CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Consultancy Vacancy for the

Evaluation of ITC’s Performance in Providing Trade Information and Business Intelligence

Overview

ITC’s Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) plans to conduct an evaluation of ITC’s Performance in Providing Trade Information and Business Intelligence. The purpose of this call for expression of interest is to identify qualified consultants interested in conducting this evaluation. Given the broad scope of this evaluation, it is possible that a team will be formed to carry it out. Applications can therefore be handed in by individuals or for a team.

The main evaluation process, including the preparation of the evaluation, designing the approach, data collection, report writing and communication, is expected to take place in the timeframe from May to December 2020.

Background

ITC provides trade and market information to enable businesses to make good decisions. Together with efforts to support MSMEs to take advantage of market opportunities (which includes the provision of business intelligence), this commitment has formed an essential part of ITC’s mission, with different parts of the organization contributing to this aim.

Over time, ITC has developed a range of online global public goods; most of them as part of the ITC programme ‘Transparency in Trade’. The programme collects and processes trade and investment-related data and analytics, providing them free of charge online. While data coverage and its compilation on related platforms are continuously evolving to meet the needs of beneficiaries, the suite of market intelligence tools currently includes portals such as Market Access Map, Trade Map, or Export Potential Map.

In terms of business intelligence, ITC has also increased its efforts in the area of SME competitiveness research and analysis. More than 13,000 companies in over 38 countries have been surveyed to date using the SME Competitiveness Survey (SMECS). This survey generates empirical evidence on the strengths and weaknesses of SMEs, and identifies opportunities to improve their competitiveness. The survey also informs the SME Competitiveness Outlook (SMECO), ITC’s flagship report, which is published annually.

Moreover, internal efforts are being made to achieve a standardised and coordinated approach to corporate data management. ITC’s project teams increasingly work with digital tools and develop their own platforms that collect data for specific needs and in various formats. A new corporate data management strategy intends to harmonise these data to enable outputs such as an improved ability to provide business intelligence, for example to discover trends, future client needs and new concepts for improving business ecosystems. In addition, data collected are to be aligned, shared and cross-fertilized with other international organizations.
Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

Providing trade and market information has been a core function of ITC since its inception in 1964. However, the global landscape and context have changed profoundly over time: Nowadays we are living in an era of information explosion, where available data is continuously growing, in both amount and complexity. Trade information and business intelligence is provided by many actors, public and private actors alike, from small-scale think tanks and institutes to multinational technology companies.

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide a comprehensive picture of what kind of trade and market information and business intelligence ITC provides today and how well the organization manages to collect, distribute and use it. To this end, the evaluation should achieve the following objectives:

- assess how effective the organization is in maintaining its relevance in this area;
- determine the utility and complementarity of the different corporate tools and products in this area and the satisfaction of their clients; and to
- provide insight into how well the information is shared, integrated and used internally.

The evaluation has a backward-looking summative perspective by assessing achievements in this area. Of paramount importance, however, is the forward-looking, formative element of this evaluation, providing indications of where the organization should develop in this area.

Scope

ITC delivers its trade-related technical assistance in six focus areas, the first of which is ‘Providing trade and market intelligence’. The scope of the evaluation will encompass this focus area, assessing the organization’s tools and products aimed at providing trade and market information, in particular market intelligence tools and data related to SME competitiveness.

Application process

To apply, please send your expression of interest to evaluation@intracen.org, with a copy to Simon Bettighofer (sbettighofer@intracen.org), indicating in the title ‘EOI for Evaluation of Information and Intelligence’.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview.

The application should include an updated CV and 2-3 exemplary reports of evaluations, reviews or studies conducted. In addition, applicants are encouraged to address the following questions in their mail/cover letter:

- Why are you interested in this evaluation?
- What expertise and experience do you have that qualifies you for this evaluation?
- What are the daily rates that would apply?

The terms of reference for this consultancy are attached in the annex of this document.

--- The closing date for this call is Thursday, 30 April 2020 ---
ANNEX

Terms of Reference

Evaluation Consultant(s)

Assignment title: Evaluation of ITC’s Performance in Providing Trade Information and Business Intelligence

Vacancy job title: Evaluation Consultant

Duty station: Home-based

Travel: Probably at least once to Geneva, possibly to other locations

Total workdays: about 60-70 days, from May to December 2020

Background

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization for trade-related technical cooperation in developing countries.

ITC’s Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) seeks evaluation consultant(s) with proven experience in evaluation; the trade information market; and data management and information technology.

The IEU welcomes the application of individual experts with expertise in these fields or of teams of experts fulfilling these requirements.

Duties and responsibilities

The consultant(s) will work under the supervision of an ITC Evaluation Officer, who will act as the manager for this evaluation, and under the overall guidance of the Head of Evaluation. The consultant(s) will be responsible for the delivery of the outputs as set out below:

- **Preparation and inception phase**: conduct a desk review and additional exploratory data collection as needed to prepare the evaluation; design the evaluation approach, data collection instruments, and prepare a draft inception report.

  The inception report should include (i) an initial analysis based on data collected and reviewed, including key questions and issues to be assessed by the evaluation and potential data gaps, and (ii) the envisaged evaluation approach including the design, data collection methods and foreseen indicators to measure performance and results, the evaluation matrix and the suggested timeline for the evaluation.

  (approx. 10 days)

  Main deliverable: draft inception report

- **Data collection phase**: conduct interviews with different stakeholders of the programme and use other data collection methods, which may include case studies (possibly with related travel), a survey and/or other means of data collection; prepare a synthesis summarizing insights from interviews, case study and/or survey results.

  (approx. 30 days)

  Main deliverable: synthesis paper(s)
• **Report drafting**: based on the data collection and synthesis paper(s), prepare an outline of the evaluation report, indicating the report structure and key inputs to be integrated; prepare a draft evaluation report.

  (approx. 20 days)

  **Main deliverables**: an outline of the evaluation report and draft evaluation report

• **Finalization and dissemination**: Revise the draft report and address comments; prepare a draft communication product that highlights the most significant learning points generated by the evaluation, and a presentation to be delivered to main stakeholders.

  (approx. 5 days)

  **Main deliverables**: audit trail in addressing comments, draft communication products

### Required profile

**Education**

• Advanced university degree in economics, international trade, business administration, social science, development studies, or other related areas

**Experience and skills**

• Minimum of eight years’ experience in conducting studies, reviews or evaluations;
• Experience in the area of trade and development is required;
• Experience related to the trade information market and/or data management and information technology is highly desirable;
• Work experience with UN agencies or international organizations is an asset;
• In-depth knowledge of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytical methods;
• Knowledge of UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and the Guidance Document on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations is desirable;
• Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively with stakeholders from different backgrounds; and
• Excellent report writing skills, being able to write clear and concise analytical reports.

**Languages**

• Proficiency in English. Working knowledge of other ITC/UN official languages is an advantage (in particular French and/or Spanish)

### Please note:

As outlined above, it is intended that the consultant (or team) to carry out this evaluation will be able to provide expertise in (i) evaluation; (ii) the trade information market; and (iii) data management and information technology.

Applications handed in for a team should ideally cover all the areas mentioned. If you apply as an individual with expertise in some but not all of these areas, feel free to indicate if you would be willing to form part of an evaluation team.