

COMESA REGIONAL INVESTMENT AGENCY



REQUEST FOR CONSULTANCY FIRM PROPOSALS

**CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO DEVELOP COMESA
INTERACTIVE INVESTMENT MAP**

February 2021

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1. BACKGROUND

COMESA REGIONAL INVESTMENT AGENCY (COMESA RIA)

COMESA Regional Investment Agency was launched in 2006 to promote COMESA Member States and to increase awareness on their investment incentives, opportunities, legislation, practices, major events affecting investments and other relevant information in view of attracting FDI for the sustainable economic development of the COMESA region, in particular infrastructure development.

The objectives set-out in COMESA RIA's Charter are as follows:

- To make COMESA one of the major destinations for regional and international investors while simultaneously enhancing national investment; and
- To carry out other activities in the area of investment promotion, facilitation and advocacy in conformity with the COMESA Treaty.

Moreover, in terms of functions, the Charter mentions:

- Gather and disseminate information including creation and maintenance of a database and website. RIA will collect and disseminate, through publications and its website, detailed information on policies affecting the business environment, cost of doing business, investment procedures, investment opportunities and other relevant information in Member States.
- Identify and promote investment opportunities, with special focus on projects with regional impact; RIA shall identify and promote infrastructure projects and other investment projects with regional impact.
- Provide training and development support for National Investment Promotion Agencies in Member States and facilitate capacity building programmes at a regional level.
- Support the improvement of the national investment environments in Member States by identifying best practices. RIA shall identify constraints in the investment environment of Member States and make recommendations as appropriate for their removal.
- Promote COMESA as a common investment area; RIA will proactively promote the COMESA and Common Investment Area through several activities including image-building activities abroad, investment missions, website, advertisement and tailor-made public relations programmes.

Beyond what is stated in its Charter, COMESA RIA's working missions since its inception have been to promote the COMESA region as an attractive investment destination and to build the capacity of COMESA Member States Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) to attract investment.

Furthermore, while COMESA RIA's main stakeholders are COMESA Member States' IPAs as reflected in its Board of Director composition, COMESA RIA's main targets have been private sector and main final beneficiaries the general COMESA population.

The COMESA Region

COMESA is Africa's largest Regional Economic Community. It was notified as a Regional Trade Agreement (RTA) to the World Trade Organisation under the Enabling Clause on

29th of June 1995. As of 2019, COMESA became a fully functioning free trade area. The COMESA Common Investment Area (CCIA) was launched in 2007 and its Customs Union in 2009, both of which are yet to be operational. Moreover, COMESA is working towards becoming a Common Market and a full Economic Community. COMESA is one of the eight regional economic communities recognised by the African Union as the building blocks of the wider African Economic Community, and of the Continental Free Trade Area which was launched in June 2015. COMESA Member States are Burundi, Comoros, DR Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Secretariat and the European Union (EU) in November 2019 signed a Contribution Agreement of EUR 8.8million for the implementation of the COMESA Regional Enterprise Competitiveness and Access to Markets Programme (RECAMP).

The RECAMP is a four-year action that aims at contributing to increased private sector participation in regional and global value chains. The Programme Overall objective is to contribute to the deepening of regional economic integration in the COMESA region through enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector with the Specific objective to increase private sector participation in sustainable regional and global value chains by increasing access to markets and improving business and investment climate.

CURRENT CONTEXT AND COMESA RIA'S ROLE

Globally, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows recorded a 13% decline in 2018, in value terms, from US\$ 1.5 trillion in 2017 to 1.3 trillion in 2018; making it a third annual decline in a row (World Investment Report 2019). The reduction in inflows was mainly attributed to the United States' multinational enterprises (MNEs) repatriating earnings from abroad, to take advantage of the country's introduced tax reforms in 2017.

Despite a decline in global FDI inflows, Africa posted an increase of 10.9% in 2018. This was from US\$ 41.4 billion in 2017 to US\$ 45.9 billion in 2018. Overall, FDI inflows to the COMESA region contracted marginally by 0.5% between 2017 and 2018. In value terms, this was from US\$ 20.1 billion in 2017 to US\$ 19.9 billion in 2018, giving COMESA a share of about 43% of the total FDI inflows into Africa.

The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a dramatic decline in FDI flows worldwide. According to UNCTAD, FDI inflows collapsed in 2020 by 42% from USD1.5 trillion in 2019 to an estimated USD859 billion, reaching the lowest level since 1990s. FDI inflows in Africa was declined by 18% during the same period. UNCTAD also expected that FDI flows to remain weak due to uncertainty over the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 5 – 10% decline in 2021. This is mainly due to the mitigation measures that countries have imposed such as lockdowns and travel restrictions among others. In response, countries and Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) have taken swift measures to support and protect both domestic and foreign investments. The measures include moving part of services online and granting additional incentives to investors in specific sectors, among others.

It is now important for IPAs, regional and international organizations in the FDI field to prepare for the post-COVID-19 era. COMESA Regional Investment Agency (RIA) has been playing its part. Its activities – investment promotion and capacity – building of COMESA IPAs – served as enablers which had indirect impacts on the generation of investments in the region and the ability of Member States to generate investments. An important mandate of COMESA RIA is promote investment opportunities/projects

available in the region at both country and regional levels. In doing so, COMESA RIA has been collaborating with COMESA NIPAs and COMESA Secretariat to collect, categorize, publish and promote investment opportunities available in COMESA Member States, as regional ones. The collected investment opportunities were designed in a form of an annual publication that is being circulated among FDI stakeholders including potential investors through RIA's organized events, COMESA RIA's partners' events, RIA's online platform and social media channels. Furthermore, online campaigns were designed targeted potential investors per sector.

However, given the fact that printed promotional materials often loses its relevance in a short period of time due the frequent changes of data included such as IPA contact information, removal of investment opportunity due to changes in country priorities or the conversion of an opportunity to an actual project, among other reasons. In addition to the limited reporting capacity which is in most cases limited to the number of copies disseminated.

An interactive investment map could serve as an ideal cost effective and efficient alternative for the printed promotional materials. The proposed investment map should serve as a database of investment opportunities in a friendly and appealing format that allows potential users to view, search and select investment opportunities available in a specific sector/or more in a given Member State. It should also give analysis of all investment opportunities per sector, investment required, type of project (Greenfield, Expansion, etc.), among other criteria. In addition to an overview of investment climate in COMESA region and its individual Member States.

Given the above, COMESA RIA developed an online investment map that includes basic functionalities such as investment opportunity basic information, basic search functionality by sector and country. Also, RIA developed a Knowledge Management Centre (MKC) which includes a library of reports, FDI studies, capacity building workshops' training materials that is accessible by COMESA RIA and COMESA Member NIPAs to ensure the sustainability of its capacity building interventions. Both, the Investment Map and KMC, exist on COMESA RIA website as separate tabs.

For COMESA RIA, the investment map is expected to serve as a promotional platform and an important reporting tool through enhanced analytics such as number of views per opportunities, requests made by interested investors, proposals submitted to Member NIPAs, etc., which ultimately will help RIA in focusing its efforts on the most appealing opportunities and advise Member States accordingly.

The proposed interactive investment should include, but not limited to the following:

- Investment opportunity profiles that include, at a minimum, project name, description, location, promoting agency, project stage/contractual arrangement, investment required, etc.
- Advanced reporting to RIA's stakeholders that includes results of RIA's efforts in promoting available investment opportunities such as number of views by opportunity, destination of view, number of inquiries submitted per opportunity, etc.
- Newsfeeds, success stories and newsletters

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CONSULTANCY

The objective of this consultancy is the upgrade of COMESA RIA's existing online investment map that includes both high-level country-specific snapshot and regional investment opportunities/projects available in COMESA region and its Member States. The online investment map shall serve as a proactive promotion tool aims at

disseminating investment opportunities and key investment related data and information about COMESA region and its Member States' business and investment environment including laws, regulations, incentives, and other competitive advantages. It is expected that investment map will project the aforementioned information in a visually appealing and friendly manner (tables, graphs, etc.). It is also expected that the map will allow potential users to search and sort out investment opportunities by sector, country or other project specific information, and identify different opportunities in different Member States. It is COMESA RIA's responsibility to avail all data and information needed for the investment map including investment opportunities/projects and COMESA region and its Member States' business and investment environment profiles.

It is also expected that the interactive investment map will serve as a reporting tool for COMESA RIA, allowing RIA to highlight key statistics including number of views, investment proposals submitted, number of visits, destination of visits, duration of visit, etc.

This consultancy must be implemented in full collaboration with COMESA RIA.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Knowing that, current investment map was developed using WordPress, the consultant/consultancy firm is expected to deliver the following:

- a) Review the architecture and design of COMESA RIA's existing online investment map.
- b) Upgrade the COMESA RIA's current online investment map to allow enhanced presentation of the investment opportunity/projects' profiles, as well as links general economic data and information (reasons to invest, trade and FDI statistics, laws, regulations and incentives) existing in COMESA RIA website.
- c) The investment map must demonstrate the following features:
 - o **Dashboard and Investment Map for Public Users:** This will enable stakeholders to go to the website and see potential investment opportunities in all COMESA Member States.
 - o **Advanced Dashboard and Investment Map for Registered Users:** The investment map will provide a special login for key "data partners" and stakeholders. This login will "unlock" additional tools to filter the dashboard and generate downloads;
 - o A visually appealing and user-friendly design and architecture based on the information available at COMESA RIA;
 - o System build-out based on an agreed upon design and functionalities;
 - o An appropriate front-end for user interface that a search feature for users and a back-end that is easy to update to include additional data if needed.
 - o Demonstrate the capacity to generate tailor-made report based on user requests including selected investment opportunities in specific sectors and/or countries;
 - o The placement of Hyperlinks to each Member State IPA's website;
 - o Be compatible with the COMESA RIA online portal; and
 - o Provide recommendations for the maintenance of the platform.
- d) Technical (system administrators and user) training for COMESA RIA staff and/or third party on the use of the investment map including (uploading content, updating data categories, generating reports, etc.). in addition to a training and user manuals.

4. WORK PLAN, SCHEDULE AND REPORTING

The consultancy will be undertaken between 15th of April 2021 and 1st of July 2021. The reporting structure will be:

- Report (1); submission of an inception report **two weeks after signing the contract**. The inception report shall include the investment map draft upgraded functionalities, workplan, and timelines. It shall also cover all foreseen challenges, next steps and recommendation that may result of the inception held between the consultancy firm, COMESA RIA and other stakeholders prior to the inception report submission date.
- Report (2); submission of draft outputs **four weeks after the inception report** that include the following information
 - I. Designed platform and architecture including landing page for the investment map showing at least 3 investment opportunity profiles for 10 Member States along with a physical dashboard which updates automatically updated based on the number of projects and total investment value, etc existing on the map, total investment required, number of projects per project sector and region/location, etc. (COMESA RIA shall provide all projects required)
 - II. Identification of data requirements till project finalization.
- Report (3); demonstration of the fully designed interactive investment map **four weeks after the approval of report (2)**; landing page, 21 investment opportunities taking into consideration comments of RIA and other stakeholders on was submitted in report (2), in addition to map testing and functionalities.

All report must be submitted to COMESA RIA as: one hard copy and one electronic file in Microsoft word format and one electronic file in PDF.

a) COMMENCEMENT AND COMPLETION OF WORK

The assessment is expected to commence on 15th of April 2021.

5. ELIGIBILITY OF CONSULTANTS

This consultancy is open only to firms/companies which are effectively established in the COMESA Region, ACP and EU member countries with sufficient experience in undertaking tasks and possessing the qualifications stated above in Clause 6 above.

6. REQUIREMENTS

The assignment will require a consultancy firm with the following qualifications and skills

- Demonstrated experience in developing ICT planning and IS analysis and digital platform design, Google maps and/or GIS planning of GIS data tools.
- Demonstrated experience in web design trends and techniques.
- Demonstrated knowledge in WordPress.
- Demonstrated experience in developing websites and investment maps for Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) in developing markets especially in Africa and Middle East.
- Demonstrated experience in investment promotion and developing promotional campaigns with particular focus on location/project marketing.

7. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

The technical proposal will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

| No. | Criteria | Score |
|----------------|---|-------|
| 1. | Adherence to TOR | 30 |
| 2. | Methodology | 30 |
| 3. | Relevant Experience (Websites development) | 25 |
| 4. | Relevant experience in investment promotion and marketing and media campaigns | 15 |
| Total Score | | 100 |
| Weighted Score | | 80 |

As far as the financial offer is concerned, it will be a weighted score of 20 over 100.

8. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications can be submitted through email or courier services and should be addressed to:

COMESA Regional investment Agency
3 Salah Salem St, Ministry of investment building
Back Building, 4th Floor
Salah Salem St, Nasr City
Cairo, Egypt

Attention: Mr. Mahmoud ElMahgoub
Tel: +202 240 55 428
Fax: +202 240 55 421
Email: mmahgoub@comesaria.org

Please note all tenders must have the tender reference number clearly labelled.

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9. CLOSING DATE OF TENDER

Tenders must be submitted to COMESA RIA by 15th March 2021.

10. AWARD OF CONTRACTS

COMESA RIA reserves the right to wholly or partially reject or award these contracts to any bidder and has no obligation to award this tender to the lowest bidder

11. PRICING

All prices MUST be indicated in United States Dollars.

There will be no price variation contract after signing of contract except upon a mutual written agreement between the two prices.

The price quoted shall be covering all the services required by COMESA RIA as contained in this Request for Proposal. Prices must be inclusive of all taxes and charges.

Prices must be valid for 30 days from the date of close of tender.

12. PAYMENT

Bidders are required to indicate their professional fees in their offers and their payment terms and conditions.

13. TECHNICAL QUERIES

For any technical queries related to specifications of work or TOR, kindly contact mmahgoub@comesaria.org .

14. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency in English is mandatory since the language of this tender is English. Knowledge of one of the other COMESA languages (French) would be preferred.