

# **Minutes of Market Early Engagement Meeting for procurement of:**

## **“IP/MPLS Active Equipment supply, installation and provision of Related Services, Phase 2”**

**Project: P169698 Log-In Georgia**

**Country: Georgia**

**Loan No.: 9161-GE**

**Procurement Contract Title:** IP/MPLS Active Equipment supply, installation and provision of Related Services, Phase 2

**The EME Meeting organized by Project Implementing Unit (PIU) N(N)LE Open Net**

**Date:** 7 November 2025

**Time:** 15:00–16:00 (UTC/GMT+4, local time Tbilisi)

**Meeting format:** Hybrid- on site (the office of the PIU) and online. The meeting was recorded.

### **Participants of the EME Meeting:**

- **The PIU:** Mariam Sulaberidze - Director; Aleksander Tsereteli - International Relationship and Projects Manager; Alexander Glonti - Technical Director; Otar Peradze - Financial and Administrative Manager; Roman Gotsiridze - Manager of IP Network Operations and Management; Tornike Meladze - Manager of WDM Transport Network Operations and Management; Nikoloz Otanadze - Network Engineer; Zurab Vardiashvili - Procurement Specialist.
- **The Private Sector Companies:** IP Infusion & ESTET LLC; LLC Green Systems; UGT & Huawei; Veziri LLC & Nokia Solution; Juniteck LLC; Safety Outsource LLC; GT Groupe LTD;
- **The World Bank, observer/advisor (Bank):** Himmat Singh Sandhu - Digital Specialist, Europe and Central Asia Region; Barbara Ziolkowska - Senior Procurement Specialist, Procurement Team Leader for the South Caucasus; Nikoloz Chantladze - Procurement Specialist, Prosperity Department.

### **Purpose of the EME meeting**

The purpose of the meeting was to provide the market with an overview of the upcoming procurement of “IP/MPLS Active Equipment supply, installation and provision of Related Services, Phase 2”, to obtain market feedback and concerns on qualification criteria, key risks or potential constraints of the bidding, in order to finalize the bidding document for re-announcing.

### **Overview of the procurement process**

**PIU:** The Director of PIU welcomed all participants and thanked them for their attendance. It was outlined that the PIU intends to re-announce an open international tender/bidding for procurement of

IP/MPLS active equipment. The bidding was announced on the Georgian electronic Government Procurement (Ge-GP) site <sup>1</sup>, but cancelled.

The Suppliers were asked for participation in EME and were provided the EME questionnaire to find out market capacity, Suppliers' experience on the market and get feedback to decide to amend or not qualification criteria of the tender.

**Bank:** Bank representatives thanked Suppliers for participation in the meeting and outlined that the purpose of EME meeting is to receive feedback from private sector on what elements can be further improved for the successful outcome in the future bidding and to find opportunities. Suppliers are asked to share their feedback to let PIU amend, revise and improve the Bidding Documents. Hence, Suppliers are encouraging to feel free and send their questions to PIU's email address. The PIU will analyze the feedback and the replies will be shared to this group of discussion.

### Supplier Feedback and Discussion (minutes):

*Note: Suppliers were invited to ask questions and provide feedback to the subject of EME meeting. Key points and topics of the meeting and feedback received from **Suppliers** are summarized below accompanied by responses and clarification from the **PIU** and the **Bank** representatives.*

| <i>Topic</i>             | <i>Feedback/Discussion/Question of Suppliers</i>                                                                       | <i>Response/Clarification of the PIU and the Bank</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Technical Specifications | Q: Will the technical specifications written in the Bidding Document of the cancelled tender changed or stay the same? | <b>PIU:</b> Most probably the technical specification will be the same, however, they will be revised before finalization of the Bidding Document. Thus, the suppliers asked to be caution to this and read carefully the technical specification, when the tender will be re-announced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Tender Timelines         | Suppliers questioned on tender timeframe                                                                               | <b>PIU</b> need some time to analyze market feedback and follow procurement procedures, most likely the tender will be announced till the end of this year. The tender will be announced through Ge-GP system, PIU's website; SPN will be published on Bank's external site. The Tender will take altogether 5-6 months up to contract signing including all the process steps of evaluation, standstill etc.<br><br><b>Bank:</b> The PIU recommends not to announce tender during upcoming holidays and take into consideration that period in the tender timeframe. |

<sup>1</sup> REF: DEP250000018, Procurement announcement date: 24.06.2025; Procurement link: <https://tenders.procurement.gov.ge/public/?go=636129&lang=en>

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| <p>Joint Venture</p> | <p>Suppliers were interested how qualification criteria will apply to JV members</p> <p>Discussion point: JV participation as a Bidder in the tender</p> <p>Q: Do JV members need specify percentage of participation in JV?</p> <p>Q: Bid Security or Bid Securing Declaration is required to be provided for the tender?</p> | <p><b>Bank:</b> World Bank doesn't mandate specific kind of association for Bidders: private sector is to decide to be either single entity, or consortium, or JV. The only requirement is to nominate a Lead Partner and all partners shall be jointly and severally liable for the implementation of the contract. A Letter of Intent is sufficient to form such association. A Joint Venture agreement is not mandatory. Certain qualification criteria must be applied to JV members, but specific criteria can be met only by one JV member. So, it's flexible, you Bidder should look into the bidding document. Also, healthy financial standing is important and must be met by all JV members.</p> <p>JV must specify a JV representative who will sign Bid and any documents of the tender on behalf of JV members.</p> <p>All the JV members must be named in a Bid Security (Bank Guarantee) (as applicable)</p> <p><b>PIU:</b> As of today, there is no criteria for JV members. In order to define proper qualification criteria for JV members, information on all potential JV members' qualification must be provided via questionnaire distributed by PIU. After carefully analyzing received information from potential bidders, qualification criteria for JV members will be defined and included in the tender documentation.</p> <p>It has to be taken into consideration that any member of the JV should provide evidence of their own experience and there is no possibility to transfer any references.</p> <p>JV as a Bidder must nominate a Leader Party.</p> <p>JV members are not required to specify JV participation percentage.</p> |
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|                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Bidders are required to provide Bid Securing Declaration, but not Bit Security.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Cancelation of previous tender                            | Suppliers expresses interest to find out reasons of cancelation of the previous tender                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>PIU:</b> Cancellation was caused by some administrative and qualification issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Possibility of additional open discussions with Suppliers | <p>Q: Do PIU intend to carry out workshops for Suppliers to better understand ON's services, propose different ideas on technical solutions?</p> <p>Q: Is this [EME] meeting last before tender announcement?</p>                                                         | <p><b>PIU:</b> The potential bidders can obtain additional information on Log-In-Georgia Project from ON website, or contact the PIU to provide interested information; moreover, tender document, which can be found on GE-GP site, is still workable and contains detailed information.</p> <p>Additionally, potential bidders are encouraged to provide their questions on technical specifications or any further feedback via email to <a href="mailto:procurement@opennet.ge">procurement@opennet.ge</a> by November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025.</p> <p>The “workshops” or any additional meeting with Suppliers will not be carried out before tender announcement, unless something important will happen causing the necessity for another meeting.</p> |
| Proprietary issue                                         | Q: Concern was raised about some features that are proprietary to specific vendor as read out in tender documents. Will this particular issue be address when considering tender document and are PIU going to change such technical requirements to enhance competition? | <b>PIU</b> underlined that the technical specification in the named tender document is neutral and use of the words “similar” or “like”, which are important to be noticed, but not ignored. However, potential bidders are encouraged to provide their concern via email to <a href="mailto:procurement@opennet.ge">procurement@opennet.ge</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Payment Scheme                                            | Suppliers were interested in payment terms                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Bank:</b> Bidding Document as a Bank SPD consists of contract agreement and payment terms are defined there, however, Suppliers/Bidders feedback is expected if a slightly higher advance payment would be essential (against Bank Guarantee).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Information on Phase I and link to the phase 2            | Discussion point: Suppliers were interested who was the vendor of the IP/MPLS equipment for the phase 1 and whether the PIU is willing to have “dual vendor”, i.e. different vendors for phase 1 and 2.                                                                   | <b>PIU:</b> (1) As it is written in the tender document <sup>2</sup> OPEN NET already has part of the IP/MPLS equipment that is from Cisco. Therefore, the vendor for the Phase 1 tender was CISCO and the supplier was Green System LLC. (2) PIU's aim is to have a qualified vendor that will be                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

<sup>2</sup> REF: DEP250000018, Procurement announcement date: 24.06.2025; Procurement link: <https://tenders.procurement.gov.ge/public/?go=636129&lang=en>

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|  |  | <p>selected based on open international tender as in previous case. It was highlighted once again that there will be open competitive selection.</p> <p><b>Bank</b> representative reminded that the project is financed by the Word Bank and procurements are regulated by the Bank's Procurement Regulations. Direct selection is not allowed for this type of procurement.</p> |
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### Summary, Next Steps and Close:

- These minutes are issued solely for the purpose of providing a non-confidential summary of the EME meeting. They do not form part of, or replace, the official procurement documents and grant no advantage to any Supplier participating in the EME meeting.
- Participation in this EME meeting will not affect or preclude any Supplier from participating in the upcoming bidding. All potential Bidders will have equal access to information when the bidding is relaunched.
- The PIU will respond to Suppliers on the issues/concerns/questions raised in the submitted Questionnaires as soon as possible.
- Suppliers are encouraged to provide their questions on technical specifications or any further feedback via email to [procurement@opennet.ge](mailto:procurement@opennet.ge) by November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
- The PIU committed to reviewing the feedback and, where appropriate, incorporating changes into the Bidding Document.

*Preparation, Distribution and publication of these minutes:*

*This document was prepared by the PIU.*

*The minutes will be emailed to the Suppliers participating in the EME meeting, the Bank and published on the PIU website.*