COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND

**SOUTHERN AFRICA**

# 

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**(CONSULTING SERVICES)**

**EOI Ref**: **EH/08/12/22**

**DECEMBER 2022**

**CONSULTANCY TO RE-DESIGN THE PASSENGER AND CARGO MANIFEST SYSTEM**

***Individual Consultant – to re-design the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System (PCMS).***

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) attained the free trade status in November 2000 opening a window for the large and established companies who could obtain certificates of origin as the major beneficiaries of the FTA. Small-scale cross border traders were not benefiting as expected despite being eligible for duty free trade hence the development of the STR to bring them on board.

Nevertheless, the COMESA region recognizes the importance of cross border trade, including small scale and informal trade flows. Small-scale cross border trade contributes significantly to income generation and job creation for a large part of COMESA’s population, particularly women, many of whom have limited alternative options for income generation. Small-scale cross border traders also contribute to regional food security, through moving food items from regions of surplus to deficit and remote areas. The COMESA region has developed policies and mechanisms to facilitate cross border trade, in particular of small-scale traders, such as the Simplified Trade Regime (STR)[[1]](#footnote-1), COMESA Trade Information Desks[[2]](#footnote-2) (TIDs) and the COMESA Green Pass[[3]](#footnote-3), among others.

COMESA, since 2010, is implementing the Simplified Trade Regime (STR) which is being implemented in eight Member States namely: Burundi, D R Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The aim of the STR is to facilitate small-scale cross border trade at selected border posts, enable them to benefit from the COMESA preferential tariffs and simplify the process of clearing goods at the border posts. The STR has been enhanced over the years by reviewing the threshold from USD500 in 2010 to USD2000 in 2014, introducing the Trade Information Desk Offices, and piloting the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System at the selected borders in 2012.

COMESA has received funding under the 11th EDF to support activities under the COMESA Cross Border Trade Initiative - Facilitating Small Scale Trade across borders which aims to increase formal small-scale cross border trade flows in the COMESA/tripartite region leading to higher revenue collection by governments at the borders as well as increased security and higher incomes for small scale cross border traders. The main beneficiaries of the Programme are the small-scale cross border traders, majority of which are women.

Result Area One of the Action seeks to ensure that *‘specific trade facilitation instruments for small scale traders are designed and effectively implemented at selected border areas and in the COMESA/tripartite region’*.

Based on the findings of the study that was done in 2021 under the program, which reviewed the design and functioning of the PCMS, the COMESA Secretariat is seeking the services of an individual Consultant with expertise in customs, trade, transport or private sector to re-design the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System (PCMS) that was piloted at Chirundu Border between Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2012.

1. **BACKGROUND**

The cross-border international trade by small scale traders is usually carried out by small scale traders who carry the goods by bicycles, pushcarts or by buses and trucks. Where the traders cross the borders by bus, it takes a long time for all the passengers and their cargo to be cleared by immigration and customs. Realizing these long delays, the COMESA Secretariat designed a Passenger and Cargo Manifest System (PCMS) whereby the details of the passengers boarding the bus as well as their cargo are captured at the place where the bus commences its journey, and the information is sent to the border officials in advance. When the bus arrives at the border, the border officials will already have information on what the bus is carrying and that will facilitate risk profiling and quicker clearance. What is at the heart of the success and credibility of the system is whether there are incentives for passengers to truthfully disclose their cargo to the person requesting for the information at the bus terminus on the one hand, and whether the border officials will trust that the advance information on the passengers and their cargo is indeed correct. Fieldwork carried out during the design of the Small-Scale Cross Border Trade project found that Customs did not have trust in the PCMS and hence conducted a 100% physical examination of passengers’ cargo on every bus.

A review of the PCMS that was carried out to understand the design and operations of the piloted PCMS with a view to establishing whether the PCMS has utility as a trade facilitating instrument for small scale cross border traders found out that indeed it has utility to facilitate small scale cross-border trade.

Most of stakeholders interviewed, ninety percent (90%), reported that, if re-designed, incorporating their recommendations, the PCMS has potential to facilitate trade and improve Small-scale Cross Border Trade data capture that Governments require for sound policy interventions to improve the plight of the Small-Scale Traders. In addition, traders will spend less time to clear their goods at the border because of pre-clearance of goods before the bus arrives at the border.

However, there are some aspects of the design of the piloted PCMS that may need to be tightened to make the instrument more effective and acceptable to the stakeholders that include:

1. Need for legislative provision for the PCMS in the participating Member States.
2. Need for PCMS to be automated and linked the Customs Systems of the Member States.
3. The PCMS form to be simplified.
4. Define periods by which the advance information is supposed to reach the border before the means of transport arrives.
5. Need to ensure that the information captured on the PCMS form is accurate; and
6. Adequate staffing levels for experts collecting the information at the commencement of journey for the means of transport.

The small-scale cross border trade that takes place between Zambia and Zimbabwe through the Chirundu border is largely by cross border traders who use bus transport and hence Chirundu is a natural border for piloting the PCMS.

1. **OBJECTIVE**

The aim of this consultancy assignment is to re-design the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System (PCMS) which was piloted at Chirundu border between Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2012 with a view to lessening clearance time for traders travelling by bus thus promoting Small-scale Cross Border Trade in the COMESA region.

1. **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Consultant will perform the following tasks:

* 1. Utilize, among others, the findings of the study on the Review the functioning of the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System that was piloted between Zambia and Zimbabwe at Chirundu in 2012 and the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System that is being implemented by Zimbabwe with a view to identifying the weaknesses to be addressed in the re-design of the system.
  2. Re-design to have a more user friendly and appropriate form to be used in the PCMS.
  3. Determine the appropriate time before the arrival of the means of transport that the passenger and cargo information should reach the border officials.
  4. Identify the appropriate personnel /institution to collect the data for the PCMS at the commencement place for the means of transport and share it with border officials.
  5. Design a tracking system to go with the PCMS and interfacing procedures with the Customs Management Systems.
  6. Ensure that the design of the PCMS is aligned to the policy, legal, institutional, IT and other aspects that would facilitate PCMS practical implementation and make proposals for consideration by relevant authorities.
  7. Recommend incentives that would make the stakeholders attracted to using the PCMS.
  8. Engage a cross section of stakeholders, such as central governments, immigration, customs and trade policy makers, border officials, cross border traders, cross border traders’ associations, transporters, among others. These engagements will provide an opportunity for the consultant to gain firsthand experience and understanding of how the PCMS should be designed in order for it to gain acceptance from the stakeholders.
  9. Develop procedures/Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) /Processes for the PCMS

Develop a draft implementation strategy and road map for the PCMS

1. **DELIVERABLES**

a.Inception Report: within two weeks of signing contract

b. Draft Report: within two and half months from signing contract

c. Draft Implementation strategy and road map for the PCMS

d. Presentations / briefings at COMESA and related forums

e. Final report, within six months of signing contract.

**6. ELIGIBILITY OF CONSULTANT**

This consultancy is open to reputable international and local consultants from COMESA member States that have sufficient experience to undertake this assignment.

**7. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The assignment is expected to be undertaken within six Months.

**8. REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

The consultant will be under the overall supervision of the Director of Trade and Customs and under the direct supervision of the Team Leader/Cross Border Trade Expert.

**9. QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE**

The successful consultant should have a minimum of the following qualifications and experience:

1. An advanced university degree in Economics, Customs, transport economics, law or business management or a related field.
2. Knowledge and expertise on border management, trade and customs, transport, including policy formulation.
3. A minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience working for Government or an Inter-Governmental Organization or private sector in fields related to customs and trade or transport.
4. Proven previous working experience consisting of involvement in assessments, evaluations, and/or reviews in relevant technical areas.
5. Excellent written and spoken English.
6. Experience of similar/related work done in the COMESA region is a distinct advantage.

**10.** TheCommon Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services for a duration of six (6) months. Interested consultants must provide information through their Curriculum Vitae indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc...).

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with COMESA rules and procedures.

Interested consultants may obtain further information by writing to [**procurement@comesa.int**](mailto:procurement@comesa.int) with a copy to [**ehara@comesa.int**](mailto:smwesigwa@comesa.int) during office hours from Monday to Friday, 08:00 hours to 17:30 hours.

Expressions of interest must be emailed to [**procurement@comesa.int**](mailto:procurement@comesa.int) with a copy to [**ehara@comesa.int**](mailto:ehara@comesa.int) **by 15th JANUARY 2023 at 12.00hrs, Lusaka Time (C.A.T) and mention “EOI – Consultancy to re-design the Passenger and Cargo Manifest System (PCMS).**

**10. Pricing**

The budget for this consultancy will be **USD 25,000 (all inclusive)**.

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

**11. Payment**:

Payment terms and conditions shall be as per COMESA’s procurement Rules and Regulations payment guidelines.

1. The STR is an innovative trade facilitation instrument designed for small traders who regularly cross the border and transact in consignments of low values. The STR exempt small consignments on agreed common lists from customs duties and other related taxes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Trade information Desks are structures established under COMESA STR at various border points to provide facilitation services and relevant trade information to traders crossing the borders. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The COMESA Green Pass is a system of certification to support trade in agricultural commodities. The Green Pass seeks to promote high value markets by guaranteeing the safety and quality of the commodity. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)