

Approved  
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Culleapure



THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

# Consultancy to Develop COMESA Communication Strategy 2021 - 2025

Terms of Reference for a Consultancy

## **A. Background**

1. The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is a regional organization of 21 countries that have come together with the goal of creating a fully integrated and internationally competitive and unified region in which goods, services, capital and persons move freely. The COMESA Treaty sets the agenda to realise the goal of integration through development of trade and investment in addition to other cross cutting sectors and activities. However, the fulfillment of the complete COMESA mandate is a long-term objective. For COMESA to become more effective as an institution it has defined its priorities within its mandate, over the medium term as, *"Promotion of Regional Integration through Trade and Investment"*.
2. COMESA's current strategy to stimulate growth is economic prosperity through regional integration. With its 21 member States, a population of over 583 million and a combined GDP of US \$778 billion, COMESA form a major marketplace for both internal and external traders. The region covers vast areas of Africa a total combined area of about 12.6 million square kilometers. With the complex dynamics inherent in regional integration efforts ranging from size, cultural and linguistic diversities, national versus regional interests among others, the achievement of the vision of COMESA is thus dependent upon public and political support and participation. The need to gain and deepen such understanding and awareness cannot therefore be gainsaid.
3. COMESA recognizes that public awareness is a critical component of achieving the aspirations of the Treaty and the full realization of regional integration agenda. This entails the dissemination of information and raising awareness and level of knowledge of the public which is a prerequisite in mobilizing their participation. COMESA will use multiple communication channels to disseminate knowledge of regional integration, popularize the MTSP 2021-2025 and advise stakeholders—including COMESA staff and the public—of key activities and their benefits. It follows therefore that raising public understanding and awareness is an essential role for COMESA to ensure that the knowledge generated in the implementation of regional integration is widely disseminated and contributes to policy and decision-making processes. In addition, it ensures that regional integration issues are integrated into broader national development objectives and planning, including the attainment of the Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. Pursuant to this goal, COMESA intends to develop a Communication Policy and Strategy for the next five years. The planned Strategy will spell out the broad strategic as well as policy direction that COMESA should take into account in communicating with all its stakeholder audiences spread across a wide geographical area. The overriding intention is to stipulate both the policy and strategic considerations that ought to govern the organization's communication Agenda in the foreseeable future. Hence the document is expected to remain dynamic due to the passage of time and an ever changing social, economic and political landscape and adoption of digital technologies including the new media. The document will spell out the goals, major directions and standards that are expected to govern both the internal and external communication.
5. Pursuant to this goal, COMESA intends to engage a consultant to develop a Corporate Communications Strategy.

## **B: Objective of the consultancy**



The main objective of the consultancy is to develop a comprehensive five-year communications strategy with guidelines for knowledge sharing, public awareness and publicity. The specific objectives are to;

- i. Propose innovative ways to enhance the communication capacity of the COMESA Secretariat to package and communicate effective messages to the key stakeholders;
- ii. Outline the practical approaches in optimizing the new media (digital media) in promoting COMESA regional integration programmes.
- iii. Identify and map the key stakeholders (institutions and individuals) from member States government, civil society, and the private sector who can influence policy, institutional and behavioral change with regard to regional integration's present and potential contribution to economic and social development.
- iv. Identify the type of information/messages needed by each of the key stakeholder groups, and the effective pathways for communication including digital communications.
- v. Identify appropriate strategies to share impacts, lessons learnt and best practices of the COMESA programmes with identified audiences/stakeholders through a range of communications channels including the entire range of both the conventional and the new media;
- vi. Outline approaches to assess, document and demonstrate the impact of regional integration programmes.
- vii. Ensure that various publics understand COMESA's core business and thereby promote buy-in wherever necessary, promote stakeholder engagement and demonstrate achievements.

### **C: Specific tasks and mode of work**

The consultant will assist the Secretariat to develop the COMESA Communications Strategic, 2021 - 2025. The specific tasks and mode of work include the following:

- a. Review the previous COMESA Communication strategy, 2016-2020.
- b. Analyze existing good practices in communication and visibility strategies in the region and various related documents.
- c. Review the implementation of programmes, identifying and highlighting possible strategic approaches, and providing recommendations for creating visibility of these programmes among stakeholders.
- d. Outline the details of the methodological approaches to be used, while taking into account the following broad processes:
  - i. An outline of key stakeholders (audiences) and their key messages
  - ii. Channels and tools of communication
  - iii. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms
  - iv. A review of relevant literature.
  - v. Implementation Plan (Outputs, activities, resources, responsible parties)
  - vi. Budget

### **D. Methodology and Approach**

The consultant will apply the following methods;

- Desk review of relevant policy documents including but not limited to COMESA Treaty, the COMESA MTSP, COMESA Communication Strategy 2016-2020, Communication strategies for comparable organizations, among others.
- Hold consultations with key players such as program directors and technical staff of the Secretariat staff
- Present the draft strategy for validation.

#### **E. Deliverables**

Under the overall direction of the Secretary General and the supervision of the Head of Corporate Communications, the Consultant will produce;

- Concept Paper outlining recommended approach for developing the corporate Communication Strategy for COMESA (to be provided immediately after signing the contract, and prior to commencing the actual process of developing the Communication Strategy);
- A draft strategy report that includes the objectives, audiences, messages, communications techniques and tools, activities, implementation plan (outputs, activities, resources, responsible parties), and monitoring and evaluation matrix (including indicators).
- Validation sessions with COMESA Secretariat staff
- Final communication strategy

#### **F. Timetable**

The consultancy is expected to be undertaken in 60 days planning and scheduling of specific activities carried out in consultation with the Secretariat and in accordance with an agreed schedule.

#### **G. Consultant's profile**

The consultant should have the following qualifications:

- At least eight years professional experience in communication and development, with demonstrable knowledge of regional integration dynamics
- Previous experience in the design of corporate communication strategies.
- A Master's Degree in Mass Communication/Public Relations or relevant field.
- Possess a good understanding of regional economic communities.

#### **H. Location**

The Consultant will work off-site.

#### **I. Remuneration**

The budget for this consultancy is USD10,000.00 all-inclusive.