**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**SELECTION OF INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** **CS/PROC/EDF/8.3/10/2020/08TPL**

**REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE:** **CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)**

1. ***The COMESA Secretariat*** is inviting Individual Consultants to submit their CV and Financial Proposal for the following services:

**CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs).**

The Terms of Reference defining the minimum technical requirements for these services are attached as Annex 1 to this Request for Expression of Interest.

**2. Only Individual Consultants are eligible for this assignment**

**3.** The maximum budget for this contract is **US$15,000 *for expert service/consultants’ fees only.*** Proposals exceeding this budget will not be accepted.

**4**. Your Expression of Interest must be presented as per Expression of Interest Forms attached as Annex 2 to this Request for Expression of Interest, in the English language and be accompanied by copies of all the indicated supporting documents. If the supporting documents are not in English, these shall be accompanied by a certified translation into English.

**5.** Your application documents clearly marked and email bearing the subject **“****CS/PROC/EDF/8.3/10/2020/08TPL -CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)*”***, should be emailed to the following address:

***procurement@comesa.int***

6. The deadline for submission of your application, to the address indicated in Paragraph 5 above, is:

***15TH JANUARY 2021 AT 16:00 hours***

7. ***Physical submission of applications is NOT allowed.***

**8.** Your CV will be evaluated against the following criteria.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Criteria**  | **Maximum points allocated**  |
| **1** | General qualifications | 20 |
| 2 | Adequacy for the assignment | 60 |
| 3 | Experience in the region | 20 |
|  | **Total** | **100** |

**9.** Your proposal should be submitted as per the following instructions:

(i) PRICES:

The financial proposal shall be inclusive of all expenses deemed necessary by the Individual Consultant for the performance of the contract.

(ii) EVALUATION AND AWARD OF THE CONTRACT:

Expressions of Interest determined to be formally compliant to the requirements will be further evaluated technically.

An Expression of Interest is considered compliant to the requirements if:

* It fulfils the formal requirements (see Paragraphs 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 above),
* The financial proposal does not exceed the maximum available budget for the contract.

The award will be made to the applicant who obtains the highest technical score. Expressions of Interest not obtaining a minimum score of 70% will be rejected.

(iii) VALIDITY OF THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

Your Expression of Interest should be valid for a period of 90 days from the date of deadline for submission indicated in Paragraph 6 above.

10. The assignment is expected to commence within two (2) weeks from the signature of the contract.

11. Additional requests for information and clarifications can be made until 7 working days prior to deadline indicated in the paragraph 6 above, from:

The Procuring entity: ***COMESA Secretariat***

 Contact person: ***Ted Peter Luka***

E-mail: ***tluka@comesa.int******;***  ***smwesigwa@comesa.int******;***

The answers on the questions received will be sent to the Consultant and all questions received as well as the answers to them will be posted on the COMESA Secretariat’s website at the latest 3 working days before the deadline for submission of applications.

**ANNEXES:**

ANNEX 1: **Terms of Reference**

ANNEX 2**: Expression of Interest Forms**

**Sincerely,**

**Name:** Silver Mwesigwa

**Title:** Head of Procurement

**Date:** 30 NOVEMBER 2020

**ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)**

**1. Introduction**

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has received funding from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) - the Small-Scale Cross Border Trade Initiative (SSCBTI), towards activities related to enhancing Cross Border Trade (CBT). The SSCBTI aims to increase formal small scale cross border trade flows in the COMESA/tripartite region, leading to high revenue collection for government at the targeted border posts, namely Mwami/Mchinji between Zambia and Malawi; Kasumbalesa between Zambia and DRC; Chirundu, between Zambia and Zimbabwe; Nakonde/Tunduma between Zambia and Tanzania; and Moyale between Ethiopia and Kenya. One of the core activities of the programme is the provision of information and sensitization support to cross border traders, and more especially the small-scale category as well as the collection of data on small scale trade.

To the above end, COMESA has supported the posting of Trade Information Desks (TIDs) at selected border crossing points in the region. The TIDs are manned by Trade Information Desk Officers (TIDOs). The core roles of the TIDOs include the provision of information/sensitization of cross border traders as well as collecting information on small scale cross border trade which would otherwise be missed by the officially designated border agencies like Customs. This information is critical for planning and policy formulation purposes of the respective countries.

Presently, the TIDOs are operational at the COMESA-SSCBTI at seven (7) selected borders namely; (i) Kasumbalesa (DRC) /Kasumbalesa (Zambia); (ii) Nakonde (Zambia); (iii) Mwami (Zambia)/ Mchinji (Malawi); (iv) Chirundu (Zambia)/ Chirundu (Zimbabwe). Running of the TIDO office does not include only the fees for the TIDO, but other costs of running the office such as office supplies and other consumables.

Unlike the public officials of the other border agencies (Customs, Immigration, Standards, etc) who are remunerated and facilitated by their respective governments, the TIDOs are currently facilitated by COMESA under the SSCBTI project. By the very nature of the projects, issues of sustainability of the TIDOs beyond the project lifetime inevitably arise.

**2. Objectives**

The aim of the assignment is to carry out a study on the appropriate ways and means of maintaining and sustaining the Trade Information Desk Officers (TIDOs) at the borders so that they continue facilitating cross border trade (and more especially for the small scale traders) beyond the timelines of the SSCBTI.

**3. Specific tasks**

The specific tasks expected of the consultant will be to:-

1. Establish the services currently provided by the TIDOs at the respective borders and conduct a review of past successes and challenges in establishment and maintenance of TIDs in similar COMESA Programmes;
2. Assess the willingness to pay the for the services by the beneficiaries of the TIDO services and the appropriate pricing of the services;
3. Evaluate the importance and impact of the TIDOs in facilitating cross border trade, with evidence-based focus on the small-scale traders;
4. Develop/explore linkages between TIDs and national programmes or institutions, including an examination of possible integration and improved management of cross-border traders associations and how these could take the TID agenda forward and promote local ownership as well as other relevant sustainability aspects;
5. Explore international best practices on the services and remuneration of TIDOs (or their equivalent in international jurisdictions) and establish the key aspects that may be appropriate for adoption for the sustainability of TIDOs at the project borders under the SSCBTI;
6. Propose an appropriate reporting structure and procedure for TIDOs taking into account the needs of various stakeholders that include the Coordinating Ministry, the Cross-Border Traders Associations or similar organizations and COMESA Secretariat;
7. Identify other additional services that the TIDOs could provide that have the potential to attract development partner resources; and
8. Undertake field consultations and surveys to gather both qualitative and quantitative data using a variety of tools such as a questionnaire and participatory methodologies such as focus group discussions. For effective consultations, visits to all the project borders and capitals of the project countries, are envisaged if possible. Otherwise alternative means of stakeholder consultations would have to be devised should travel not be possible.
9. Explore and recommend possible options of maintaining the TIDOs beyond the project lifetime including: incorporation into the public services of the respective countries; the private sector; non state project sponsorship; public private partnerships (PPPs); among others.

**4. Expected deliverables and timelines**

The key outputs expected from the consultant include the following:

1. **Inception Report** – The Inception Report should be turned in within 5 days of signing the contract. This will include critical details of how the assignment will be executed including the methodology, work plan and the study tools. A critical element of sustainability is how to pay for the services provided by TIDs. The ideal or desired situation is where the consumers of the services, who are small-scale traders pay for these services. The consultant should provide for a methodological approach to how they will derive the ‘’willingness to pay’ ’by small scale-traders;
2. **Draft Study Report –** The Draft Report should be turned in within 40 days of signing the contract. This will include findings of the literature review, field survey (or alternative method of gathering data should fieldwork not be possible due to measures to control COVID-19) and the recommended options for sustainability and respective road maps for implementation. A review meeting that includes the targeted countries could be held to provide inputs into the draft report;
3. **Final Study Report –** The Final Report should be turned within 10 days of receiving comments from the client/stakeholders. This will be a refined version of the draft report incorporating the comments of the client/stakeholders and should contain a proposed framework and options for sustainability of TIDs that include among others, (i) an indicative estimate of the maximum amount small-scale cross-border traders may be willing to pay as fee for TID services at each named Borders, based on feedback gathered during the field work; (ii) for each sustainability option recommended, a roadmap of concrete steps and responsible authorities to operationalize the proposed solution.;

In addition to the above core outputs, the consultant will also deliver other outputs as may be required by the client including regular assignment progress reports, field documents, datasets and study tools, among others.

**5. Qualifications and experience of the consultant(s)**

The consultant(s) should havethe following qualifications and experience:

1. A Masters degree in Economics, Commerce, Business Administration, Law, Human Resource Management, Project Management; or International Trade;
2. Minimum of 10 years’ experience in the area of cross border clearance and trade facilitation;
3. Knowledge of project management including issues of sustainability of project gains;
4. Skills and experience in human resource management, development and remuneration frameworks;
5. Knowledge of small-scale cross-border trade and gender issues in cross-border trade;
6. Knowledge of regional integration issues especially in the COMESA Region
7. Proven experience and skills in conducting field research surveys and quantitative/qualitative analysis;
8. Strong interpersonal and communications skills;
9. Strong computer skills especially in Microsoft packages and applications;
10. Proficiency in English. Good working knowledge of French will be an advantage.

**6. Duration and Location**

The assignment is for a total duration of three (3) months. The duty station will be at the COMESA Secretariat or/and home based. Travel outside the duty station is envisaged where possible.

**7**. **Target borders for the study**

The following are the borders selected to the study;

1. Kasumbasela between DRC/Zambia
2. Chirundu between Zambia/Zimbabwe
3. Mwami/Mchinji between Zambia/Malawi
4. Nakonde, Zambia

**8. Reporting**

The consultant shall be under the overall supervision of the Director, Trade and Customs Division, with regular and close consultations with the Team Leader of the Small Scale Cross Border Trade Initiative at COMESA Secretariat in Lusaka. The tasks will also be undertaken in close consultation with other COMESA Secretariat relevant divisions and stakeholders.

 **9. Payment Schedule**

The consultant will be paid a lumpsum of US$15 000 for the service. For travel outside the duty station the consultant will be paid DSA according to COMESA rates.

The contract is set and payable as follows;

20% after submission of Inception report which is of acceptable COMESA standards

30% after submission of draft report which is of acceptable COMESA standards

50% after submission of acceptable COMESA standards final report (after validation).

**ANNEX 2: Expression of Interest Forms**

[A. COVER LETTER FOR THE EXPESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE PROJECT 11](#_Toc267927845)

[B. CURRICULUM VITAE 13](#_Toc267927846)

[C. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL 17](#_Toc267927847)

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# A. COVER LETTER FOR THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE PROJECT

REFERENCE NUMBER: CS/PROC/EDF/8.3/10/2020/08TPL

REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE: **CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)**

[*Location, Date*]

To: COMESA Secretariat

Dear Sirs:

I, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for the ***CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)*** in accordance with your Request for Expression of Interests number *CS/PROC/EDF/8.3/10/2020/08TPL,* dated [*insert date*] for the sum of [*Insert amount(s) in words and figures*]. This amount is inclusive of all expenses deemed necessary for the performance of the contract in accordance with the Terms of Reference requirements.

I hereby declare that all the information and statements made in my CV are true and accept that any misinterpretation contained in it may lead to my disqualification.

My proposal is binding upon me for the period indicated in Paragraph 9(iii) of this Request for Expression of Interest.

I undertake, if my Proposal is accepted, to initiate the consulting services related to the assignment not later than the date indicated in Paragraph 10 of the Request for Expression of Interest, and to be available for the entire duration of the contract as specified in the Terms of Reference.

I understand you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

Yours sincerely,

Signature [*In full and initials*]:

Name and Title of Signatory:

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

***[insert full name]***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Family name:**
 | *[insert the name]* |
| 1. **First names:**
 | *[insert the names in full]* |
| 1. **Date of birth:**
 | *[insert the date]* |
| 1. **Nationality:**
 | *[insert the country or countries of citizenship]* |
|  |  |
| 1. **Physical address:**
2. **Postal address**
3. **Phone:**
4. **E-mail:**
 | *[insert the physical address]**[Insert Postal Address]**[insert the phone and mobile no.]**[Insert E-mail address(es)* |
| 1. **Education:**
 |  |
|  |  |
| **Institution:****[Date from – Date to]** | **Degree(s) or Diploma(s) obtained:** |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[insert the name of the diploma and the specialty/major]* |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[insert the name of the diploma and the specialty/major]* |

**10. Language skills:** (Indicate competence on a scale of 1 to 5) (1 – excellent; 5 – basic)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Language** | **Reading** | **Speaking** | **Writing** |
| *[insert the language]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* |
| *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **11. Membership of professional bodies:**  | *[indicate the name of the professional body]* |
| **12. Other skills:** | *[insert the skills]* |
| **13. Present position:** | *[insert the name]* |
| **14. Years of experience:** | *[insert the no]* |
| **15. Key qualifications:** (Relevant to the assignment)*[insert the key qualifications]* |

**16. Specific experience in the region:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Date from - Date to** |
| *[insert the country]* | *[indicate the month and the year]* |
| *................* | *......................* |
| *[insert the country]* | *[indicate the month and the year]* |

**17. Professional experience:**

| **Date from – Date to** | **Location of the assignment** | **Company& reference person (name & contact details)** | **Position** | **Description** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[indicate the country and the city]* | ***Name of the Company:******Address of the company:******Phone:******Fax:******Email:*** ***Name and title of the reference person from the company:*** | *[indicate the exact name and title and if it was a short term or a long term position]* | ***Name of the Assignment:*** ***Beneficiary of the Assignment:******Brief description of the Assignment:*** ***Responsibilities:*** |
| ................ | …………….. | ……………………. | …………… | ………………………………………………………………………….. |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[indicate the country and the city]* | ***Name of the Company:******Address of the company:******Phone:******Fax:******Email:*** ***Name and title of the reference person from the company:*** | *[indicate the exact name and title and if it was a short term or a long term position]* | ***Name of the Assignment:*** ***Beneficiary of the Assignment:******Brief description of the Assignment:*** ***Responsibilities:*** |

1. **Other relevant information:** (e.g. Publications)

***[insert the details]***

***19. Statement:***

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes myself, my qualifications, and my experience. I understand that any wilful misstatement described herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal, if engaged.

I hereby declare that at any point in time, at the COMESA Secretariat’s request, I will provide certified copies of all documents to prove that I have the qualifications and the professional experience as indicated in points 8 and 14 above**[[1]](#footnote-1),** documents which are attached to this CV as photocopies.

By signing this statement, I also authorize the COMESA Secretariat to contact my previous or current employers indicated at point 14 above, to obtain directly reference about my professional conduct and achievements.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Date: |  |

**ATTACHMENTS:** ***1) Proof of qualifications indicated at point 9***
 ***2) Proof of working experience indicated at point 15***

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# C. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** CS/PROC/EDF/8.3/10/2020/08TPL - CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TRADE INFORMATION DESK OFFICES (TIDOs)

Please insert your Total Financial Offer in both words and figures.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TOTAL FINANCIAL OFFER**  |  |

*[Please insert the Total Financial Offer in words]*.

Signature [*In full and initials*]:

Name and Title of Signatory:

1. ***The proof of stated qualifications shall be in the form of the copies of the degrees and diploma obtained, while for the professional experience the proof shall be either acknowledgement letters from the previous employers or copies of the Purchase Order/ Contract signed with them.***  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)