Contractor Opening No.: ITC/CIC/154/2023

The International Trade Centre is looking for a:

**Trade Facilitation Expert**

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<th>Division/Section:</th>
<th>Division of Market Development, Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business Section (DMD/TFPB)</th>
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<td>Type of assignment:</td>
<td>International Consultant</td>
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<td>Type of contract:</td>
<td>Delivery contract</td>
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<td>Duty Station:</td>
<td>Home Based</td>
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<td>Duration of assignment</td>
<td>3 months, 17 September – 16 December 2023</td>
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<td>Application period:</td>
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**Terms of Reference**

**BACKGROUND**

The International Trade Centre (ITC) has a unique mandate in the United Nations system to promote increased competitiveness of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing, transition and least developed countries and assisting them to better use trade as a platform for growth, development, and employment creation. As such, ITC supports these countries to improve their business environment and facilitate better management of border operations, including through the implementation of inclusive and sustainable trade facilitation reforms and in particular the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

**OBJECTIVE**

From December 2022 to November 2025, ITC implements a project aimed at strengthening agri-food trade in the ECOWAS region and contributes to a Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) programme: “GIZ ECOWAS Agricultural Trade (EAT) programme” funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development Cooperation (BMZ).

Among other interventions, Output 2 of this project aims at supporting the design of sustainable and gender sensitive agri-food trade facilitation measures with the view to enhance the efficiency of cross-border food trade in West Africa and contribute to food security.

In this context, ITC recruits one International Consultant to support the identification of highly efficient, inclusive, and sustainable trade facilitation measures in West Africa.
**DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

The International Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Associate Programme Officer on Trade Facilitation and the overall guidance and technical direction of the Trade Facilitation Advisor both at the ITC headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Throughout its duties the International Consultant should give particular attention to consider measures sensitive to gender and youth and, in particular, the one having the highest positive impact on women and youth inclusion and empowerment.

The International Consultant will accordingly deliver the following areas of responsibilities:

1. **Conduct a mapping of inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa and develop a draft concept note to provide recommendations on the most appropriate trade corridor or corridors.**
   - Clearly define the terms and the scope of the study jointly with ITC team: objectives, geographical scope and focus area, time frame and key concepts: trade facilitation, inclusive and sustainable
   - Conduct a thorough literature review to identify existing research, reports, academic papers, and relevant publications related to inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa. Gather reports, policy documents, and industry publications. This information can come from government sources, international organizations, trade associations, and research institutions.
   - Conduct targeted interviews with relevant stakeholders to gain firsthand insights and perspectives. Identify key informants such as policymakers, industry experts, academics, and representatives from relevant organizations and prepare a set of structured questions for the interviews.
   - Collect, organize, and analyze relevant data from the literature review, desk research, and interviews. Ensure that the data collected are organized, categorized, and properly documented. Analyze the collected data to identify trends, patterns, challenges, and best practices related to inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa. Use qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques as appropriate.
   - Synthesize and organized the findings into a comprehensive mapping to facilitate comparison and appropriation by all stakeholders. This means identify specific trade facilitation measures, common themes, emerging issues, gaps in existing measures, and opportunities for improvement in trade facilitation practices. This could involve categorizing trade facilitation measures based on inclusivity, sustainability, regulatory frameworks, technological advancements, etc. Compare the identified measures, practices, and policies with international standards and best practices.
   - Based on the mapping, develop a draft concept note to provide reasoned recommendations on the most appropriate corridor or corridors to implement further analysis and actions of the project. This involves laying out the aim of this note the optimal corridor, explain the broader context of trade corridors, identify several options of trade corridors, propose, and review the criteria considered to shortlist the corridors (a combination of quantitative data analysis, stakeholder consultations, expert assessments, geographical, meteorological aspects, infrastructure, etc.), present a comparative assessment of the different corridors based on the established criteria, discuss potential risks and challenges on selected corridors and provide well-reasoned recommendations for the corridor that is deemed most suitable for implementing the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit.
2- Develop and pilot the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit.

a. Develop the toolkit and obtain its validation by ITC.

The diagnostic toolkit should be involving several key components to ensure a comprehensive assessment of trade facilitation measures along trade corridors.

- A concept notes that outlines the purpose, objectives, scope, and expected outcomes of the trade corridor diagnostic toolkit. This should provide a clear overview of the initiative, its importance and its methodology outlining the data collection process, the types of data to be collected, and the analytical techniques that will be applied.
- A standard Term of reference that define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the individuals or teams involved in the diagnostic process. It should include details about the project's objectives, methodology, timeline, and reporting requirements.
- A comprehensive questionnaire to gather relevant information from stakeholders along the trade corridors. Stakeholders could include government agencies, customs, transport companies, logistics providers, traders, and other key players and in particular small-scale traders and their representatives. Questions should focus on various aspects of trade facilitation, such as customs procedures, infrastructure, regulatory environment, and digitalization efforts.
- A structured outline for the final diagnostic report. This outline should include sections such as executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, recommendations, conclusions, and annexes. Each section should provide guidance on the way to fill it, be well-defined and serve a specific purpose.
- A letter to introduce the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit to stakeholders. Explain the purpose of the toolkit, the importance of their participation, and the benefits of the diagnostic. Highlight the confidentiality of their responses and their role in improving trade facilitation along the corridors.

b. Develop the content and materials of the training programme and obtain its validation by ITC.

The content and materials should be involving several key components:

- A training curriculum setting out the objectives of the training program, determine what skills, knowledge, and understanding participants should gain from the training and all the key concepts, methodologies, and tools related to the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit. Break down the content into modules or sessions.
- A concept notes that outlines the purpose, goals, target audience, and expected outcomes of the training program.
- A detailed agenda that outlines the schedule of the training program. Include sessions, breaks, activities, and interactive elements. Make sure the agenda is well-structured and time bound.
- A set of visually engaging and informative PowerPoint presentations for each module. Ensure that the slides are clear, concise, and complement the training curriculum. Use visuals, charts, and diagrams to enhance understanding.
- An evaluation sheets or forms to assess participants' learning progress and gather feedback.
These sheets can include quizzes, practical exercises, and open-ended questions. Evaluation criteria should align with the training objectives.

- A participant handouts or materials that participants can refer to during and after the training. These could include summaries of key points, reference materials, and additional resources.
- A least one or two interactive activities such as group discussions, case studies, role-playing, and simulations. These activities will engage participants and help them apply their learning.
- An outline for the training report that will be generated after the training. The report should summarize the training content, highlight participant engagement, and provide insights into the effectiveness of the training.
- A guide for facilitators that provides step-by-step instructions for conducting each training session. This guide should include key talking points, tips for engaging participants, and suggestions for handling questions.

c. **Pilot the training programme to shortlisted participants.**

This should involve:
- Identify at least 10 relevant “collectors” candidates to participate to the training.
- Prepare draft openings remarks.
- Prepare and disseminate the attendance list.
- Conduct the training sessions online according to the agenda and curriculum.
- Administer the evaluation sheets or forms to assess participants' understanding and gather their feedback on the training program.
- Based on the outline created earlier, compile a training report that includes an overview of the training, details about the modules covered, participant feedback, and suggestions for improvement.

d. **Provide advisory service to facilitate the rollout of the Trade Corridor diagnostic toolkit and ensure the compilation of the information into the overall report until its pre-validation by ITC.**

This should involve:
- Provide selected candidates with an orientation on the purpose, objectives, and scope of the Trade Corridor diagnostic toolkit.
- Conduct a training session to familiarize the collectors with the toolkit's components, methodologies, and data collection techniques.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities for each collector involved in the data collection process, clarify roles (i.e., data collection, data analysts, quality control, and report writers).
- Monitor that collectors' data collection from various stakeholders along the trade corridor using the prepared questionnaires and implement quality control measures to ensure the accuracy and consistency of collected data.
- Maintain regular communication with collectors to address any questions, challenges, or clarifications they may have during the data collection process.
- Review and cross reference the data collected by collectors to identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies, analyze the compiled data to identify trends, patterns, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to trade facilitation measures.
- Based on the analysis, identify a minimum of eight inclusive and sustainable trade facilitation measures that are relevant to West Africa's trade corridors.
o Compile the information into a comprehensive report, coordinating technically the collectors to consolidate their individual reports into one comprehensive overall report. This report should include an executive summary, methodology, findings, recommendations, and identified trade facilitation measures. Thoroughly review and edit the overall report to ensure consistency, clarity, and alignment with the project's objectives.

3- Develop and finalize the report identifying at least 8 inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa through formal and informal consultations and until its validation by the ECOWAS Commission and ITC.

This should involve:

- Share the draft overall report with key stakeholders, including government agencies, trade associations, and industry experts, for their input and feedback.

- Integrate the feedback received from stakeholders into the report and make necessary revisions before regional consultation workshop/seminar.

- After incorporating feedback and making revisions, finalize the overall report for dissemination before the regional consultation workshop/seminar.

- Share the final report with relevant stakeholders at the occasion of a regional consultation workshop/seminar organized by ITC to discuss the findings, recommendations, and identified trade facilitation measures.

- Integrate the feedback received from stakeholders into the report and make necessary revisions before regional consultation workshop/seminar.

- Draft the detailed minutes of the sessions the regional consultation workshop/seminar and document the entire process, including challenges faced, lessons learned, and best practices for future reference and improvement.

The final version of the report should layout a detailed one pager description for each inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures.

The Consultant is obliged to provide full access to ITC external and internal auditors to documents and information. In addition, the contractor shall comply with any audit undertaken in line with the financial regulations and rules of the United Nations.

Copyright Clause: The Consultant has to ensure that s/he has obtained the necessary permissions with regard to intellectual property rights required to perform his/her services under this consultancy contract and for the subsequent dissemination by ITC in any form. Documentary proof is to be submitted to ITC. Should any license fee be due for the use of copyrighted materials of third parties, the Consultant shall request prior written permission from ITC. S/he has further to ensure to obtain accreditation to event(s), if required.
**Expected Outputs and Timelines**

**Output 1:** A comprehensive mapping based on literature review, existing reports, desk research and selected interviews laying out a review of inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa until is developed and validated by ITC by 1st October 2023.

**Output 2:** A “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit (i.e., concept note, terms of reference for the assignment, questionnaires, report outline, correspondence to introduce the methodology, standard fact sheet, etc.) to conduct a holistic diagnostic of identified Trade Facilitation measures along Trade Corridors is developed, reviewed, and validated by ITC by 1st October 2023.

**Output 3:** A draft concept note laying out reasoned recommendations on the most appropriate corridor or corridor(s) where to layout the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit in West Africa is developed and validated by the ECOWAS Commission and ITC by 1st October 2023.

**Output 4:** A training programme on the smooth delivery of the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit (i.e., concept note, Agenda, Training Curriculum. Power points, Evaluation sheets, report outline, etc.) is developed, reviewed, and validated by ITC by 8th October 2023.

**Output 5:** At least 10 potential candidates to roll out the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit are identified and reporting requirements (i.e., evaluation and attendance sheets) of the training programme is provided to the full satisfaction of ITC by 8th October 2023.

**Output 6:** The roll out of the “Trade Corridor” diagnostic toolkit is supported by collecting inputs from selected candidates and by compiling the information into one overall report identifying at least 8 inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa by 12th November 2023.

**Output 7:** The overall report identifying at least 8 inclusive and sustainable Trade Facilitation measures in West Africa is reviewed and validated by ITC and the ECOWAS commission considering the feedbacks collected in a regional workshop with selected stakeholders by 16th December 2023.

**Travel:** Potential Travel involved.

**Requirements:**

**Education:**

Master’s Degree or higher in development studies, law, international business, international trade, economics, international trade law or related fields is required. Extensive relevant experience may be accepted in lieu of the master’s degree.

**Required Experience:**

Minimum of 5 years of relevant working experience with Customs Authorities and/or managing cross border trade formalities as a private sector actor or border regulatory agency officers required.
**ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

Previous experience in trade facilitation projects, especially related to small scale cross-border trade, is highly desirable.

Previous experience in implementing trade-related projects in West Africa Region (e.g., Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo) region will be considered a strong asset.

Previous experience in gender and/or youth related issues in West Africa is desirable.

**SKILLS:**

Excellent knowledge of trade facilitation measures, cross border trade in general, and small-scale cross border trade related issues is required.

Excellent analytical, communication and writing skills are required.

Very organized and meticulous with a great sense of detail.

Ability to work independently under limited supervision.

Good understanding of international trade, trade-related policies, and multilateral trade agreements is desirable.

Ability to network with officials from the public and private sector is desirable.

Ability to multi-task and meet tight deadlines is desirable.

**LANGUAGE:**

Excellent proficiency in English and in French is required.

Proficiency in Arabic, in Portuguese and/or in Spanish is an advantage.

*ITC champions workforce diversity, inclusion, gender equality and gender parity and considers all qualified persons - of all genders - equally, including those with disabilities, without discrimination or prejudice of any kind.*