

WACOMP REGIONAL

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NATIONAL CONSULTANT TO DEVELOP A COUNTRY REPORT TO CONSTITUTE MALI CHAPTER OF ECOWAS INVESTMENT PROFILE ON ICT SECTOR

Title of assignment: Developing a Country Report to be incorporated as the Mali Chapter of an Investment Profile on the ICT Sector in ECOWAS

Tentative start date: end September 2021

Tentative end date: end October 2021

BACKGROUND:

The International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), is the only multilateral agency fully dedicated to supporting internationalisation of SMEs. ITC's mission is to foster inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development. ITC's projects and programmes contribute to the global efforts to achieve UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development and Aid for Trade Agenda.

ITC is an implementing agency of the **West Africa Competitiveness (WACOMP) programme** along with United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission.

WACOMP aims to support a number of selected value chains at national and regional levels to promote structural transformation and better access to regional and international markets, while taking into account social and environmental concerns. It consists of one regional component (WACOMP Regional) and sixteen national components (15 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania).

The **overall objective** of WACOMP Regional, which covers the 16 countries, is to strengthen competitiveness of West African countries and enhance their integration into the regional and international trading system, through an enhanced level of production, transformation and export capacities of the private sectors in line with the regional and national industrial and SME strategies.

Its **specific objectives** are to:

- to improve the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of selected value chains;
- to improve the climate for business at national and regional levels.

To achieve the above-mentioned objective 2, ITC's **Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business** section (TFPB) is responsible for the achievement of:

- Output 2.2: Regional policy and framework to improve industrial competitiveness are harmonized, formulated and monitored.

Under this output, TFPB is in charge of implementing:

- **Activity 2.2.1: Promoting FDI partnership agreements with counterparts in the South (e.g. India, Brazil) and in North (with EU countries)** that foster increased advanced technology and know-how transfer.

Despite its national and regional investment promotion schemes, there is indeed a dire need to increase FDI in the region, in particular value-chain driven investments. For this purpose, ECOWAS and ECOWAS Member States networking capacities need to be improved with North and South investors.

In this regard, WACOMP Regional will support ECOWAS in the **development of sector investment profiles covering selected Member States for the target value chains covered by the project**, namely mango, cassava, textiles/garments, and information communication technology (ICT). The objective of these Investment Profiles is two-fold:

- (i) to assist foreign investors, in terms of understanding the investment climate, receiving the latest research and market insights, and **identifying investment opportunities in the selected sectors**; and
- (ii) to enable public and private sector representatives to **promote investment** in the selected value chains, particularly in the ECOWAS countries presenting a high potential for increased value-chain driven investment that can contribute to improved participation in regional and international trade and value chains.

These present terms of reference (ToR) concern the development of a sector-specific Investment Profile type of report to be incorporated as the Mali Chapter of the ECOWAS Investment Profile on the ICT Sector. This report will provide an in-depth value chain analysis, with recommendations for very precise and most bankable investment opportunities in the ICT sector.

To the extent relevant, the report should be developed bearing in mind the objective of promoting increased value-chain investments that can contribute to enhanced intra-regional trade, increased added value created within the region, and to the development of regional value chains. Thus, it should also address existing and potential backward and forward linkages including with ECOWAS countries that are not dedicated a specific chapter.

To undertake this activity, ITC will contract a National Consultant (NC) to produce this report (subsequently referred to as “Mali Report” in these ToRs), working in close collaboration with an International Consultant (IC) contracted to lead the development of the Sectoral Parts of the ECOWAS Investment Profile on the ICT Sector.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

The NC, working under the direct supervision of the Senior Officer, Business and Trade Policy, TFPB, and receiving guidance from the IC, will undertake the tasks outlined below:

1. Alongside the IC and ITC, **undertake an inception meeting on how to draft the Mali Report, following which carry out research for the assessment of the ICT sector.** The meeting discussion will focus on the objectives, scope, process and tasks for developing the Mali Report and be based mainly on the guideline and draft template (developed by the IC) for the Report to be produced by the NC.

In line with the draft template developed and presented by the IC, the assessment for the ICT sector should cover the following aspects:

- A brief summary of ICT development in non-focus countries, as per the guideline and template
- the national value chain analysis of the focus country - The analysis should address the various segments of the ICT chain and related major players, as well as and any linkages with complementing sectors, provide detailed production, trade and consumption data, and include a SWOT analysis. It should also highlight existing and potential backward and forward linkages with other ECOWAS countries, including those that are not dedicated a specific chapter;
- incentives to invest in the country – This section could include tax benefits, labour law flexibilities, benefits related to infrastructure, talent pool, work and living permits, presence of tech hubs, incubation programmes, SEZs etc.;
- recommendations for very precise and most bankable investment opportunities in the ICT sector - These general and sector-specific investment opportunities should clearly be derived from the analysis and provide potential foreign investors with clear and precise ideas for investments within the various functional and geographical areas and at different segments of the sectors' value chains in the country. To the extent possible, the aspects relevant to enhanced intra-regional trade, development of regional value chains, and increased added-

value created by ICT for other sectors and within the region should be adequately addressed, including through the selection of investment opportunities;

- contact information of the national investment promotion agency (IPA) or other agencies from where interested investors can find more information on investment facilitation procedures (e.g. on starting a business, obtaining investor license, applying for SEZ etc.);
- other factors deemed necessary.

The research should include documents, statistics and other types of data from reputable sources such as international organizations (e.g. ITC, ITU, World Bank, UNCTAD, UNECA), ECOWAS, its Member States and other regional organizations (e.g. UEMOA), as well as other specialised agencies, academia, research institutes, experts, civil society organisations, national, regional and international media, etc.

Where applicable, use of text should be minimized in favour of graphical representation.

2. **Identify most relevant stakeholders to interview and subsequently interview them.** The stakeholders include key sector players from the public and private sectors. The NC will be required to engage regularly with these stakeholders (i.e. IPA) to ensure national ownership of the initiative as well as to obtain regular feedback throughout the process. Additionally, the NC will also be required to liaise frequently with ITC and the IC, including for issues related to stakeholder consultations.
3. Following the structure of the draft template shared by the IC, **produce and submit the draft Mali Report** (20 to 25 pages) – capturing the value chain analysis and recommendations for very precise and most bankable investment opportunities in the ICT sector.
4. Based on feedbacks from the IC, ITC and the relevant national stakeholders, especially the IPA, **produce a revised draft of the Mali Report and/or additional inputs** to be used further by the IC in drafting the corresponding part of the Profile, which may involve additional desk research and/or consultations. **If required, the Consultant will also provide final inputs** to be used further by the IC for the finalization of the Profile and its validation by ECOWAS.

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

The Consultant is responsible for all submitted documents and must ensure that they are not plagiarized. Any plagiarism, copying or closely reproducing another's work without accrediting the legitimate author, in the documents submitted would result in a refusal of the submitted document.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND TIMELINES:

The expected outputs and timelines are as follows:

Activity 1: Undertake inception meeting and research, in line with the draft template developed and presented by the IC

Output 1: Inception meeting and research undertaken to draft the Mali Report

Timeline: end September 2021

Activity 2: Undertake stakeholder consultations

Output 2: Meetings undertaken with stakeholders

Timeline: early October 2021

Activity 3: Draft the 20-25 page Mali Report to be submitted to ITC

Output 3: First draft of the Mali Report submitted to ITC

Timeline: mid October 2021

Activity 4: Produce a revised draft and/or additional inputs, which may involve additional research and/or consultations; and if required, provide final inputs to the IC to support the finalization of the Profile

Output 4: Revised draft and/or additional inputs submitted, as well as final inputs, if required

Timeline: Revised draft and/or additional inputs: end October 2021;

Final inputs, if required: November 2021

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

Skills:

- Strong analytical and drafting skills in English
- Organizational and managerial skills

Education:

- Advanced degree (MA/MSc) in trade, law, economics or in another field relevant for the assignment

Experience:

- Minimum 5 years work experience
- Knowledge of the ICT sector and relevant stakeholders in Mali. Knowledge in the field of trade and investment promotion is an added advantage
- Good communication and presentation skills, at ease with high-level representatives of the public and private sectors
- Proven ability to work independently with minimum supervision and effectively within a team

Languages

- Fluency in written and spoken English