

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A NATIONAL CONSULTANT TO SUPPORT THE COMESA BUSINESS COUNCIL (CBC)'S POLICY DIALOGUE AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS**

**Title of Assignment:** Supporting policy dialogue and advocacy efforts of the CBC in relation to the AfCFTA and COMESA trade

**Duty Station:** Zambia

**Travel:** Domestic Travel

**Expected Start Date:** 01 June 2021

**Expected End Date:** 30 November 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.

The Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business (TFPB) section in ITC is involved in trade-related technical assistance programmes supporting the public and private sectors in the Asian and African regions. Through its interventions, TFPB aims to strengthen institutional capacities to develop, implement, and coordinate the design and implementation of coherent domestic regulatory reforms, trade policies, and trade negotiations. Under the scope of these programmes (previous and ongoing), TFPB has been working with business chambers and associations to strengthen their capacity to engage in policy dialogue and advocacy on issues affecting the private sector and improving the business environment.

The COMESA Business Council (CBC), established under the Treaty of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) as the Consultative Committee of the Business Community, is the apex regional body representing the private sector and business community in the COMESA region. In this context, the CBC is engaged in efforts to strengthen partnerships promoting trade and investment in regional and global markets; provide regional facilitation/coordination to membership and support operational efficiency of enterprises; and promote continuous advocacy and dialogue for private sector at the national and regional levels. The Business Policy Programs division of the CBC, in particular, is mainly responsible for engaging the private sector in dialogue and advocacy initiatives with the objective of improving the competitive business environment in the COMESA region.

With the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) as of 01 January 2021, the CBC is undertaking further efforts to ensure that the private sector is able to effectively benefit from the opportunities provided under the AfCFTA. Therefore, further support is needed to strengthen the capacity of the CBC, and particularly the Business Policy Programs division of the CBC, to support the private sector to better engage under the AfCFTA and benefit from an improved business environment.

In this context, ITC is supporting the CBC to recruit a trade policy expert, as a National Consultant, to undertake activities under the scope of the Business Policy Programs division, for a specified period of time. These Terms of Reference (ToR) cover the activities to be undertaken by the National Consultant to support the efforts of the Business Policy Programs division of the CBC.

## **DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The National Consultant will work under the supervision of the Business Policy Programs Manager of the CBC and the overall supervision of the Senior Officer, Business and Trade Policy – TFPB section, ITC.

The duties and responsibilities of the National Consultant (NC) are as follows:

1. Undertake regular monitoring to track developments relating to the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement and Protocols, as well as other related issues of concern to the COMESA. Such monitoring will be conducted through research, including desk reviews, participation in policy engagement meetings, workshops or other consultations. Based on the regular monitoring and the research undertaken, the NC will draw up an initial list of potential policy issues that could be the subject of policy positions and future dialogue and advocacy efforts. The NC, in undertaking this research, will cover the following topics:
  - Policy concerns in relation to the implementation of the AfCFTA and its Protocols;
  - Policy and regulatory barriers affecting trade and investment, with special focus on matters relating to the agro-industry/manufacturing sector within the COMESA; and
  - COMESA's current trade patterns, priorities for trade negotiations, and opportunities and challenges faced in this regard.

From this exercise, the NC, in consultation with the CBC Secretariat and private sector, will identify and prioritize two policy issues to form the basis of policy positions to be developed under this ToR. (Tentatively propose 1 position paper related to COMESA/AfCFTA, and 1 position paper on an issue related to the agro-industry/manufacturing sector in COMESA).

2. The NC will develop the two policy positions based on the issues identified above – and in doing so, will be expected to undertake detailed research and analysis, which will include consultations with relevant public and private sector stakeholders. The policy positions developed will clearly identify the issue, explain the impact on the private sector, and propose recommendations for relevant legislative/policy reforms.
3. In order to finalize the policy positions, the NC will present the findings of the policy positions to relevant stakeholders through two private sector dialogues (PSD) and finalize the policy positions based on the feedback received.
4. Upon finalization of the policy positions, the NC will support the CBC to disseminate the policy positions to key stakeholders and engage in relevant advocacy efforts with a view to initiating/facilitating the trade policy/legislative reforms proposed in the policy positions. In this context, the NC will undertake meetings with relevant officials to discuss matters relevant to the policy papers findings, and present at relevant workshops/meetings that are organized in that time-period. In addition, the NC will support the CBC to submit the relevant policy positions to the COMESA and discuss reforms in this regard.
5. Provide support for relevant research and policy support tasks as assigned by CBC, and develop a short report (3-5 pages) at the end of the engagement outlining:
  - The key activities undertaken over the course of the support to the Business Policy Programs Division of CBC – including the activities related to the policy positions above, and other research tasks undertaken to support CBC;
  - Challenges identified during this process and recommendations for future engagements and support.

## **EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND TIMELINES:**

The expected outputs and timelines are as follows:

**Activity 1: Monitor developments relating to implementation of the AfCFTA and its Protocols and other related issues of concern to COMESA; track policy issues relating to AfCFTA and COMESA's business environment and trade; and prioritize two issues to form basis for policy positions in consultation with CBC.**

Output 1: Long list of specific issues relating to AfCFTA and COMESA's business environment and trade shared with CBC; and two issues to form basis for policy positions identified and agreed upon with the CBC Secretariat.

Timeline: June 2021

**Activity 2: Undertake detailed research and analysis on two identified policy issues and develop two policy positions**

Output 2: Drafts of two policy positions submitted to CBC for review, and revised based on feedback received.

Timeline: First drafts to be submitted – July 2021; Revised drafts to be submitted – August 2021

**Activity 3: Support to organize two private sector dialogues (PSD), and present findings of the policy positions at the PSDs**

Output 3: Two PSDs organized through convening of sectoral working groups; and policy positions presented (PowerPoint presentation for each PSD to be shared with CBC Secretariat at least 10 days before the PSD).

Timeline: September/October 2021

**Activity 4: Disseminate policy positions, including to the COMESA, and undertake advocacy efforts**

Output 4: List of stakeholders to whom each of the policy positions was disseminated shared; list meetings/consultations undertaken and follow-up presentations delivered, including with the relevant policy organs within the COMESA, shared.

Timeline: October/November 2021

**Activity 5: Develop report outlining key activities undertaken during period of contract, key findings on policy issues identified through research engagements, challenges faced and recommendations for future engagements**

Output 5: Report submitted

Timeline: November 2021

## **EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

### **EDUCATION**

- Master's degree/advanced professional qualifications in economics, international trade, law, international relations, or related fields

### **EXPERIENCE**

- Minimum of 7 years of relevant working experience, including engagements relating to international trade and private sector development
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of international trade, as demonstrated knowledge/insight into AfCFTA and related topics
- Previous engagement with private and public sector stakeholders within the COMESA sub-region is an added advantage

### **SKILLS**

- Strong analytical and drafting skills
- Excellent communication, networking and writing skills
- Ability to convey complex information in an easily understandable and pedagogical manner
- Capacity to work effectively with the COMESA Business Council and ITC team

#### **LANGUAGES**

- Fluency in written and spoken English and French

#### **HOW TO APPLY**

Prospective candidates are invited to submit their application by sending their CV to Mr. Yvan Rwananga ([yrwananga@intracen.org](mailto:yrwananga@intracen.org)) and Ms. Vidya Nathaniel ([vnathaniel@intracen.org](mailto:vnathaniel@intracen.org)) by 14 May 2021.