**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**SELECTION OF INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** **CS/PROC/EU /SC.01**

**REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE:** **TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO** **CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIORITY NTBs AND RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE IN RWANDA**

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

**CONSULTANCY TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIORITY NTBs AND RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE IN RWANDA**

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 **EURO 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. **“CS/PROC/EU /SC.01 CONSULTANCY TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIORITY NTBs AND RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE IN RWANDA”** should be emailed to the following address:

[***tenders@comesa.int***](mailto:tenders@comesa.int)

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

***19th October 2023 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** | Academic Qualifications | 20 |
| 2 | Understanding the Assigment and Methodology | 20 |
| 3 | Skills and experience relevant to assignment | 35 |
| 4 | Regional experience | 25 |
|  | **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 3 working days prior to deadline indicated in the paragraph 6 above, from:

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

Contact person: ***Sandra M Chola and Alice Twizeye***

E-mail: [***SChola@comesa.int***](mailto:SChola@comesa.int)***;***  **ATwizeye@comesa.int** [***SMmwesigwa@comesa.int***](mailto:SMmwesigwa@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 7 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:** 28th September 2023

**ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. **BACKGROUND**

COMESA through its NTB Regional Monitoring Forum Steering Committee Meeting in 2021 had presented the work plan and requested partner states to submit the request under NTB implementation for Strategy for elimination of NTBs. Furthermore, COMESA had granted support for Rwanda to carry out a study on the impact of priority NTBs and restrictions to trade in Rwanda.

The financial support availed to countries derived under the 11th EDF Trade Facilitation Programme and shall support Rwanda to implement some of the critical activities under the strategy for elimination of NTBs developed in 2019.

1. **OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT**

The consultant will provide insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by SMEs in the country, as well as inform policymakers about effective measures to support the growth and sustainability of SMEs in the face of NTBs and restrictions to trade. The objectives are as follow:

1. Identify and document the types of NTBs faced by SMEs in Rwanda, including but note limited to, regulations, administrative procedures, certification requirements, or market access barriers.
2. Quantify the economic impact of prioritized NTBs on the financial performance, profitability, and growth of SMEs in Rwanda.
3. Assess the effect of NTBs on SMEs' ability to access domestic and international markets, including the cost of compliance with NTB requirements and the barriers to entry faced by SMEs.
4. Determine the specific NTBs that disproportionately affect certain sectors or industries within the SME community in Rwanda.
5. Investigate the strategies adopted by SMEs in Rwanda to mitigate the adverse impact of NTBs, such as seeking alternative markets, engaging in lobbying efforts, or forming industry associations.
6. Examine the effectiveness of existing government policies and support mechanisms in addressing NTB-related challenges faced by SMEs.
7. Identify success stories and best practices where SMEs in Rwanda have successfully overcome NTBs and provide recommendations based on these examples.
8. Propose policy recommendations and reforms that can help alleviate the burden of NTBs on SMEs in Rwanda and enhance their competitiveness.
9. **DELIVERABLES**

The deliverables shall constituent the following;

1. Research Report: A detailed report summarizing the findings of the assessment aligned with the objectives, including thorough data analysis, observations, recommendations, and conclusions.
2. Executive Summary: A concise overview of the assessment's main findings, recommendations, and implications for policy and decision-makers.
3. Data Analysis: Analysis of data collected during the assessment, which could be presented in tables, graphs, charts, or other visual representations for clarity.
4. Case Studies: In-depth case studies showcasing the impact of NTBs on specific SMEs operating in Rwanda, highlighting their experiences, challenges, success stories, and potential solutions.
5. Recommendations: Actionable recommendations aimed at addressing the identified NTBs and improving the business environment for SMEs in Rwanda.
6. Policy Briefs: Concise policy briefs summarizing the assessment's findings, recommendations, and implications tailored for policymakers, advocacy groups, and relevant stakeholders to use.
7. Workshops or Training Sessions: Organizing workshops or training sessions where the findings of the assessment can be presented to SMEs, government officials, and other relevant stakeholders for validation.
8. Awareness Materials: Development of awareness materials such as brochures, flyers, infographics, or videos aimed at raising awareness of the impact of NTBs on SMEs in Rwanda from the study among stakeholders and the public.
9. Technical assistance: Offering technical assistance to SMEs, including practical guidance and support in addressing some of the identified NTBs.
10. Conduct awareness of NTB reporting Mechanism: ensure all NTBs assessed pass through reporting mechanism to track progress and impact.

These deliverables would provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of NTBs on SMEs in Rwanda and offer actionable solutions to improve the business environment for them.

1. **COMPETENCE AND EXPERTISE OF THE REQUIRED FIRM**
2. **General Qualification**

**Education**: Master’s Degree in International Trade, Economics, Trade facilitation, Business, or related fields.

1. **Professional experience:**

* At least 7 years of experience in international trade and trade facilitation.
* At least 5 years of professional experience in Trade in Goods, implementation of international and regional trade agreements (WTO TF, SPS and TBT)
* Five (5) Years’ Experience in analytical works and economic analysis especially on NTBs
* The firm should demonstrate with certificates of completion of at least three (3) similar assignments/projects.
* The firm should demonstrate broader understanding of NTBs and Trade Policy.
* The firm should present a group of competent staff with good track record composed of project managers, appraisal, finance, analysis, and marketing.
* Excellent writing, editing, reporting and oral communication skills in English

1. **DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The assignment is expected to be implemented within the period of 1st October 2023 – 31st December 2023. The total number of estimated days is 90 working days.

The assignment requires travelling to and within Rwanda as the study implies interviews with all relevant stakeholders and onsite research and a work plan will be developed and agreed with MINICOM at the inception of the project during the negotiation.

**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/EU /SC.01

**REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE**: **- “TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIORITY NTBs AND RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE IN RWANDA”**

To: COMESA Secretariat

Dear Sirs:

I, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for the in accordance with your Request for Expression of Interests number *CS/PROC/EDF/SC/01* **TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIORITY NTBs AND RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE IN RWANDA** *,* 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/COM /SC/01- **CONSULTANCY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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)