting:
 - Overt
 - Color changing Guilloches and patterns – preprinted
 - Changeable Laser Image – personalization
 - 2D Barcode in PDF417 format storing 1 or 2 kb of data–personalization,
 - Light photo background – preprinted
 - Tactile Laser Effect – personalization
 - Ghost Image - personalization

Covert

- Microtext – preprinted
- UV printing – preprinted

Forensic

- Nanotext

The Card Production Centre shall:

- Operate under an ISO/IEC 27001: 2005 or equivalent information security management system, including for all supply chain management and card distribution functions.
- Procure all blank cards pre-printed with the non-variable information
- Provide centralised printing of all national ID cards
- Have high speed network connected to the Data Centre and DR site
- Have a network of efficient card printers configured with staging server and scheduling of card production operations
- Have adequate quality assurance and control on rejected ID cards
- Implement routine check on blank cards received and disposed – subject to independent audit.
- Provide regular transportation arrangement to distribute printed ID cards to all election offices in the country.
- Obtain ISO 9001 certification upon completion of a pilot phase of operations and prior to the bulk production of cards.

Request for Information

4. The Bangladesh Election Commission is therefore issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to gather opinions and information from the industry on options, standards, production models, technologies, contracting alternatives and indicative costs for production, distribution and replacement of citizen identification cards.

5. On the basis of careful consideration of responses received to this RFI and of advantages/disadvantages of the various options presented, the BEC intends to make a final procurement strategy decision, whether in the form of an open or a limited international competitive bidding process. Similarly, on the basis of information received, the BEC will determine a range of required financing for the project, to be provided jointly by the Government of Bangladesh and international development partners.

6. While the BEC is interested in industry advice on any and all aspects bearing importance to the card issuance project, it is particularly interested in industry's international experience, customary commercial practices and indicative prices or price ranges for:

1. Production and distribution of ID cards under a partnership model with vendor bearing the investment and operational costs and risks and government paying a per-card fee, subject to a SLA.
2. Production and distribution of ID cards under a managed services contract with vendor taking responsibility for the design, procurement, building, operational testing, commissioning and operation of the card production and distribution

- facilities and processes, and government providing financing for all investment costs and paying a per card fee for card production and distribution under a SLA.
3. Contingency arrangement to guarantee uninterrupted card production under government control in case of disaster or contract default or cancellation under either of the two arrangements above.
 4. Assignment of intellectual property rights or perpetual licensing rights that ensure Government's right to continue regular card production and operation of the facility under any form of contract termination.
 5. Transfer of knowledge to a designated government or private organization sufficient to operate the card production facility past the bulk production period.
 6. Indicative cost impact of various card security features as mentioned under para 5 above.
 7. Considerations with respect to the location of the card production facility.
 8. Design characteristics of a building to house the card center and issues with respect to collocation of the production and personalization facilities?
 9. International standards required for the id card itself or its lifecycle management processes?
 10. ISO 27001/ISO 9001 certification for the card production center prior to bulk production.

Participation instructions

7. The BEC would appreciate your responding to this RFI in writing by August 3, 2010. Please send your responses to Brig. General Akhtaruzzaman Siddique, NPD, PERP & Proposed PD, IDEA Project, Election Commission Secretariat, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Tel: 8153195, Fax: 8153005 Or by email to: pdperpec@gmail.com
8. Indicative prices or price ranges are being sought for general information purposes only and they will not be binding upon you or the BEC under any future solicitation or contracting agreement.
9. If in addition to your written submission you would want to make a live presentation this could take place during August 4 and 5, 2010 at BEC's offices in Dhaka (Conference Room, PERP project office (6th floor), Islamic Foundation Building, Agargaon, Dhaka). The presentation would be of a public character and be attended by GoB officials, ECS officials and staff from GoB's international cooperation partners involved in the project.