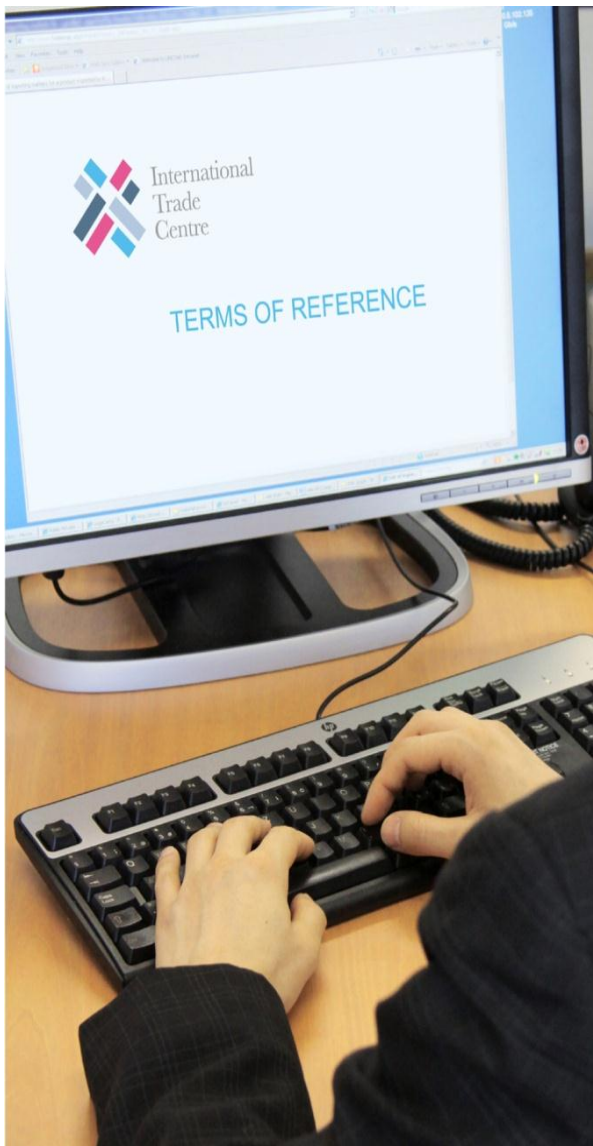


EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

ITC's Export Strategy Function



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1. LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DMD	Division of Market Development
EMU	Evaluation and Monitoring Unit
ITC	International Trade Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED	Office of the Executive Director
SPPG	Strategic Planning, Performance and Governance
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

2. EXPORT STRATEGY FUNCTION IN THE ITC

ITC's export strategy function operates within the overall mandate of ITC, which focuses on promoting exports in developing countries. Export Strategy function corresponds to one of the five recognised business lines in ITC¹. ITC traditional approach to export strategy has been to help developing countries to think strategically about their exports, to take advantage of market access opportunities and to enhance the overall competitiveness of their export value-chains. ITC's methodology was first used in 2002 and it was since then further developed, refined and augmented. For the first six years, the export strategy function was incubated within the Office of the Executive Director. IN 2007 Export Strategy was recognised one of ITC's 5 Business Lines. In 2009, a Section in its own right was created and located within the Division of Country Programmes (DCP) which coordinates ITC's projects at the country level and serves as the focal point for coordinating with client countries. Between 2009 and 2012, the Export Strategy Section has been substantially strengthened in terms of resources and budget.

Today ITC's export strategy function develops National Export Strategies [NES], Sector Export Strategies (SES), and regional export strategies as well as cross-sector functional strategies. An ITC-led Export Strategy is a policy and operational decision-making and management framework, which provides comprehensive analysis, strategic objectives and prioritised actions, to develop and/or strengthen export competitiveness of the country or sector. The strategies provide a blueprint for competitiveness and development of a country's export sector. A comprehensive analysis is undertaken at the national and institutional levels to identify priorities for enhanced performance. Anchored in strong public-private dialogue the blueprint strengthens the links between export development, trade policy and performance and socio-economic growth. Outcomes of an ITC-facilitated export strategies include:

- Improved capacity of stakeholders to formulate strategic priorities in export development and to manage their implementation,
- Export Strategy documents, incl. a detailed and prioritised Plan of Action,
- Improved policy and institutional frameworks that support development and competitiveness of the export sectors,
- Trade mainstreamed into national policies and planning,
- Formalised platform of stakeholders with influence and interest in the export sector, contributing to building a culture of dialog and trust between the public and private sectors,

¹ ITC Business Lines are available at: <http://www.intracen.org/about/itc-structure/>

ITC has developed a methodology based on a full range of tools and services to enhance the ability of stakeholders to formulate national and sector export strategies following a specifically designed process, which focuses on sustainable export growth and on mainstreaming trade into the broader development framework, including poverty alleviation, empowerment of women and youth and environmental sustainability.

Sound and realistic export strategies are the basis for effective trade-development programmes and for an adequate coordination and alignment of trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) provided by ITC as a whole with country development priorities. An effective functioning and a strategic positioning of the export strategy function in ITC is therefore crucial within the wider ITC business model and could be used more strategically in ITC programming, drawing on ITC technical competency areas.

3. PURPOSE

The present evaluation TOR relate to the evaluation of the export strategy function in ITC.

The evaluation is conducted with two main purposes:

1. Assess the actual effect of the Export Strategy business model on beneficiary countries' export environment and export capabilities. The evaluation will assess the policy and economic effects the programme has generated to improve the performance of Governments, intermediary Trade Support Institutions (TSI) and the business sector in the area of exports generation. The evaluation will in particular, assess the effects on which the programme has had a direct effect:
 - The extent of inclusiveness consultation and relevance of participation in the strategy process;
 - Level of awareness and capacity-building the strategy process generates;
 - The mainstreaming of exports within the national development policy;
 - Design and implementation of trade-development projects and policies to improve the export situation.
 - Good practices included in other related exercises implemented by ITC in particular and by other organizations.

The evaluation will make a clear distinction with those elements for which the ITC Export Strategy function has no formal mandate for and control over follow up or implementation in the country at the post-design stage. Having this distinction in mind, the evaluation will assess the following indirect effects since the overall impact of the programme very much depends on them:

- The extent to which strategies are formulated and implemented at the country level and in particular the actual use of strategies in improving the competitiveness and development of countries' export sector;
 - Effects on the institutional export promotion soft infrastructure at the country level and country ownership and local stakeholder involvement;
 - Effects on the quality of the business environment and export friendliness at the country level.
2. Assess and refine the method applied by ITC to develop export strategies. The evaluation will provide a better understanding of trends in demand and supply in the export strategy market. It will analyse ITC's current positioning within this market and will undertake an assessment of ITC's strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats. The assessment of ITC's capacity will be conducted on the basis of the following indicative criteria:
- Get things done (Focus on implementation and on building up a system that delivers results);
 - Support developing country beneficiaries in adapting to a very fast pace of change;
 - Provide clear and rigorous conceptual analysis and intellectual approach (Focus on enabling better conceptual understanding about issues to pave the way for orientation to address them and to policy/actions to solve them)
 - Partner with, develop and empower people's energy and talent and develop country ownership;
 - Facilitate cross-fertilisation on innovative solutions, partnerships public/private sector, to widening views and learning from others' experiences.

On the basis of this analysis, the evaluation will propose concrete initiatives to improve and refine the methodology for export strategy development with the final aim of maximising the support and impact for beneficiary countries. Special attention will be devoted to the issue of integrating the evaluation findings within, and in consultation with, the ES function. Particular attention should be given to the way connection with other ITC business lines is conducted in order to create synergies and assure better impact of ITC's TRTA work in the field.

4. GEOGRAFICAL SCOPE

The evaluation will focus its work on a limited but representative sample of Export Strategies. In addition to geographical balance criteria, the following criteria can be used to define the final list of field missions by the evaluation team in the proposed methodology report. The evaluators will propose four to six Export Strategies, possibly among the following:

1. one recently finished (Mozambique),
2. one old (St. Lucia or Laos),
3. one on-going (Kyrgyzstan and Palestine),
4. one sector (Zimbabwe or Ghana), and,
5. one regional (COMESA or UEMOA).

The final export strategies to be assessed in depth will be selected with the Evaluation Team when presenting and adopting the evaluation methodology for the evaluation.

5. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In line with DAC/OECD criteria, the external evaluation will assess ITC's Export Strategy function for its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and to what extent it has generated impact for beneficiary countries.

Relevance

- Is the export strategy function relevant and in line with ITC's mandate and mission and strategic objectives?
- What are the relevant features for export strategy providers currently required by the market? Who are the competitors? Has ITC offering the capacity to keep adapting to a very fast pace of change in demand? What is ITC's comparative advantage?
- Are Export Strategy methodology and implementation relevant, robust enough and adapted to the specific different cases of countries / sectors?
- What is the relevance of factors determining the mix of export strategies in the portfolio (country/regional, Country/sector, big country/small country, geographical balances)?
- How to improve the relevance of ITC Export Strategy positioning within the context of Aid for Trade?

Effectiveness

The evaluation will assess the capacity of ITC to get things done. It will focus on implementation and on building up a system that delivers results:

- Is ITC effective in planning its portfolio of export strategies? How useful and effective is the StrategyMap database for understanding the overall export strategy market and for conducting the planning of activities?
- Are current impact measurement and monitoring practices satisfactory?
- Is the methodology applied for developing export strategies effective for integrating end-market requirements and demand-side opportunities at the very core of its approach?
- Similarly, is it effective in terms of integrating substantive knowledge, in particular trade and marketing intelligence into its methodology?
- How effective has the export strategy function been in mainstreaming the issue of exports development within the national development policy.
- Within the ITC, how effective has been the Export strategy function in producing a basis enabling the work of country offices in DCP?
- How effective has the Export Strategy function been in enhancing the capacity of the organization(s) responsible for developing and/or coordinating the implementation of the export strategy?

Efficiency

- What value is the ITC methodology offering compared to methodologies applied by other agencies developing export strategies?
- Have Export Strategies been delivered according to Work Plan?
- What is the assessment in terms of value for money of the ITC export strategy function? What is the full cost of ITC's service in NES (RB/XB)? What is the costs analysis related to the production of export strategies?
- Have the NES, SES and regional and functional strategies been standardized and mainstreamed within ITC's approach with clear monitoring plan to show results?
- Has the ES function determined adequate job profiles for staff working in ES issues to address current and future challenges in export development and promotion issues? Has the right staffs with the right profile and skills been recruited for the ES function and are their skills utilised in an efficient manner?

Impact

- How are export strategies being utilized and by whom? What outcomes are ES products and services producing?
- What is the impact of export strategies on improving the institutional soft infrastructure for exports developments and the business/export-friendliness of the business environment?
- Similarly, what is the impact in terms of improving the competitiveness and development of countries' export sector?
- Do export strategies have any unintended impact?

Sustainability

- Is the export strategy function providing for institutional and financial arrangements at the country level that enable long-term follow-up and continuous up-dating during the course of ES implementation?
- Have export strategies developed through ITC's support led to trade-development programmes?
- Have the relevant stakeholders been selected at local level for designing, developing and implementing export strategies?
- In the case of LDCs, are export strategies coherent with the UNDAF objectives at the country level?
- What are the major risks the export strategy function in ITC is facing, in particular concerning its long term sustainability?
- Is export Strategy well embedded in ITC's TRTA large programme?

6. NORMS AND METHODS

The evaluation of ITC's export function will be undertaken in accordance with the OECD / DAC evaluation standards and guidelines for UN evaluations, as well as ITC's own Evaluation Policy and Guidelines. According to UNEG guidelines, evaluations should be carried out in a participatory and ethical manner, and be implemented in accordance with the ethical guidelines stated in the UNEG Standards and Norms for Evaluation. The evaluation should take account of cultural differences, local customs, religious practices, gender roles and age throughout the planning, implementation and reporting on the evaluation. UNEG also specify that the chosen methodology for an evaluation should explicitly address issues of gender and under-represented groups and be in line with the UN system's commitment to the human-rights based approach.

The export strategy evaluation will apply a triangulation of methods to answer the evaluation questions raised above. This triangulation of methods is selected to ensure the ideal coverage and assessment. The selected consultant will deliver a detailed methodology report outlining the methodology that will be applied to the evaluation. The methodology report should clearly state what methodology will be applied to measure impact of the export strategies produced by ITC. The methodology should also outline how the impacts of ITC's export strategies are compared to other organisations developing export strategies.

Desk Research

The team leader should review all section strategies, policy documents, a geographical representative sample of export strategies and sector strategies and documents and tools developed by the section. The evaluator should ensure that the information collected is valid and reliable. Key findings must be substantiated through a verification process using different sources, and all findings should be validated by the ES section.

Field Missions

The team leader should also undertake participatory observations and interview a selection of partners that have used the export strategies. The location for the field missions will be decided by the evaluator when the desk reach has been completed and when the methodology report has been completed.

Qualitative face-to-face and phone interviews

Qualitative face-to-face and phone interviews will be conducted with a representative sample of stakeholders in the production and utilization of the export strategies and ITC staff and donors.

Comparative analyses & questionnaires

A comparative analysis should be conducted analysing the impact of ITC's export strategies compared to the impact generated by export strategies developed by other international organisations. Has the situation of the sector/country improved as a result of the export strategy? The evaluators will use objective and internationally recognised indicators such as the World Bank "easy of doing business rankings" and use evaluation tools such as questionnaires to understand the point of view of exporters about this matter

SWOT analysis of the export strategy methodology

The evaluation team will also perform a SWOT analysis outlining the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the methodology used by ITC. This analysis will be used to build a strategy for how the methodology applied by ITC for developing export strategies can be refined.

7. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team for the export strategy evaluation will be recruited in accordance with UN rules. The qualifications required for the selected consultants are the following:

Evaluation team leader

- Advanced university degree in Economics, Business Administration, Trade or Development studies,
- Excellent drafting abilities in English
- Expertise in TRTA evaluations and impact assessments,
- Expertise in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methodologies,
- Proven experience in conducting high-quality evaluations for international organisations.
- Experience developing methodologies for impact evaluations

Expert in trade Development

- Advanced university degree in Economics, Business Administration, Trade or Development studies,
- Experience working for Trade Promotion Organisations
- Expert in Trade Development
- Hands on experience facilitating change in international organizations.
- Experience in providing guidance in methodology development for Aid for Trade projects

8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The export strategy evaluation will be managed and controlled for quality, diligence and timeliness by the Monitoring and Evaluation Office (EMU) in ITC, with support and guidance from the export strategy team in ITC. The export strategy team will provide documentation and will assist with drafting the TOR's for the evaluation. The selection process of the independent consultant will also be managed by EMU. The administrative Assistant in EMU will manage all travel and logistical

arrangements for the evaluation consultants. There will be established a very close working relationship will be established between EMU and the export strategy function during the evaluation in order to ensure that the evaluation is undertaken in an inclusive and participatory manner. EMU will ensure that the evaluation is undertaken, in due respect of the ITC Evaluation Policy and the UNEG guidelines and OECD/DAC guidelines. EMU will share with and make available to ES in due time drafts of the evaluation report and the draft final report including all its annexes.

9. TIMELINE

The export strategy evaluation will be launched on the 1st of September 2012 and will be concluded at the latest on the 31/05/2013. A detailed work plan outlines timing of key milestone and expected deliverables, as well as an overview time line for the export strategy function evaluation process can be found below:

Deliverables for export strategy evaluation	Deadline
Draft TOR, design work plan and develop budget	15/10/2012
Desk research and delivery of methodology report	31/12/2012
Geneva mission (10-14 December)	14/12/2012
Field missions	01/03/2013
First draft provided and debriefing to export strategy evaluation management team	01/04/2013
Comments to the report by the evaluation management team	15/04/2013
Final draft provided	01/05/2013

10. DELIVERABLES

The export strategy evaluation team leader should provide a substantial methodology report outlining the evaluation methodology to the evaluation management team, describing the chosen methodology. This will include a motivated and final selection of country destinations for conducting the field missions. The document will ensure proper interpretation of the Terms of Reference and clear agreement of the evaluation scope and work plan. The evaluation methodology report should include survey methods and a detailed research plan for how all evaluation questions will be answered.

The core products of the export strategy evaluation process will be a final evaluation report. The final report should highlight the purpose, scope and limitation of the export strategy evaluation, and should contain a description of the applied methodology, evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations (ITC 2008e). The analysis should highlight constraints, strengths on which to build on, and opportunities for the export strategy function in ITC. The evaluation should also come up with practical recommendations for how ITC can refine its methodology for creating Export Strategies. The evaluation team should ensure to be in direct dialogue with the Export Strategy function to ensure that all recommendations are practical and achievable.

Additionally, in order to ensure wider usage and learning from the evaluation findings, the evaluation team leader will be required to deliver an oral debriefing to the export strategy function team and EMU prior to delivery of the final evaluation report. This debriefing will ensure that factual errors, mistakes and misunderstandings can be corrected before the evaluation team starts drafting the evaluation report. The debriefing will also ensure that the Export strategy Team can immediately include lessons learned from the evaluations in planning of the activities for the export strategy function. The draft final report including all its annexes will be shared, presented and discussed with ES team for effective feedback, comments and corrections prior to its finalisation and formal submission to EMU.