COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND

**SOUTHERN AFRICA**

#

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**(CONSULTING SERVICES)**

**EOI Ref**: **EH/19/07/23-01**

**JULY 2023**

**CONSULTANCY TO ASSESS POTENTIAL DATA SCIENCE UTILIZATION IN COMESA REGIONAL INTEGRATION POLICY MAKING.**

***Individual Consultant – to assess potential data science utilization in COMESA regional integration policy making.***

1. **INTRODUCTION**

COMESA is the largest of the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) recognized by the African Union, bringing together 21 Members States, with a total population of 560 million people. The trade integration agenda of COMESA includes a functioning Free Trade Area (FTA) which currently includes 15 Member States, various trade and transport facilitation instruments, the creation of a Customs Union as well as the progressive liberalization of trade in services, investments, and the free movement of persons in the region.

The COMESA Council of Ministers approved the COMESA Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) 2021-2025. The COMESA RSDS objectives are to strengthen statistics that support all pillars of the new Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2021-2025, and secondly, to strengthen strategic partnerships in statistical development. The COMESA RSDS second strategic objective provides for undertaking applied statistical research and collaboration on areas of mutual interest with international and regional partners.

To initiate this work, the Secretariat procured consultancy services to develop applied statistical research proposals that will inform the preparation of the work plan for the duration of the RSDS tenure (2021–2025). One of the key thematic areas of statistical research on emerging issues that was considered in the development of proposals draws from *Strategic goal 3*: *Strengthen the building of statistical capacity in the region* and *Strategic goal 4*: *Strengthen technologies as enablers for the statistical system.* Within these strategic goals, leveraging big data for regional integration policy making was identified as a key area of research with the potential for strengthening capacity and technologies as enablers of the statistical work of the COMESA. Enablers of the statistical work of the COMESA.

1. **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this research project is to exploit the use of big data and to demonstrate its potential for deployment to support the provision of useful insights into COMESA’s regional integration policy. The main policy issues to be supported through the leveraging of big data as are underpinned by the four strategic pillars of COMESA, namely, market integration, physical integration/connectivity, productive integration, and gender and social integration, whose overarching objective is the achievement of sustainable economic and social progress in Member States.

1. **SCOPE OF WORK**

Under the direct supervision of the Head of Statistics Unit and the overall supervision of the Assistant Secretary General - Programmes, the consultant will be required to undertake the following tasks:

1. Develop an Inception report highlighting roadmap for conducting the assignment.
2. Prepare an inventory of the potential big data sources that are relevant to the statistical needs of the 2021-2025 COMESA Medium Term Strategic Plan.
3. Conduct a qualitative assessment of identified big data sources covering among others an assessment of their stability over time and coverage relative to alternative existing data sources in use including identifying any specific gaps, feasibility of accessing the relevant data, and the role of business and/or administrative data sources in their quality assurance.
4. Examine the technical and legal aspects of accessing the identified big data sources in COMESA Member states.
5. Discuss the prospective set of IT tools and experiments for accessing the diverse types of identified big data.
6. **DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The assignment shall be completed within a period of four(4) months.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1st Month  | 2nd Month | 3rd Month  | 4th Month  |
| Prepare an inventory of the potential big data sources |   |   |   |   |
| Conduct a qualitative assessment of identified big data sources |   |   |   |   |
| Examine the technical and legal aspects of accessing the identified big data sources |   |   |   |   |
| Discuss the prospective set of IT tools and experiments for accessing the diverse types of identified big data |   |   |   |   |
| Preparation of final technical report |   |   |   |   |

 **5. QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE**

The successful consultant should have the following qualifications and experience:

* A minimum of a master’s degree in Statistics, Economics, Demography, Geographical Information Systems, Mathematics, Data Science, Computer Science, Computer Engineering or any field of study related to data science and analytics.

 **Experience**

* 5 years of experience working at the national and/or international level applying data science, data analytics or data mining techniques is a requirement.
* Experience in application of data science techniques in the compilation and analysis of official statistics as well as non-traditional sources of statistics.
* Experience performing complex data exploitation on large volumes of data to provide insights.
* Experience data science technical skills such as prototyping and developing data exploitation capabilities using Python, R etc and use of libraries for data science.
* Proficient knowledge of word processing, spreadsheets, presentation tools, and Internet.

**6.** 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 four (4) 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** with a copy to **ehara@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** with a copy to **ehara@comesa.int** **by 11th AUGUST 2023 at 12.00hrs, Lusaka Time (C.A.T) and mention “EOI – consultancy *to assess potential data science utilization in COMESA regional integration policy making*.**

**7. PRICING**

 The budget for this consultancy will be **USD 18,000 (all inclusive)**.

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

**8. Payment**:

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