



GUIDE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS INTENDED FOR USE UNDER MDB FINANCED OPERATIONS

December 2023



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COMMON ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINED TERMS

Common Abbreviations and Defined Terms that are used in this Guide are listed below.

ABBREVIATIONS

COTS	Commercial-Off-The-Shelf.
e-GP	Electronic Government Procurement.
HOP	Heads of Procurement.
ICT	Information and communications technology.
IT	Information technology.
ISO	International Organization for Standardization.
MAPS	Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems.
MDBs	Multilateral Development Banks.
OWASAP	Open Web Application Security Project.
SaaS	Software as a Service.
SMS	Short message service.
SSL	Secure Sockets Layer.
URL	Uniform resource locator.





GLOSSARY

Borrower	An entity that signs a financing agreement with an MDB(s) to finance a project.
Electronic Government Procurement	The use of information technology (especially the internet) by government institutions and other public sector organisations in conducting and managing their procurement activities and relationships with providers of Goods, Works and Services required by the public sector.
e-GP systems	The web-based solution to be used in Borrower countries to carry out public procurement proceedings.
Guide	The Guide for the Assessment of Electronic Government Procurement Systems Intended for Use Under MDB Financed Operations.
Goods	Objects of every kind and description, including commodities, raw materials, agricultural crops, computer software, software licenses, products and equipment and objects in solid, liquid or gaseous form as well as Works and Services incidental to the supply of Goods, excluding real property, money, securities or choses in action, as long as the value of the incidental Services and Works does not exceed the value of the Goods themselves.
Public Procurement	The acquisition with public funds of Goods by any means including purchase, rental, lease, or hire-purchase, and the acquisition of Works, consulting services, and non-consulting services.
Services	Consulting or non-consulting services. “Consulting services” means services of an advisory or intellectual nature to be performed by a consultant using their professional or technical skills, and which do not lead to a physically measurable result. “Non-consulting services” means services of a technical or physical nature resulting in the production of measurable outputs for which performance standards can be clearly defined and consistently applied.
Works	All works associated with the construction, reconstruction, demolition, repair, maintenance or renovation of a building, structure or works, such as site preparation, excavation, erection, building, installation of equipment or materials, decoration and finishing, and Services incidental to construction, such as drilling, mapping, satellite photography, seismic investigations, and similar Services, if the incidental Services do not exceed the value of the construction.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.01 Countries are increasingly digitising government services to enhance efficiency and promote transparency. This is also the case in the area of public procurement, where governments are adopting the use of electronic government procurement (e-GP) systems. For the purposes of this guide, e-GP is defined as the use of information technology (especially the internet) by government institutions and other public sector organisations in conducting and managing their procurement activities and relationships with providers of Goods, Works and Services required by the public sector. It is a powerful tool which can make a significant contribution in:

- fostering the core principles of procurement (enhancing transparency, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness of public procurement activities);
- driving innovation through the use of relevant communication technology and information solutions;
- promoting good governance of procurement;
- reducing fraud and corruption; and
- strengthening public financial management and accountability.

The effective use of an e-GP system contributes to the establishment and maintenance of a sound financial management cycle, including planning, budget execution, payments, audit, asset registration, etc. It elevates the procurement function to a strategic level by aggregating procurement demand, spend and performance information providing comprehensive data to analyse, report and act upon.

1.02 Countries and public sector entities that are using or introducing e-GP solutions typically wish to also realise the aforementioned benefits of such systems on projects financed by Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). Equally MDBs encourage the use of e-GP systems to lower transaction costs and expedite the achievement of the development outcomes sought under the projects they finance. All stages of the procurement process can potentially benefit from digitisation, including procurement planning, advertising of opportunities, preparation and issuance of initial selection, bidding and request for proposal documents, receipt and responses to requests for clarification, receipt, opening and evaluation of submissions¹, notification of the intention to award contracts, publication of results, as well as contract management and payments. Over and above this, e-GP systems may include discrete modules covering additional upstream procurement activities such as Supplier Relationship and Performance Management (SRPM), e-Reverse Auctions, e-Authoring/Signature of contracts and e-Framework

¹ The term “submissions” for the purposes of this guide is an inclusive term that covers prequalification applications, Expressions of Interest, Bids, Proposals and equivalents.

Agreements. Some, more advanced, e-GP systems may even have digitised downstream processes such as e-Catalogues and e-Ordering (PRs, POs and Invoices) and reporting/data analytics. Given the range of functionality involved in e-GP, it may take the form of a number of systems, which may or may not be integrated.

- 1.03** However, it is not necessary for an e-GP system to include all of the aforementioned functionality or modules. For some steps in the procurement processes used by contracting agencies, online technology is extremely efficient. In other instances, the use of e-GP systems is more problematic and uncertain, such as where the necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks are yet to be finalised in areas including authentication and e-signatures or where related information technology security risks remain substantive.
- 1.04** It is desirable that e-GP systems are based on open architecture so additional functionalities can be added over time. This would make it possible to expand system functionality in a phased manner as legislation, resources, and development plans permit, as well as facilitating the exploitation of valuable system data to inform decision making and public procurement oversight.

1.2 Purpose and Application of the Guide

- 1.05** The Guide and the associated assessment template, found in Annex II, have been prepared to provide for a structured and uniform approach to the review of e-GP systems that are intended to procure Goods, Works or Services contracts financed under MDB financed operations². The primary focus of such assessments is to ascertain whether the minimum MDB requirements for an e-GP system, as further detailed in section 2 and Annex II of the Guide, have been met and thus to determine if the system can be utilised for procurement under MDB-financed projects. While such assessments may help to inform the wider e-GP procurement reform aspirations of a country or entity whose e-GP system is under assessment, such broader reform initiatives would be better served through assessment tools that are dedicated to this purpose, such as the e-GP supplementary module of the Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems³(MAPS), which was developed with MDB support.

The MAPS e-GP module is a diagnostic tool used to undertake a deep assessment of a country's e-GP system with the intention of recommending a strategic plan of action or an agenda for reform. It is a supplementary module of a full MAPS assessment and pilots are currently being planned to test its potential application as a standalone assessment. Assessment using the MAPS e-GP module must follow the formalities and requirements of the MAPS assessment process prior to publication, including formal request of the government, validation with in-country stakeholders and, review and approval of the concept note and the assessment report by the MAPS Secretariat and the Assessment's Technical Advisory Group consisting of peer reviewers from MDB(s) and bilateral donors of development aid.

² MDB financed operations in the context of this guide refers to those MDBs whose logos are found on the cover page of the guide.

³ See: Supplementary modules - MAPS (mapsinitiative.org) for more information.

The timeline to complete a MAPS e-GP Module assessment usually goes beyond six months. Considering that the MDB e-GP assessments are used to determine whether a country or executing agency's e-GP system is fit for use under Bank financed operations these assessments are usually undertaken by MDB(s) within a short space of time – usually up to 3 months - and may be synchronized with a project processing cycle or loan approval cycle. Project operations require agility in the use of such assessments, and, notwithstanding their forementioned different purposes, the timelines and processes required for a full MAPS assessment or MAPS e-GP supplementary module may be incompatible with such project timelines. In any case, where a MAPS e-GP Module has been completed and published it will be used as a key source of information for an MDB(s) e-GP assessment.

- 1.06** The assessment can be undertaken for e-GP systems at both the national and subnational level of government. Additionally, the assessment can be used for e-GP systems at the agency level, where there is not a national or subnational procurement system in place, or the procuring entity is permitted to use a separate system. The e-GP assessment should be informed by wider assessments of the procurement policy, procedures and practices employed at the relevant national, subnational or agency level. These would highlight any material conflicts with the MDBs' shared core procurement principles and key policies and procedures of the specific MDB(s) undertaking the assessment which, in turn, may manifest themselves in the e-GP system's requirements and processes.
- 1.07** The Guide and the associated assessment template have been jointly developed between the MDBs, which are members of the MDB Heads of Procurement (HOP) grouping, with the intention of ensuring a consistent approach to such assessments and to facilitate joint assessments or mutual reliance between MDBs of each other's assessment reports, thus reducing transaction costs for Borrowers⁴ and MDBs. However, specific MDBs, subject to their own mandates, policies and procedures, may need to modify or supplement the minimum requirements of the Guide and the assessment template and will have to ensure that procurement undertaken through the e-GP system under projects which they finance, will not conflict with the core policy positions and requirements reflected in their individual procurement frameworks. This may cover areas such as any required country eligibility restrictions related to participation in the procurement process, the exclusions and sanctions list permitted for use and the extent of national or regional preferences allowed for under the MDB(s)' procurement frameworks, as detailed in Annex I which considers indicative policy considerations for each specific MDB, and should draw on the wider assessments referred to in 1.06.
- 1.08** Based on the findings of an assessment, each MDB party to the assessment will need to individually determine whether it accepts an e-GP system in its totality for use on its projects or whether it shall impose restrictions as to the value or type of procurement the system can be utilised to undertake and any additional requirements the Borrower will need to comply with when using the system.

4 The term "borrower" captures recipients of both loan and grant financing from MDBs for the purposes of this guide.

2. MINIMUM MDB STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO E-GP SYSTEMS

2.1 Background

2.01 The MDBs who form part of the HOP encourage sovereign governments and other recipients of MDB financing to plan and implement e-GP solutions in a manner reflective of their context. The resulting systems will thus reflect the specific requirements and priorities of each country. However, while recognising these individual circumstances, the MDBs also have responsibilities to their development partners, Borrower countries, and their own governance policies and rules. These responsibilities mean that the MDBs have developed some minimum standards and qualities that must be met if such e-GP systems are to be used to conduct procurement under projects which they fund.

2.2 Minimum Standards

2.02 These minimum standards and qualities are designed solely to ensure that core principles of good governance apply to the use of MDB resources. Therefore, the MDBs require that e-GP complies with the following principles:

- transparency;
- economy and efficiency;
- non-discrimination;
- equality of access;
- open competition;
- accountability; and
- security of process.

2.03 For an e-GP system to be acceptable, the following broad standards should be met:

- technical standards that facilitate interoperability with other existing systems and potential future systems;
- robust security;
- fully auditable processes/records; and
- no charges⁵ or other barriers to impede the market's use of/access to system.

2.04 These requirements provide further guidance and do not replace existing requirements that apply more generally to procurement processes for MDB funded activities, as provided for in each MDB's policies and procedures. As detailed in the Introduction section there is scope for each MDB participating in an assessment to accept an e-GP system fully or partially and in either case with additional requirements for use.

2.05 The above-mentioned requirements are expanded in the form of specific criteria in the assessment template in Annex II, which is introduced in Section 3.



⁵ Other than those detailed in section 4.8.2 of the assessment template

3. E-GP ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

3.1 Role and Use of the Assessment Template

- 3.01** Further to the broad minimum standards set out in Section 2, the e-GP assessment template, attached in Annex II, provides more detailed criteria to be considered when assessing e-GP systems. The template is designed to ensure a consistent approach to system assessments.
- 3.02** The template is expected to form part of an assessment exercise and to inform the development of the subsequent assessment report but both are expected to be more expansive and would also cover actual system tests and feedback from key stakeholders. As noted previously, individual MDBs may need to assess additional areas to satisfy their own requirements and these areas should be clearly identified in the resulting report to facilitate mutual reliance of the core findings between MDBs.
- 3.03** While the evaluation template is intended to be utilised by assessment teams to record their findings, as appropriate, it could also be used in full or part to prepare a questionnaire for the Borrower to complete, prior to the start of the assessment. There are opportunities for the future digitisation of the assessment template to facilitate more efficient review exercises and data analytics.

3.2 Content of the Assessment Template

- 3.04** The assessment template considers the following key areas:

Background to the Assessment

- 3.05** This part of the template captures key background information, including:
- who is conducting the assessment;
 - the role of consultants;
 - the objectives and scope of the assessment;
 - the responsible party for the e-GP system in the Borrower country/agency;
 - key Borrower stakeholders; and
 - the legal and regulatory framework governing the use of e-GP.

Overview of the E-GP System

- 3.06** This section of the template provides an overview of the e-GP system, including:
- date of system launch/major updates and details of the developer;
 - the type, name and model of system;
 - system hosting arrangements;
 - system components;
 - information that is captured on system;
 - languages and currencies supported by the system; and
 - any changes to the system since any previous MDB assessment.

Key Technical Requirements

- 3.07** This part of the template reviews the system against minimum technical requirements related to:
- system access;
 - information security management;
 - authentication of system users; and
 - the use of third party operated systems.
- 3.08** This is one of the areas that will require accompanying thorough testing/review of the actual system.

Requirements at Key Stages in the Procurement Cycle

- 3.09** The assessment also looks at some minimum standards that apply at different stages of the procurement cycle, including those relevant to:
- advertising of general and specific opportunities;
 - procurement documents;
 - correspondence with bidders;
 - submissions;
 - bid securities/bid securing declarations;

- public bid/proposal openings;
- bid/proposal evaluation, standstill periods and contract award;
- bid-related payments; and
- complaints.

3.10 As with the key technical requirements, these criteria will require accompanying testing/review of the system.

Capacity of Owner of e-GP System to Provide Maintenance and Support

3.11 Aside from the functionality and core technical requirements of an e-GP system, it is important to also ensure that the entity ultimately responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the system has sufficient:

- human resources;
- IT expertise and resources; and
- budget allocation to effectively and efficiently perform their role.

This part of the assessment will involve seeking feedback from the entity responsible for the system and other key stakeholders, reviewing relevant strategies/plans, analysing statistics related to the performance of the entity, and reviewing staffing levels/plans, resources and budget allocations.

Capacity of Users and Bidders to Utilise the System

3.12 In addition to assessing the capacity of the entity responsible for establishing and managing the system, it is equally important to assess to what extent users of the system and bidders have been suitably sensitised, trained and otherwise prepared to efficiently utilise it. The template, therefore, includes several relevant criteria related to this area.

Reverse E-Auctions

3.13 Most MDB procurement frameworks allow for the use of reverse e-auctions in specific circumstances and thus the template also, where relevant, can be used for the assessment of minimum criteria for reverse e-auction solutions offered as part of e-GP systems or as standalone systems.

3.14 As noted in the introduction section, there may be other discrete modules aside from reverse e-Auctions. These are deemed to be less common and thus are not specifically covered in the assessment template but where they require assessment, they would be considered in accordance with the principles in Section 2.

4. ASSESSMENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

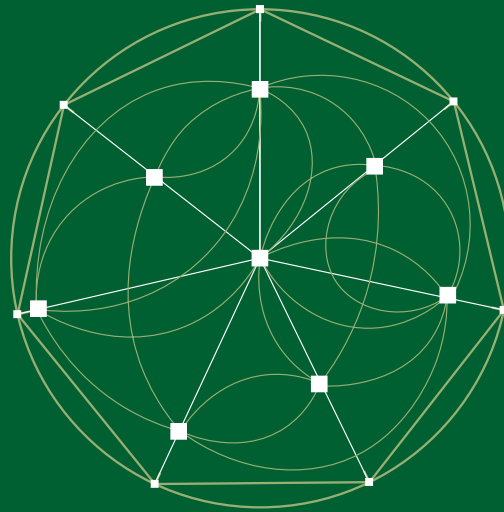
- 4.01** Upon the conclusion of an assessment, the findings of the assessment should be discussed with the Borrower. A narrative assessment report should then be prepared which incorporates the completed assessment template, which as previously mentioned, might be supplemented with additional areas that the MDB(s) conducting the assessment need to include to verify the system's conformity with their policies and procedures, including those detailed in 1.07, and any salient points from the discussions with the Borrower.
- 4.02** The assessment report would also be expected to include more supporting background information and feedback on the Borrower and e-GP system than that required in the assessment template to provide for more complete and situation-appropriate analysis. This would include analysis of relevant statistics and reports made available to the assessment team, feedback from meetings with the entity responsible for the system and system users, findings from system testing and reviews of any discrete modules, including those related to contract management and reverse e-auctions.
- 4.03** The report shall have a conclusions and recommendations section that:
- (a) provides general conclusions on the e-GP system;
 - (b) confirms to what extent the e-GP system is accepted by the MDB(s) conducting the assessment i.e. in its totality or for certain types of procurement or contract values;
 - (c) details any actions that need to be taken before the system can be accepted in full or part for use by the MDB(s). This might include consideration of wider MDB technical support; and
 - (d) explains any modifications required or additional requirements necessary for practices or processes during system use to meet the specific MDB(s) requirements.

5. MONITORING

5.01 The MDB(s) should establish a timeline with the Borrower for follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations of the report.



ANNEXES

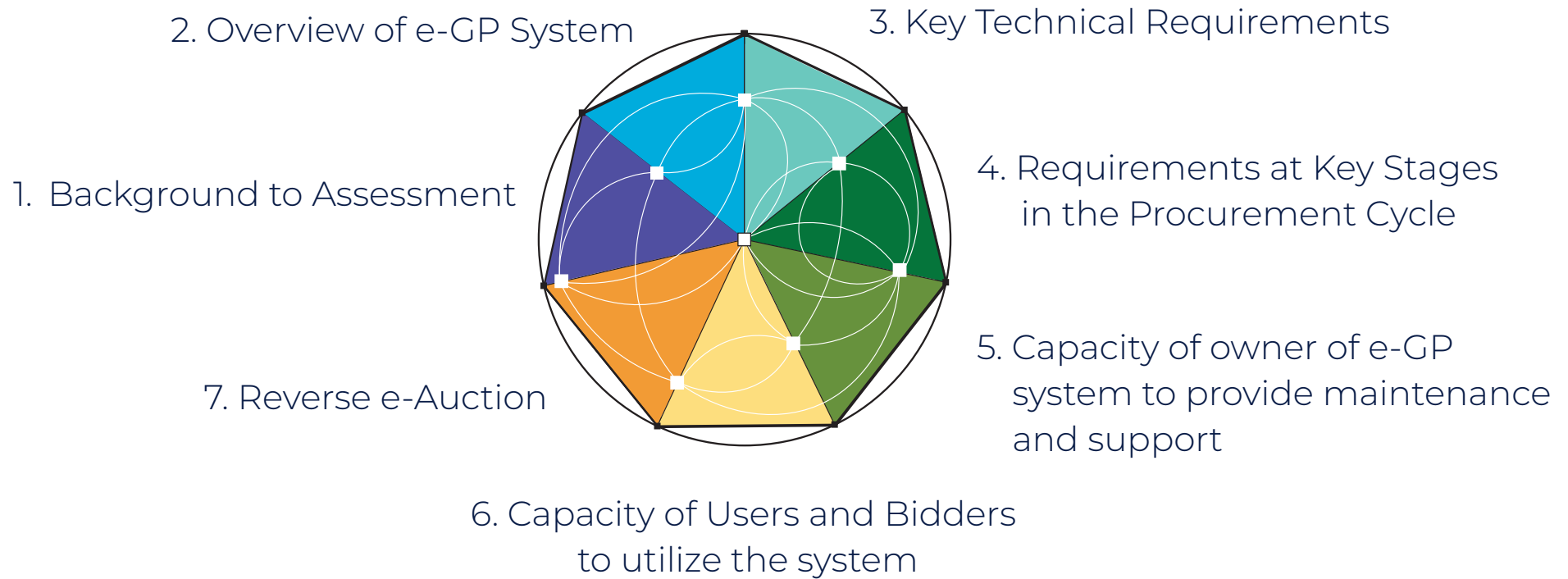


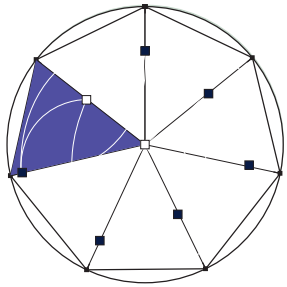
ANNEX I: POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR EACH SPECIFIC MDB

Each MDB involved in an assessment will have its own unique policy requirements that may impact what they must assess beyond the minimum requirements stated in the assessment template. The below table includes indicative policy areas that might need to be considered in the context of the assessment, but these will need to be customised to reflect the specific requirements of each MDB.

No.	Policy Topic	Areas of Relevance for Assessment	Specific Topics/Sections of Assessment Template To be Supplemented
1.	Any country eligibility requirements for providers of goods, works and services to participate in the procurement process and be awarded contracts [<i>members of MDB, regional restrictions, etc</i>]	[<i>to be completed by MDB in question</i>]	[<i>to be completed by MDB in question</i>]
2.	Acceptance of conditions for participation [<i>e.g., licenses, registrations, etc</i>]		
3.	Applicable sanctions and debarments [<i>e.g., own list, cross debarment, etc</i>]		
4.	Restrictions for State-Owned Enterprises that apply [<i>legal and financially autonomous, etc</i>]		
5.	Conflict of interest provisions		
6.	Acceptance of national or regional preference systems		
7.	Complaints handling systems/remedies		
8.	Accepted procurement methods / approaches		

ANNEX II: E-GP ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE





1. Background to Assessment

	Responses
1.1 Owner(s) of the assessment. ¹	
1.2 Third parties collaborating with or supporting the assessment ² and their role.	
1.3 Role of consultants in undertaking the assessment.	
1.4 Objectives/scope of assessment, including whether assessment is at national, state, sector or entity level and whether initial target is for full or partial use of e-GP system.	
1.5 Responsible party ³ for overseeing/managing e-GP system on Borrower side and any on-going role for e-GP system provider e.g., on-going technical support. Key contact persons should be listed.	
1.6 Intended users of e-GP system.	
1.7 Borrower's key e-GP stakeholders ⁴ .	
1.8 Was development of e-GP system part of wider procurement reform process? If so, provide details on the context and details of any MDB involvement.	
1.9 Where present, public procurement legal and regulatory framework governing use of e-GP and related laws and regulations.	
1.10 Details of any relevant Borrower strategies/plans, including targets or outcomes, related to e-GP.	

1 This may be one or a number of MDBs.

2 This could include MDBs, bilateral donors or other external parties.

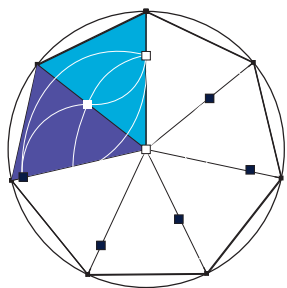
3 Organogram should be provided to detail where party fits within government and whom it reports to.

4 As necessary stakeholder map can be attached.

		Responses
1.11	Percentage of procurement currently undertaken through e-GP and any known issues. ⁵	
1.12	Key findings of previous assessments ⁶ of system by MDBs, bilateral donors, auditors or other parties, included any MAPS e-GP module assessments, and details/outcomes of any known pilots of system.	

5 Assessment should consider e-GP performance for at least previous 12 months prior to assessment and assess number of procuring entities, registered bidders, number and value of bids and extent of usage for MDB projects.

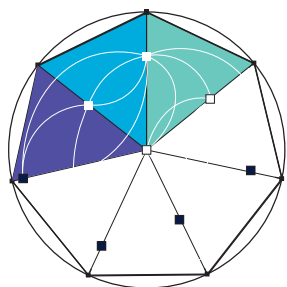
6 Previous assessments/pilots and relevant assessment reports should be listed in the Report, detailing who undertook them and when, with any relevant URLs to access them listed.



2. Overview of e-GP System

	Responses
2.1 Date of system launch and any major updates.	
2.2 Responsible party for system development and updates.	
2.3 Is e-GP provided through one system or a number of systems? If the latter to what extend are they linked and which systems are being assessed?	
2.4 Type of system, including whether developed by Borrower “in-house”, Custom Software Solutions, customised version of “Commercial off-the-shelf” (COTS) system or COTS system and whether is a Software as a Service (SaaS).	
2.5 Hosting: in “the cloud” or on premises. If is in the cloud, is it hosted domestically or internationally and if so where?	
2.6 Name/model of system.	
2.7 List of modules/components under existing/proposed system.	
2.8 URL of system.	
2.9 What kind of registration information is captured in the system e.g., company register, bidder register, contract register etc?	
2.10 What languages does the system support and in what capacity?	
2.11 What currencies can the system support/report on? ⁷	
2.12 Details of any substantive modifications or changes to e-GP system since last MDB assessment/accreditation (if any)?	

⁷ It is noted that generally MDBs for international competitive bidding require bidders to be able to bid in up to 3 foreign currencies, as well as giving the procuring entity the option of requiring local costs to be reflected in local currency.



3. Key Technical Requirements

Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
3.1 System Access	
3.1.1 System access shall be open, equal, and unrestricted to all prospective bidders/proposers.	
3.1.2 System homepage, access to procurement opportunities/contract award data and key information, including on registration, shall be open, free and unrestricted to members of the public, including unregistered bidders/proposers.	
3.1.3 Bidders who want to submit information or receive online alerts or notifications of amendments or clarifications shall be offered an online enrolment facility.	
3.1.4 The principle of single sign-on shall apply. Single enrolment shall allow bidders/proposers the multiple use of the same electronic system for different procurement activities.	
3.1.5 Registration process shall not include any screening process for requirements that are not in conformity with MDB procedures e.g., use of national sanctions or exclusion lists not acceptable to MDBs.	
3.1.6 The system shall be interoperable with ICT products in common use and other Borrower systems to allow for efficient operations and transferability of key data. The system shall be internet based, accessible by users through readily available and commonly used browser software.	

Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
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3.1.7 Downloaded documents shall be readable through open standards with a range of commonly used office software. If specialized software is necessary, this shall also be downloadable (e.g. software to read PDF documents), free of charge and compatible with commonly used system and office software. Similarly, the requirements for electronic submissions, where these are provided for, shall require interfaces with commonly used office software, or the submission software shall be available online from the contracting authority's system as required.

3.1.8 The system shall perform reliably and securely in a time-sensitive manner without any historically unresolved system performance or latency issues.

3.2 Information Security Management

3.2.1 For any e-GP processes engaged internally or through third parties, the contracting authority shall develop, maintain and implement an information security management system that conforms with international standards for information management, such as ISO 27001-2022 and those shared under the Open Web Application Security Project (OWASAP) 2021. Measures should be in place to ensure data is not modified/tampered with by unauthorised parties when transferred between entities involved in the process.

3.2.2 There shall not be evidence of a history of system breaches or audit issues that represent an on-going material risk to the integrity or security of any procurement.

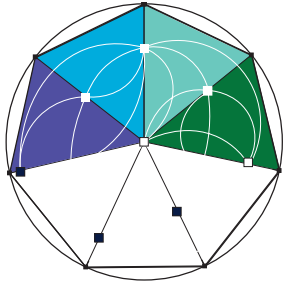
3.2.3 Contracting authorities should have in place procedures to be followed in the case of any failure, malfunction, or breakdown of the electronic system used during the procurement process. In any case, non-repudiation measures shall be integrated into the system at critical steps, such as submissions being uploaded/entered onto system, including time stamped logs and auto-generated messages to users/bidders. Notwithstanding this, contracting authorities shall not accept any responsibility for failures or breakdowns other than in those systems strictly within their own control.

	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
<p>3.2.4 e-GP systems and information security shall ensure that secure records are kept of every process, procedure, transmission, receipt, transaction in terms of the content, executing individual and authorizations, time and date. These records, including online submissions, shall be maintained to high standards of security and kept for at least two years after the date of project completion, or other date stated in the financing agreement, and be made available for audit on request.</p>		
<p>3.3 Authentication of System Users</p>	<p>Where a Digital Certification/Signature is required the following shall apply</p>	
<p>3.3.1 Suitable authentication procedures shall be in place, such as unique username and password, to authenticate the entity logging into system and making a submission⁸.</p>		
<p>3.3.2 The registration process for a new company should check to ensure there are no duplicate identities existing on the system and complete this validation process before allowing them to register and make a submission.</p>		
<p>3.3.3 The certification process shall certify bidders/proposers for a reasonable period of time (at least one year) and existing bidders/proposers shall not be required to request a certification for each procurement process.</p>		
<p>3.3.4 The certification process shall be kept open permanently allowing bidders/proposers that conform with the certification requirements to submit the request for certification at any time in order to allow them to register in advance for future procurement processes.</p>		
<p>3.3.5 The certification process shall allow bidders/proposers to take all actions required for their certification within their own countries, without the need to travel abroad.</p>		

⁸ If a 'token' system is employed for authentication purposes this must not disadvantage any particular group of bidders, including those outside of the Borrower's country.

3.4 Third Party Operated e-GP Systems

3.4.1 Contracting authorities may use e-GP systems operated by a third party under a service contract arrangement. Unless appropriate security mechanisms are in place which prevent them from access to confidential information. Communication between the Client and the sever should be secured through a Secured Socket Layer (SSL). Two factor authentication should be used to verify user identify by using SMS or equivalent. Third party service providers and their subsidiaries or parent companies shall be ineligible to be awarded contracts on procurement processes that are undertaken through the said e-GP system.



4. Requirements at Key Stages in the Procurement Cycle

		Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
4.1	Advertising of General and Specific Opportunities	Electronic advertising of procurement opportunities will be considered to satisfy MDB procurement advertising requirements by meeting the following conditions:	
4.1.1	The advertisement shall be posted on a publicly accessible webpage for the e-GP system (or a separate page linked to the system) that is well known nationally, well maintained, functional, and affords free and unrestricted access, rather than just being available to registered e-GP system users, with details of how to access the opportunity on the e-GP system.		
4.1.2	Concurrent advertising may be also required on additional sites and media according to specific requirements of individual MDBs' procurement regulations, beyond the requirements of 4.1.1, with any such additional advertising providing details of how to access the opportunity on the e-GP system.		
4.1.3	The bidding period shall be measured from the date of publication on the required sites/media, and where these dates vary the date of publication on the system shall prevail. A secure log of these entries shall be available for audit.		
4.1.4	Where bidding is subject to pre-qualification, this shall be clearly disclosed in the bid advertising and, where required by the MDB in question, restricted bidding shall also be confirmed in a suitable advertisement. The bid advertisements and results disclosures shall not be restricted.		

	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
<p>4.2 Procurement Documents</p>	<p>Contracting authorities may distribute Procurement Documents by using electronic systems (download from website)</p>	
<p>4.2.1 MDBs may require the use of their own Standard Procurement Documents. Procurement Documents must be provided to bidders/proposers through the e-GP system in an approved language. The system shall accommodate MDB eligibility, sanctions and currency requirements. Any other divergence between national system requirements and MDB requirements, shall be flagged and addressed by the MDB involved in the way the MDB sees fit, depending on system capabilities and the criticality of the divergence.⁹</p>		
<p>4.2.2 Contracting authorities shall offer the distribution of Procurement Documents in commonly used electronic formats (e.g. xml, html, doc, rtf, xls, ppt, pdf), where they are to be downloaded.</p>		

9 In relation to currency refer to footnote 7.

	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
<p>4.3 Correspondence, Amendments, Substitutions and Clarifications</p>	<p>Correspondence with bidders/proposers during bid/proposal preparation shall be done electronically and records of all correspondence shall be kept securely for audit and the bid evaluation report:</p>	
<p>4.3.1 All clarifications and amendments or substitutions of the procurement documents, as well as any pre-bid/proposal conference minutes, shall be posted onto the e-GP platform where the associated Procurement Document was published. Bidders/proposers who have already expressed an interest should be directly notified electronically of any such postings. In the absence of an automated notification system, a disclaimer on the website of the procurement document should alert that it is the bidders'/proposers' responsibility to check for any clarifications and amendments or substitutions on the website.</p>		
<p>4.3.2 Where Contracting Authorities stage online pre-bid/proposal conferences and clarifications, online conferencing and chat facilities, shall not function for such purpose after the period allowed for in the bidding document or subsequent amendment.</p>		
<p>4.3.3 Correspondence during bid/proposal evaluation for the purpose of clarification may also be done electronically. Confidentiality of the bid/proposal evaluation process shall be maintained.</p>		
<p>4.3.4 All correspondence, amendments, substitutions and clarifications shall be recorded for audit. Systems shall ensure that only authorized changes can be made.</p>		

	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
<p>4.4 Submissions¹⁰</p>	<p>Contracting authorities shall offer enrolled bidders/proposers the use of electronic systems to make submissions by filling in online procurement forms and/or uploading documents through a secured website conditional on the following:</p>	
<p>4.4.1 There shall be security arrangements to ensure confidentiality of each bidder's/ proposer's submission, access to submissions only for those specifically authorized (i.e. bidders/ proposers before the submission deadline) and integrity (i.e. not allow any modification after submission deadline) of submissions in electronic format. Bidders shall not have access to submissions from other Bidders and shall be able to withdraw, substitute or modify bids/proposals.</p>		
<p>4.4.2 Submissions submitted online shall be scanned for viruses/malware by system before being uploaded and accepted electronically, and where this causes a submission to be rejected the bidder/proposer shall be notified immediately.</p>		
<p>4.4.3 A disclaimer shall be included on the submission website or bidding document to alert the bidders/proposers' responsibility to make submissions free of viruses/malware.</p>		
<p>4.4.4 Submission data should be submitted and stored in an encrypted form with a "timelock" preventing access to submissions before the date/time for the opening of submissions.</p>		
<p>4.4.5 Contracting authorities shall ensure that the date/time of the applicable time zone of an automated closure of a submission deadline can only be set by authorized persons. A secure log of these processes shall be available for audit as required.</p>		

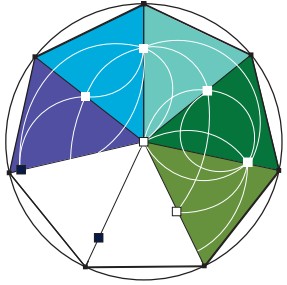
10 Submissions includes prequalification applications, expressions of interests, bids, proposals or equivalent.

	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
4.4.6	Where bidders/proposers modify or withdraw their submission a secure log of these changes shall be available for audit.	
4.4.7	The system shall support a date/time deadline for submissions. Only those submissions or modifications completed at the time of the submission deadline shall be considered. Receipt of electronic submissions or modifications, including the date and time, must be acknowledged by the system immediately.	
4.5	Bid Securities/Bid Securing Declarations¹¹	
4.5.1	System shall be able to accommodate the submission of bid/proposal securing declarations.	
4.5.2	Electronic bid securities are acceptable as long as they do not discriminate against any bidder.	
4.5.3	If bid securities are required in paper format, a scanned copy of the original shall be submitted as a pre-requisite for bidders' qualification as stipulated in the bidding document.	
4.6	Public Bid/Proposal Opening	
4.6.1	Electronic submissions shall be opened online at the specified opening date/time. The system shall capture the name and address of all bidders/proposers (and bid prices for one envelope processes). The bid/proposal opening report shall be immediately disclosed electronically at least to all bidders/proposers who submitted bids/proposals.	
4.6.2	Contracting authorities shall securely keep the bid/proposal opening records in the system and make them freely available, at least by electronic means, to all bidders/proposers who submitted bids/proposals.	

¹¹ This does not apply to consulting services where use of bid securities / bid securing declaration is not deemed appropriate given the context.

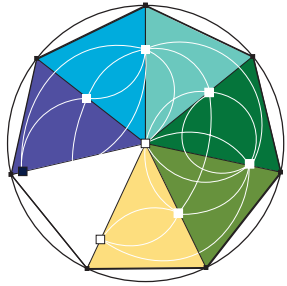
		Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
4.6.3	Contracting authorities shall ensure that, for two stages evaluation processes, financial bids/proposals in electronic format shall only be accessed and opened after the evaluation of the technical bids/proposals is completed.		
4.6.4	Bids/proposals in electronic format shall remain confidential. They shall only be accessible to authorized persons involved in the evaluation process.		
4.7	Bid/Proposal Evaluation and Contract Award	The contracting authority may use pre-approved automated evaluation processes so long as the evaluation aligns with the criteria established in the procurement documents	
4.7.1	e-GP system to be able to facilitate 1 or 2 stage processes and 1 or 2 envelope approaches, in accordance with MDB requirements.		
4.7.2	A bid/proposal evaluation report(s) shall be prepared as required by the MDBs, which shall be made available in electronic format and securely stored in the system.		
4.7.3	e-GP system should accommodate standstill periods and issuance of Notices of Intention to Award Contracts, as required by the Bidding Documents. As an exception a standstill period can be provided for as an offline modality.		
4.7.4	Contract awards shall be published online consistent with bid advertising (see Section 4.1), include the data required by MDBs and shall remain available for review by users on-system.		

		Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
4.8	Bid-related Payment		
		Good practice provides free and open access to all information and allows bidders to submit bids without any charges. However, if payment is required, a nominal fee may be charged under the following restrictions.	
4.8.1	Prospective bidders shall have open and free access to all Specific Procurement Notices (SPNs) where no payment shall be required.		
4.8.2	Fees to be charged to obtain bidding documents/Requests for Proposals, if any, shall be reasonable to encourage effective competition.		
4.8.3	The e-GP system shall offer a widely available and internationally recognised online electronic payment facility for the payment of any bid related fees.		
4.9	Complaints		
4.9.1	The e-GP system should allow bidders to make procurement complaints in a confidential manner and receive an electronic confirmation of their complaint.		



5. Capacity of owner of e-GP system to provide maintenance and support

		Observations on Actual Resources Available	Level of Available Resource
5.1	Entity under assessment (and where appropriate SaaS provider) shall report the quality and quantity of human resources required and available to support and operate the system.		
5.2	Entity under assessment (and where appropriate SaaS provider) shall report the IT resources and technical support required and available to support the system.		
5.3	Entity under assessment shall provide report the budget required and available to support the operation of the system.		



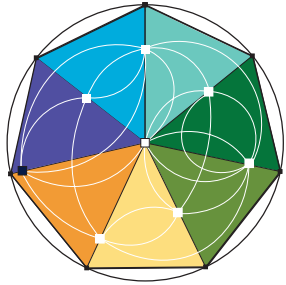
6. Capacity of Users and Bidders to utilize the system

Observations on Actual Capacity	Level of Capacity
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- 6.1 Entity under assessment should report extent to which procuring agencies are suitably trained and supported to use the system¹².
- 6.2 Entity under assessment should report extent of outreach to and support for bidders to use the system¹³.

¹² Assessment should capture quantitative data on number of users and number who received/completed training available, as well as quality of any training/support.

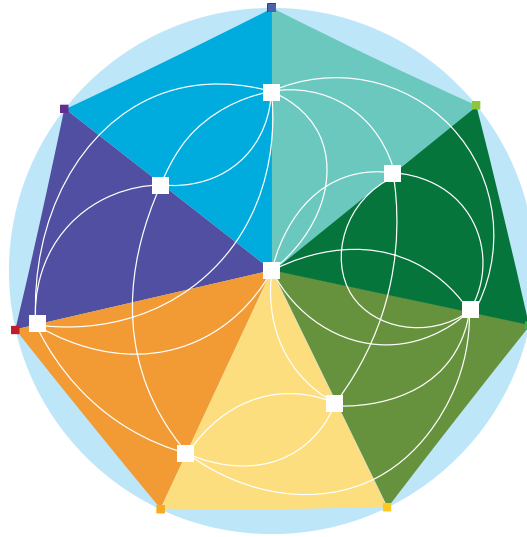
¹³ Assessment should capture quantitative data on type of outreach/support and numbers or Bidders who benefited.



7. Reverse e-Auctions

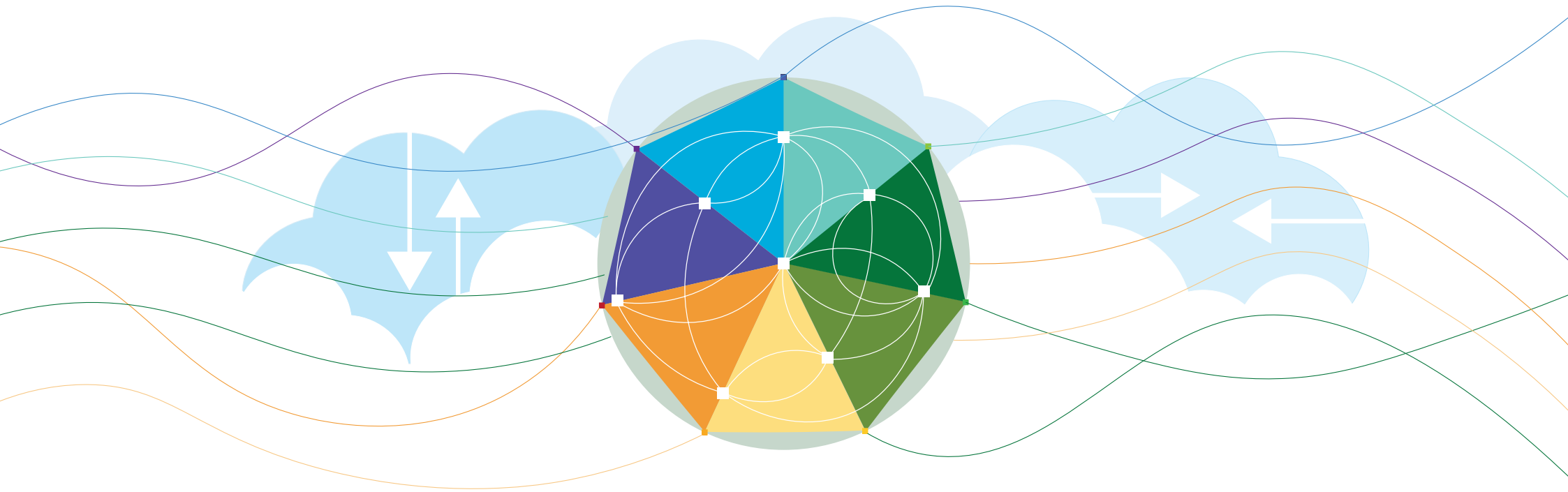
	Observations on e-GP System Under Assessment	Extent of Compliance
7.1	A reverse e-Auction system shall take the form of an online dynamic competitive process whereby Bidders will compete over a relatively short period of time offering a succession of bids to progressively lower the price(s) offered and the contract will be awarded to the lowest priced offer(s), which may take into account objective evaluation criteria that can be readily monetarized under a reverse auction scenario.	
7.2	System shall allow all bidders to have an equal and continuous opportunity to present their bids during the period allowed for bids.	
7.3	Each bidder shall receive, instantaneously and on a continuous basis during the reverse auction, sufficient information allowing it to determine the standing of its bid vis-à-vis other bids. However, a bidder will not be able to see the identify of the other bidders.	
7.4	The system shall require the establishment of clear and transparent rules regarding the timing of final bids and the extension of the reverse auction period following a bid being made in the defined period originally allowed for.	
7.5	The lowest-price bid or the most advantageous bid, as applicable, at the closure of the electronic reverse auction shall be the successful bid.	

The e-GP Assessment Template can be downloaded in an Excel format through this link: [HERE](#)









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