**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**SELECTION OF INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** **CS/PROC/TRADECOM/SC.01**

**REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE:** **STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE**

1. ***The COMESA Secretariat*** is inviting Individual Consultants to submit their CV and Financial Proposal for the following services:

**CONSULTANCY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE**

The Terms of Reference defining the minimum technical requirements for these services are attached as Annex 1 to this Request for Expression of Interest.

**2. Only Individual Consultants are eligible for this assignment**

**3.** The maximum budget for this contract is **EURO 20,000 *for expert service/consultants’ fees only.*** Proposals exceeding this budget will not be accepted.

**4**. Your Expression of Interest must be presented as per Expression of Interest Forms attached as Annex 2 to this Request for Expression of Interest, in the English language and be accompanied by copies of all the indicated supporting documents. If the supporting documents are not in English, these shall be accompanied by a certified translation into English.

**5.** Your application documents clearly marked and email bearing the subject **“****CS/PROC/TRADECOM/SC.01 - STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE*”***, should be emailed to the following address:

[***procurement@comesa.int***](mailto:procurement@comesa.int)

6. The deadline for submission of your application, to the address indicated in Paragraph 5 above, is:

***15TH MARCH 2021 AT 16:00 hours***

7. ***Physical submission of applications is NOT allowed.***

**8.** Your CV will be evaluated against the following criteria.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Criteria** | **Maximum points allocated** |
| **1** | General qualifications | 20 |
| 2 | Understanding the methodology | 30 |
| 3 | Adequacy for the assignment | 30 |
| 4 | Experience in the region | 20 |
|  | **Total** | **100** |

**9.** Your proposal should be submitted as per the following instructions:

(i) PRICES:

The financial proposal shall be inclusive of all expenses deemed necessary by the Individual Consultant for the performance of the contract.

(ii) EVALUATION AND AWARD OF THE CONTRACT:

Expressions of Interest determined to be formally compliant to the requirements will be further evaluated technically.

An Expression of Interest is considered compliant to the requirements if:

* It fulfils the formal requirements (see Paragraphs 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 above),
* The financial proposal does not exceed the maximum available budget for the contract.

The award will be made to the applicant who obtains the highest technical score. Expressions of Interest not obtaining a minimum score of 70% will be rejected.

(iii) VALIDITY OF THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

Your Expression of Interest should be valid for a period of 90 days from the date of deadline for submission indicated in Paragraph 6 above.

10. The assignment is expected to commence within two (2) weeks from the signature of the contract.

11. Additional requests for information and clarifications can be made until 3 working days prior to deadline indicated in the paragraph 6 above, from:

The Procuring entity: ***COMESA Secretariat***

Contact person: ***Sandra M Chola***

E-mail: [***schola@comesa.int***](mailto:schola@comesa.int)***;***  **fmsiska@comesa.int** [***smwesigwa@comesa.int***](mailto:smwesigwa@comesa.int)***;***

The answers on the questions received will be sent to the Consultant and all questions received as well as the answers to them will be posted on the COMESA Secretariat’s website at the latest 7 working days before the deadline for submission of applications.

**ANNEXES:**

ANNEX 1: **Terms of Reference**

ANNEX 2**: Expression of Interest Forms**

**Sincerely,**

**Name:** Silver Mwesigwa

**Title:** Head of Procurement

**Date:** 26th February 2021

**ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Overview of COMESA Trade and Trade Challenges**

COMESA is the largest Regional Economic Community (REC) in Africa, offering the business community the best opportunities for overcoming the diminutive size of national economies. In fact, COMESA is one-third of the African continent, comprising of 21 Member States with a combined population of 586 million people and a total GDP of US$805 billion in 2019 (COMSTATS, 2020[[1]](#footnote-1)). COMESA successfully established a Free Trade Area (FTA) in October 2000 with the key aim being to facilitate regional integration through zero customs tariffs on goods produced and traded among the member states. There were 16 Member States participating in the COMESA FTA in 2020, namely: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tunisia, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe[[2]](#footnote-2) (COMESA, 2020[[3]](#footnote-3)).

As of 2018, intra-COMESA export of goods had risen to about $10.3 billion (from $1.5 Billion in 2000), excluding small-scale (informal) cross-border trade, which UNCTAD[[4]](#footnote-4) and ECA estimated to be about 30-40% of total trade. These figures are still relatively dismal in absolute terms, but the nominal (US$ terms) growth, at 33% per year over 2000-2018, is remarkable.

Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) have been identified as some of the key factors that serve as major challenges and constraints to the further expansion of trade and the establishment of new products and industries in COMESA. The factors ultimately adversely affect intra-COMESA trade. However, the proliferation, causes and consequences of NTBs and NTMs in COMESA is not well-known, particularly from an empirical perspective. It is therefore important to understand costs and benefits of NTBs and NTMs and their implications for trade and regional integration in COMESA, for particularly COMESA intra-regional trade and the COMESA FTA.

**1.2 Background on Non-Tariff Measures**

The United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2019)[[5]](#footnote-5), defines NTMs as policy measures other than ordinary customs tariffs that can potentially have an economic effect on international trade in goods, by changing the quantities traded, prices or both. NTMs are classified into two; NTMs imposed on imports and exports typically consisting of technical and non-technical measures. A detailed classification of NTMs is provided by (UNCTAD, 2019).

Domestic regulations may prescribe specific requirements for products contending to be sold in a given national market. Generally, such measures aim to overcome or reduce the impacts of perceived market imperfections, such as those related to negative externalities, risks for human, animal or plant health, or information asymmetries.

While, NTMs serve important regulatory purposes, they tend to restrict trade. Therefore, a key issue is whether governments in pursuing legitimate consumer protection goals are also deliberately or inadvertently restricting trade more than is necessary to achieve these goals (UNCTAD, 2019).

The state of play of the official proliferation of NTMs in COMESA is worthwhile to consider. As of December 2019, COMESA Member States had notified 494 measures to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) while 50 specific trade concerns had been raised with WTO.

**1.3 Non-Tariff Barriers in COMESA**

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) are the policies that induce an adverse impact on trade due to the specific discriminatory and protectionist intent (UNESCAP, 2019[[6]](#footnote-6)). Therefore, by definition, NTBs are a subset of NTMs, but encapsulate only those NTMs with adverse effects or impacts on trade due to discrimination and/or protectionism.

In view of COMESA’s mandate from Article 49 of the COMESA Treaty – on elimination of non-tariff barriers on Common Market goods – the REC has established and pursued a wide range of regulations, programmes and interventions to stem the proliferation of NTBs in the region. Nonetheless, NTBs often still arise. As of 1st June 2020, there were 14 officially recorded outstanding NTBs in COMESA according to data in the COMESA-EAC-SADC Online NTB Reporting and Elimination Mechanism. The most prevalent NTBs relate to customs and administrative entry procedures.

The implications of the state of play on NTMs and NTBs on intra-COMESA, the CMESA FTA, regional integration and international trade growth more broadly are empirically not well known.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The broad objective of the study is to determine the costs and benefits of NTMs and NTBs, and their implications for intra-COMESA trade and further regional integration through the COMESA FTA. Specifically, bearing in mind the definitional differences between NTMs and NTBs, the study seeks to:

1. Establish the typology, trends and probable sources of prevalent NTMs and NTBs in the COMESA region over the period 2016-2020;
2. Identify prevalent “behind-the-border”, “at-the-border” and “beyond-the-border” measures in the COMESA region;
3. Establish the major causes of the prevalent NTBs in COMESA over the period 2016-2020.
4. Determine the ad valorem equivalents (AVEs) of NTMs and NTBs in COMESA over the period 2016-2020;
5. Determine the net benefits/costs effects of the various NTMs and NTBs to the imposing and “aggrieved” Member States over the period 2016-2020;
6. Determine the net costs of the various NTMs and NTBs to the “aggrieved” Member States over the period 2016-2020;
7. Determine the extent to which the key barriers hinder the growth and expansion of intra-COMESA trade, including FTA the regime;
8. Offer concrete, actionable and stakeholder-specific solutions for resolving the prevalent NTBs in each of the category of NTBs; and
9. Offer general policy recommendations for benefit maximization and cost minimization of NTMs and NTBs in the COMESA region.

**3.0 SPECIFIC TASKS**

The specific tasks expected of the consultant will include the following:

1. Strictly adhere to best practices in research and policy analysis in the selection and application of relevant data collection and analytical approaches, including through adherence to a detailed review of the literature;
2. Devise the analytical methods for establishing the typology, trends and probably sources of prevalent NTMs and NTBs;
3. Towards estimating the AVEs of NTMs and NTBs, elaborate a three-step analysis in accordance to Glubler et al., (2016)[[7]](#footnote-7), estimating import demand elasticities in the first step, running a gravity model to estimate the impact of NTMs on import quantities in the second step, and transforming the effects into a price effect Ad Valorem Equivalents (AVEs) using previously computed import demand elasticities in the third step.
4. Devise the analytical methods for determining the net benefits of NTMs and NTBs for imposing and “aggrieved” Member States and establishing the extent to which these barriers hinder growth in intra-COMESA trade, including under the FTA regime;
5. Identify key international, regional and national-level sources of data required for the methodologies designated in (b)-(d) above;
6. Apply the devised methodology and: empirically describe the typology, trends and sources of prevalent NTMs and NTBs; accurately estimate the AVEs of NTMs and NTBs; and determine the net benefits of NTMs and NTBs for imposing and “aggrieved” Member States;
7. Vet and validate the results of the study with key subject-matter experts at the COMESA Secretariat and in selected Member States;
8. Contextualize the results of the study within the theoretical and empirical literature on NTMs, NTBs and other aspects to do with trade, trade facilitation and consumer protection; and
9. Offer actionable, stakeholder-specific solutions for resolving NTBs in COMESA and general recommendations on the best courses of action for COMESA to maximize on the benefits and minimize on the costs of NTMs and NTBs in the region.

**4.0 METHODOLOGY**

In line with the specific tasks outlined in Section 3.0, the consultant will be required to develop a comprehensive methodology for conducting the study. This will specifically elaborate all the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis that should be employed for this assignment. The methodology shall explicitly include a substantive review of subject-relevant literature.

For the AVE, the consultant should carefully consider adopting the three-step analysis by Glubler et al., (2016), as indicated in the Specific Tasks. The conventional approach to the measurement of the trade-restricting effect of NTMs is elaborated in Kee et al. (2009)[[8]](#footnote-8),[[9]](#footnote-9).

The methodology will be vetted by the COMESA Secretariat and ultimately agreed with the consultant. To the extent possible, the COMESA Secretariat will also provide the consultant with necessary support, guidance and documentation to facilitate the smooth execution of the study.

**5.0 EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND KEY TIMELINES**

The key outputs of the study will include:

1. **Inception Report** – This will provide critical details of how the assignment will be executed, including the interpretation and understanding of the terms of reference, a literature review plan, an elaboration of the methodology and study tools, and a proposed work plan (2 weeks after the signing of the contract).
2. **Draft Study Report** – This will be a technical report providing details on methodology implementation, preliminary findings contextualized within the literature, and the key recommendations (6 weeks after submission of an acceptable inception report).
3. **Final Study Report** – This will be a refined version of the draft report incorporating the comments from the COMESA Secretariat and other stakeholders (within 2 weeks of receiving the comments);
4. **A Policy Brief** or **Executive Summary** – this will be a high-level summary presenting the key findings and actionable recommendations of the study (1 week after the submission of the Final Study Report).

In addition to the above core outputs, the consultant will also deliver other outputs as may be required by the client, including regular assignment progress reports, study tools, datasets, and methodology application files, among others.

**6.0 LOCATION, DURATION AND SCOPE OF WORK**

* **Location:** The duty station during this assignment will be homebased.
* **Duration:** The assignment will be undertaken over a total performance period of 12 weeks, excluding major external dissemination events.
* **Scope of Work:** The study will cover all countries out of the 21 COMESA Member States where NTMs and NTBs have been notified and/or formally records, for both imposing and aggrieved countries.

**7.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

The suitable consultant should be an individual or a consortium of individuals with the following qualifications and experience:

1. Possess a Master’s degree in Economics, Econometrics, International Trade, Regional Integration and Development or related field;
2. Minimum of 5 years’ experience in applied research on regional;
3. Thorough knowledge and understanding of NTMs and NTBs;
4. Knowledge of the COMESA initiatives, systems and mechanisms for tracking NTMs and NTBs;
5. Knowledge of border trade-related regional integration issues in COMESA;
6. Proven experience and skills in conducting trade and economic research using quantitative/qualitative analysis tools;
7. Strong interpersonal and communications skills;
8. Strong computer skills, especially in statistical and/or econometric packages and applications;
9. Fluent in both written and spoken English. Ability to communicate in French or any of the local languages on the project border communities will be an added advantage.

**8. REPORTING**

The Consultant will report to the Director of Trade and Customs Division COMESA Secretariat. He/ she shall be directly supervised by Research Economist in the TRADECOM II-ACP project. Deliverables will become final once all tasks requirements are completed and approval is granted by COMESA Secretariat.

**9. FEES FOR THE CONSULTANCY**

A lump-sum amount of Euro 20,000 shall be paid for this assignment.

The assignment does not foresee travel outside the consultant’s duty station. However, should travel outside the duty station become necessary subject to the approval of the COMESA Secretariat, the consultant will be paid a daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and compensated for transport and other logistics at standard COMESA rates.

**ANNEX 2: Expression of Interest Forms**

[A. COVER LETTER FOR THE EXPESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE PROJECT 11](#_Toc267927845)

[B. CURRICULUM VITAE 13](#_Toc267927846)

[C. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL 17](#_Toc267927847)

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# A. COVER LETTER FOR THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE PROJECT

REFERENCE NUMBER: CS/PROC/TRADECOM/SC.01

REQUEST FOR SERVICES TITLE: **STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE**

[*Location, Date*]

To: COMESA Secretariat

Dear Sirs:

I, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for the **STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE** in accordance with your Request for Expression of Interests number *CS/PROC/TRADECOM/SC.01,* dated [*insert date*] for the sum of [*Insert amount(s) in words and figures*]. This amount is inclusive of all expenses deemed necessary for the performance of the contract in accordance with the Terms of Reference requirements.

I hereby declare that all the information and statements made in my CV are true and accept that any misinterpretation contained in it may lead to my disqualification.

My proposal is binding upon me for the period indicated in Paragraph 9(iii) of this Request for Expression of Interest.

I undertake, if my Proposal is accepted, to initiate the consulting services related to the assignment not later than the date indicated in Paragraph 10 of the Request for Expression of Interest, and to be available for the entire duration of the contract as specified in the Terms of Reference.

I understand you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

Yours sincerely,

Signature [*In full and initials*]:

Name and Title of Signatory:

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

***[insert full name]***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Family name:** | *[insert the name]* |
| 1. **First names:** | *[insert the names in full]* |
| 1. **Date of birth:** | *[insert the date]* |
| 1. **Nationality:** | *[insert the country or countries of citizenship]* |
|  |  |
| 1. **Physical address:** 2. **Postal address** 3. **Phone:** 4. **E-mail:** | *[insert the physical address]*  *[Insert Postal Address]*  *[insert the phone and mobile no.]*  *[Insert E-mail address(es)* |
| 1. **Education:** |  |
|  |  |
| **Institution:**  **[Date from – Date to]** | **Degree(s) or Diploma(s) obtained:** |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[insert the name of the diploma and the specialty/major]* |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[insert the name of the diploma and the specialty/major]* |

**10. Language skills:** (Indicate competence on a scale of 1 to 5) (1 – excellent; 5 – basic)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Language** | **Reading** | **Speaking** | **Writing** |
| *[insert the language]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* |
| *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* | *[insert the no.]* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **11. Membership of professional bodies:** | *[indicate the name of the professional body]* |
| **12. Other skills:** | *[insert the skills]* |
| **13. Present position:** | *[insert the name]* |
| **14. Years of experience:** | *[insert the no]* |
| **15. Key qualifications:** (Relevant to the assignment)  *[insert the key qualifications]* | |

**16. Specific experience in the region:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Date from - Date to** |
| *[insert the country]* | *[indicate the month and the year]* |
| *................* | *......................* |
| *[insert the country]* | *[indicate the month and the year]* |

**17. Professional experience:**

| **Date from – Date to** | **Location of the assignment** | **Company& reference person (name & contact details)** | **Position** | **Description** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[indicate the country and the city]* | ***Name of the Company:***  ***Address of the company:***  ***Phone:***  ***Fax:***  ***Email:***  ***Name and title of the reference person from the company:*** | *[indicate the exact name and title and if it was a short term or a long term position]* | ***Name of the Assignment:***  ***Beneficiary of the Assignment:***  ***Brief description of the Assignment:***  ***Responsibilities:*** |
| ................ | …………….. | ……………………. | …………… | ………………………………………………………………………….. |
| *[indicate the month and the year]* | *[indicate the country and the city]* | ***Name of the Company:***  ***Address of the company:***  ***Phone:***  ***Fax:***  ***Email:***  ***Name and title of the reference person from the company:*** | *[indicate the exact name and title and if it was a short term or a long term position]* | ***Name of the Assignment:***  ***Beneficiary of the Assignment:***  ***Brief description of the Assignment:***  ***Responsibilities:*** |

1. **Other relevant information:** (e.g. Publications)

***[insert the details]***

***19. Statement:***

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes myself, my qualifications, and my experience. I understand that any wilful misstatement described herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal, if engaged.

I hereby declare that at any point in time, at the COMESA Secretariat’s request, I will provide certified copies of all documents to prove that I have the qualifications and the professional experience as indicated in points 8 and 14 above**[[10]](#footnote-10),** documents which are attached to this CV as photocopies.

By signing this statement, I also authorize the COMESA Secretariat to contact my previous or current employers indicated at point 14 above, to obtain directly reference about my professional conduct and achievements.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Date: |  |

**ATTACHMENTS:** ***1) Proof of qualifications indicated at point 9***  
 ***2) Proof of working experience indicated at point 15***

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# C. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** CS/PROC/TRADECOM/SC/01-**STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON INTRA-COMESA TRADE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TOTAL FINANCIAL OFFER** |  |

*[Please insert the Total Financial Offer in words]*.

Signature [*In full and initials*]:

Name and Title of Signatory:

1. <https://comstat.comesa.int/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Implying that DR Congo, Eritrea, Eswatini (under derogation due to participation in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU)), Ethiopia and Libya were yet to establish the provisions for participation in the FTA. . [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.comesa.int/tunisia-ready-to-trade-under-the-comesa-fta/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Zarrilli, S. and M. Lopez. 2020. “Leveraging digital solutions to seize the potential of informal cross-border trade”, © Copyright United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Palais des Nations, 8-14, Av. de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, 29 April (<https://unctad.org/news/leveraging-digital-solutions-seize-potential-informal-cross-border-trade>) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditctab2019d5_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UNESCAP. 2019 “Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2019: Navigating Non-tariff Measures towards Sustainable Development”, United Nationals Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Flagship Report, October (<https://www.unescap.org/publications/APTIR2019>) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Grübler, J., M. Ghodsi and R. Stehrer (2016), ‘Assessing the Impact of Non-Tariff Measures on Imports,’ wiiw, Vienna, February [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Kee, H.L, A. Nicita, and M. Olarreaga. 2009. “Estimating Trade Restrictiveness Indices”, The Economic Journal, 119: 172-199. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The conventional approach is to estimate AVEs from the partial correlation between the presence of NTMs at the importer-product level and the value of trade flows. Kee et al. (2009) performed the estimation product-by-product at the HS6 level, aggregating imports from all sources. In the literature, this approach has a number of problems, some of which Kee et al. (2009) attempt to resolve in various ways. The consultant will be required to review the problems of this approach and offer proposed solutions that would resolve them. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ***The proof of stated qualifications shall be in the form of the copies of the degrees and diploma obtained, while for the professional experience the proof shall be either acknowledgement letters from the previous employers or copies of the Purchase Order/ Contract signed with them.***  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)