

Terms of reference (ToRs) for the procurement of services above the EU threshold

Project title:

Support to the ECOWAS Commission on the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

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Country:

ECOWAS Region

Transaction number:

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Subject of the tender procedure:

Short-Term Expert (STE) Pool for Trade Advisory in the ECOWAS Region

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List of abbreviations

AEO	Authorised Economic Operator
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AO	Authorised Operator
AV	Auftragsverantwortlicher (Commission manager of the GIZ Project)
AVB	General terms and conditions of contract ('Terms and Conditions') for supplying services and work
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CD	Capacity Development
CTP	Common Trade Policy
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CW	Capacity Works (GIZ's management model for sustainable development)
e-CO	Electronic Certificate of Origin
ECOTIS	ECOWAS Trade Information System
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
HoP	Head of Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KOMP	Cost-output monitoring and forecast
LOI	Letter of intent
LTE	Long-Term Expert
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Member State
NEDA	GIZ's sector Network Economic Development in Africa
NTB	Non-Tariff Barrier
REC	Regional Economic Community

**Subject of the tender procedure: Short-Term Expert (STE)
Pool for Trade Advisory in the ECOWAS Region**

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RMO	Risk Management Office
SIGMAT	<i>Système Interconnecté de Gestion des Marchandises en Transit</i> (in English: Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit)
(S)STE	(Senior) Short-Term Expert
TiS	Trade in Services
ToR	Terms of reference

0. Context

0.1. Initial Situation:

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, signed in 2018 by 54 African countries, aims to promote economic integration and create the world's largest free trade area, covering 1.3 billion people. The ECOWAS region, home to around 370 million people, is one of the most integrated regional trade areas in Africa and plays a key role in AfCFTA implementation.

Over the past decades, ECOWAS has created important foundations for regional integration through mechanisms such as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), the Common External Tariff (CET), and progressive steps towards free movement of persons and goods. Nevertheless, gaps remain between regional frameworks and national implementation, which affects the region's ability to fully leverage the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA.

As of November 2025, eleven of the twelve ECOWAS Member States have ratified the AfCFTA agreement and its current protocols with the exception of Benin. Uniform implementation of the AfCFTA in the ECOWAS region is a priority for the ECOWAS Commission but poses economic, legal and administrative challenges for the ECOWAS Member States. Many countries face complex tariff adjustment processes, limited institutional coordination between ministries and agencies, and the need to upgrade customs systems and infrastructure to meet AfCFTA requirements, particularly with respect to rules of origin, digitalisation and border procedures. Beyond the technical aspects of implementation, capacity constraints remain a major issue.

Across the region, there is a considerable transparency and information deficit regarding the AfCFTA, affecting government institutions, business associations, and civil society. National implementation strategies are at varying stages of development, and information on progress, opportunities, and regulatory changes is often not accessible or not communicated in a user-friendly manner. This slows down private sector readiness, undermines trust, and limits early adoption of AfCFTA-related opportunities by SMEs, women- and youth-led enterprises, and informal cross-border traders.

Trade in Services (TiS) is a particularly dynamic sector in West Africa, generating significant contributions to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, and digital innovation. While sectors such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), transport, tourism, financial services, and professional services hold strong potential, progress in implementing the AfCFTA TiS Protocol is uneven. Regulatory fragmentation, limited data on services trade, insufficient negotiation capacity, and varying levels of digital readiness make it difficult for Member States to align commitments and harmonise domestic regulations. These gaps hinder the region's ability to fully leverage TiS as a driver of competitiveness and regional integration.

0.2. Brief description of the project

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), in partnership with the ECOWAS Commission, as well as public and private partners in the twelve ECOWAS Member States, is responsible for implementing the project "*Support to the ECOWAS Commission in the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*" between January 2023 and March 2029. The project is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-financed by the European Union (EU).

The overarching objective of the project is to strengthen the regional and national frameworks required for the effective implementation of the AfCFTA. To achieve this, the programme provides technical support, policy advice, and capacity development to public institutions and private-sector actors at regional and national levels.

The project focuses its activities on three target groups: 1) ECOWAS Commission 2) public trade institutions including ministries responsible for trade, AfCFTA National Committees, and national customs administrations, 3) Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly women- and youth-led businesses.

With regard to the **ECOWAS Commission**, the project works closely with the Directorates of Trade and of Customs Union & Taxation. It supports policy formulation, strategy development, and the organisation of regional technical and coordination meetings, including those related to rules of origin, TiS negotiations, and customs cooperation. In addition, the programme contributes to the regional roll-out of the Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit (SIGMAT) and the electronic certificate of origin (e-CO).

For the **public trade institutions**, the project supports national AfCFTA implementation committees, national trade facilitation committees, and relevant line ministries in organising national AfCFTA-related events, strengthening institutional capacities, developing strategies, and improving coordination among key stakeholders. It also cooperates with national customs administrations to advance the implementation and operationalisation of SIGMAT and the e-CO.

Regarding **SMEs**, the project promotes greater private-sector readiness for the AfCFTA. Activities include awareness-raising campaigns, capacity-building workshops, and outreach through Chambers of Commerce and business associations. Special emphasis is placed on women- and youth-led enterprises to ensure they can access new market opportunities, understand AfCFTA requirements, and benefit from regional trade reforms.

The project works on five outputs:

Output 1 aims to strengthen the contribution of the ECOWAS Commission to the coordination of positions of its Member States in the AfCFTA negotiations. While the main negotiation rounds have been completed, countries are now submitting their tariff offers, services commitments, and other trade-related proposals, which remain subject to further alignment at the level of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) before submission to the AfCFTA Secretariat. A key focus will be on the TiS. To support ECOWAS and its Member States in making informed decisions, the project facilitates the development of analyses on trade barriers to TiS and supports the definition of priorities for TiS policies. Stronger coordination among the Member States will enable ECOWAS to speak with one voice in the AfCFTA negotiations (module objective), ensuring that they introduce and defend common positions. In the long run, this will facilitate the implementation of the AfCFTA in the ECOWAS Region.

Output 2 aims to strengthen coordination among Member States on transnational legal and technical instruments. The underlying assumption is that modern regional trade facilitation instruments and implementation guidelines will strengthen ECOWAS's capacity to implement the AfCFTA (module objective). To achieve this, the project supports Member States' active involvement in developing uniform framework conditions for the technical implementation of the AfCFTA. Moreover, the project supports the ECOWAS Directorate of Customs Union & Taxation in the development of technical studies on regional trade facilitation aspects such as transit procedures and the organization of exchange forums to foster dialogue and coordination.

Output 3 aims to strengthen the technical capacities of relevant line ministries in selected ECOWAS Member States to facilitate the implementation of AfCFTA provisions. The underlying assumption is that technical support in developing implementation plans and national roadmaps will strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for the effective implementation of the Agreement (module objective). The project supports the involvement of the private sector in these processes and organizes capacity-building sessions for them on the AfCFTA, with a particular focus on relevant services sectors.

Output 4 aims to improve access to AfCFTA-related information for Member States, the private sector and civil society. With improved access, private sector actors and civil society will be better equipped to engage with decision-makers at both regional and national levels, while businesses will be better prepared to trade under the AfCFTA framework. To achieve this, the project supports the development and updating of information portals at both regional and national levels, ensuring that they also provide clear guidance on regulations affecting the cross-border delivery of services. In addition, the project supports the organization of information campaigns and capacity-building initiatives for businesses in ECOWAS Member States seeking to export services, with a particular focus on women- and youth-led enterprises.

Output 5 aims to support ECOWAS Member States in expanding agreements on regional and continental climate-friendly TiS. The underlying assumption is that strengthening agreements on climate-friendly TiS will promote sustainable economic growth, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance the region's resilience to climate change. To achieve this, the project supports the development of harmonized TiS tools that incorporate social and climate provisions. Moreover, it facilitates processes for transparently integrating climate-smart solutions into regulatory instruments governing mutual recognition arrangements on selected services sectors.

The project has both a BMZ and EU logframe as it is co-financed:

BMZ module objective:

The institutional and regulatory framework conditions for implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) have improved in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region.

BMZ module objective indicators:

1. 40 coordinated positions were submitted by ECOWAS Member States in the negotiation and implementation processes of Phase II and III of the African Free Trade Area Agreement, of which 1 was on e-commerce and 8 with the involvement of women's interest groups.
2. 12 regulations, technical strategies or conceptual approaches to implement relevant commitments of the AfCFTA agreement have been submitted by the ECOWAS Commission to the Member States for decision.
3. 5 ECOWAS technical recommendations on AfCFTA implementation were each taken into account by 5 Member States in their implementation plans and guidelines on trade policy, customs modernisation and trade facilitation.

BMZ output objectives and indicators:

BMZ Output 1: The ECOWAS Commission's contribution to coordinating the positions of ECOWAS Member States in the further negotiations of the AfCFTA agreement has been strengthened.

- 1.1 25 strategic position papers and technical background analyses were developed by the ECOWAS Commission with the Member States, 1 on e-commerce and 1 on further AfCFTA negotiation rounds.
- 1.2 18 cooperation forums to coordinate the AfCFTA negotiation positions of the Member States were organised under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission.

BMZ Output 2: Coordination among ECOWAS Member States on the design of the technical framework for AfCFTA implementation has been strengthened.

- 2.1 15 technical studies or instruments on the regional implementation of AfCFTA regulations have been submitted to the Member States for validation.
- 2.2 10 exchange forums among the Member States have been held to develop the technical framework for AfCFTA implementation.

BMZ Output 3: The technical capacities of relevant ministries and the private sector in ECOWAS Member States to shape the implementation of AfCFTA provisions have been strengthened.

- 3.1. 12 implementation plans or guidelines in Member States have been developed conceptually and with the involvement of the private sector by the relevant ministries for the implementation of selected AfCFTA commitments.
- 3.2. 15 employees from relevant ministries and the private sector in the focus countries confirm on the basis of 30 examples how they use what they have learnt from technical advisory services in their work to implement the AfCFTA agreement.

BMZ Output 4: Access to information for Member States, the private sector and civil society on the implementation of the AfCFTA and export opportunities has been improved in the ECOWAS region.

- 4.1 10 information portals in ECOWAS Member States and at the ECOWAS Commission on the AfCFTA and its implementation, which provide target group-specific export options for women entrepreneurs and traders, are established or expanded.
- 4.2 100 civil society organizations receive targeted training on relevant AfCFTA topics, including TiS.

BMZ Output 5: ECOWAS Member States have expanded agreements on regional and continental climate-friendly TiS.

- 5.1 15 climate-friendly technical concepts for the implementation of the AfCFTA Protocol on TiS have been developed by ECOWAS Member States.

Additional BMZ indicators (standard indicators):

- Number of people who have directly participated in municipal, regional or national policy- or decision-making processes
- Number of enterprises that have been supported in improving competitiveness

EU overall programme objective:

To increase intraregional, continental, and bilateral TiS, enabling higher integration into regional and global value chains and enhance benefits from all trade agreements (Multilateral, Continental, RECs, and bilateral Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

EU specific programme objective:

1. Increased services liberalization and exports for selected services sectors at multilateral, continental, regional or bilateral level.
2. Number of measures to harmonize TiS regulations at national and regional levels adopted by ECOWAS Member States, disaggregated by country.
3. Number of measures aimed at increasing services sector exports adopted by ECOWAS Member States, disaggregated by country.

EU Output 1: Improved availability of analysis on TiS barriers and policy prioritization, developed in collaboration with the private sector at national level.

- 1.1. 20 sector-specific TiS recommendations submitted to ECOWAS Commission for discussions with the support of the EU.
- 1.2. 15 policy dialogue initiatives supported on TiS barriers at national (and regional) level, disaggregated by country.
- 1.3. 15 studies supported, disaggregated by country.

EU Output 2: Enhanced capacity of relevant public sector actors on drafting and operationalizing policies and implementation instruments.

- 0.3. 20 TiS related policies, regulations, instruments or legislations developed/ revised, disaggregated by country.
- 0.4. 7 national roadmaps for the implementation of relevant policy commitments supported by the intervention, disaggregated by country.
- 0.5. 10.000 public and private sector actors who have received targeted trainings in relevant services sectors, disaggregated by sex, topic and country.

EU Output 3: Enhanced capacity and awareness among the private sector, especially SME's on services exports and the and the identification of trade opportunities.

- 3.1. 400 businesses/ institutions and organizations reached promoting regulations and business concepts for export of services, disaggregated by country.
- 3.2. 400 women and youth-led business representatives trained who increased their knowledge and/or skills in identifying and exploring export opportunities, disaggregated by sex, topic and country.
- 3.3. 25 platforms on services exchange functional, disaggregated by country.

EU Output 4: Enhanced availability of harmonized TiS tools and knowledge products / measures incorporating social and climate provisions, developed with private sector input.

- 4.1. 200 business development products and tools developed or supported.
- 4.2. 10 common social and climate recommendations developed.
- 4.3. 500 information channels used to inform private sector actors, including women and youth led businesses about TiS issues and opportunities, disaggregated by country.

The objective of this tender is to provide technical short-term expertise on demand to national and regional governmental stakeholders and deliver relevant capacity-building measures for Output 1-5.

1. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

2.1 Term

The expected term of the contract for services must be specified in the 'Special terms and conditions of contract'. The definitive term and service delivery period are set out in the contract award notification.

2.2 Objectives, indicators, work packages, milestones

The Contractor will contribute to the implementation to all outputs (1-5) of the project. The overall goal of this assignment is to support the implementation of the AfCFTA in the ECOWAS region by providing advisory services and capacity building for both national and regional governmental as well as private sector stakeholders. When the need arises from the project's partners in a particular thematic area, experts are called upon to provide demand-driven advisory services and/or capacity building to national and regional government partners and/or the project itself.

The contract is for the provision of a pool of short-term experts to cover various issues relating to TiS in the ECOWAS region in general and the programme objectives in particular.

The services to be provided under the contract include measures for human capacity development and organisational and strategy advice in the following thematic areas:

- Barriers to Trade in Services (TiS)
- Support for further AfCFTA negotiations, with a focus on TiS
- Implementation of AfCFTA regulations at the national and regional levels
- Customs procedures (e.g. Anticipated Decisions and Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) program)
- Improving access to trade information, including the updating of content and improving the user-friendliness of trade portals
- Development of export strategies for SMEs
- Promoting environmentally and socially sustainable trade practices (Green Trade)

The contractor will identify and manage a pool of short-term experts (STE) that will assist the reform initiatives in the programme's areas of intervention. The contractor will be in charge of the pool of experts. The selection and deployment of experts will be managed by the STE pool coordinator who will be based at the project office in Abuja, Nigeria. The pool coordinator is expected to attend relevant meetings and workshops with partners and with the project, including stakeholder consultations, inception and validation meetings, technical committee meetings, as well as internal planning and review meetings.

While certain assignments may be carried out remotely from the experts' home countries, most of the assignments will require travel to the ECOWAS Member States. Hence, all short-term experts need to be able and willing to travel to and in the ECOWAS region. In order to be able to fully adapt to the needs and priorities of the political partners, the sequencing of tasks will be defined during the process. This requires a high degree of flexibility from the contractor in terms of available experts and timing.

The contractor is responsible for the following tasks:

- Determining with the GIZ team the required areas of expertise

- Identifying and proposing suitable experts from the STE pool
- Selecting experts together with the GIZ team
- Subcontracting, briefing and backstopping of experts
- Organizing and conducting workshops and training activities

Expected services that may be included in the three work packages are:

- Technical, operational, and strategic policy advisory services
- Support for developing, drafting and reviewing reports, studies, analyses, position papers, guidelines, action plans, strategies, implementation plans, legislation, regulations
- Research and analysis, including diagnostic missions to assess implementation efforts and identify obstacles
- Facilitation of private sector participation in policy-making processes, facilitation of dialogue and coordination between public and private sector actors
- Facilitation of national and regional workshops and conferences, including interpretation and translation services and providing expert inputs
- Human capacity development related services
- Deliverables will be in English, French, or Portuguese, depending on the context of the activity

All training materials and methodologies that are being developed related to the contract should be available in English, French, and Portuguese and should be made available to the ECOWAS Commission and the MS to ensure sustainable knowledge transfer and are available for future capacity-building initiatives.

The specific scope of services includes but is not limited to the following:

Work package 1: Support and advisory for public and private sector stakeholders related to trade policy, TiS and, trade facilitation in the ECOWAS region (*20% part of Output 1 / 25% part of Output 2 / 20% part of Output 3 / 20% part of Output 4 / 15% part of Output 5*):

Expected activities

- Support the development of draft regulations, guidelines, action plans, or strategies related to trade facilitation and economic integration in the ECOWAS region, with a specific focus on the AfCFTA and TiS.
- Conduct analyses on TiS regulatory frameworks, trade statistics and customs procedures to strengthen economic integration and trade facilitation.
- Develop evidence-based proposals or position papers to enhance the business and investment climate for private sector actors, with a particular focus on women and youth entrepreneurs in the ECOWAS region.
- Analyse Green Trade opportunities in the ECOWAS region and propose measures to align trade facilitation with environmental sustainability.
- Conduct sectoral studies or analyses to assess trade barriers, growth potential, and necessary reforms for enhancing SME participation and private sector engagement in regional trade.
- Support the development and implementation of regional and national AfCFTA communication strategies, including organizing communication campaigns and updating information platforms to make them more user-friendly and accessible.

- Support the organization of regional conferences to strengthen trade facilitation within ECOWAS and develop the technical framework for AfCFTA implementation.

The exact timelines for the individual assignments will be discussed after awarding the contract, as soon as the project's partners have made requests.

Work package 2: Capacity-building and organisational advice for public and private sector stakeholders to strengthen sustainable trade in the ECOWAS Region. *(20% part of Output 1 / 20% part of Output 2 / 20% part of Output 3 / 20% part of Output 4 / 20% part of Output 5)*

Expected activities

- Identify capacity needs together with the ECOWAS Commission and partners in the Member States to define capacity assessments, workshops, trainings, and on-the-job interventions/coaching.
- Design and deliver capacity development modules, training packages, and workshops to enhance stakeholders' understanding of relevant AfCFTA protocols and strengthen their ability to formulate policies, regulations, and implementation instruments.
- Design and deliver trainings for regional authorities, national agencies, and private sector-led groups on trade facilitation instruments, with a particular focus on transit-related instruments (e.g. SIGMAT, Guarantee Mechanism, E-Certificate).
- Design and deliver capacity-building initiatives to establish a pool of MS resource persons on trade facilitation and TiS protocols/processes.
- Design and deliver training on negotiating skills for AfCFTA negotiators and for the private sector to better represent their perspectives in negotiations.
- Support the development of export strategies for SMEs.
- Provide coaching, study tours, and technical guidance for personnel in targeted agencies of the Member States and the ECOWAS Commission on developing frameworks for bilateral and/or regional MRAs.
- Provide coaching and technical guidance for the public and private sector to design climate- and socially friendly business development tools and policies for service exports.

The exact timelines for the individual assignments will be discussed after awarding the contract, as soon as the project's partners have made requests.

Work package 3: Support to project strategic planning and update of Capacity WORKS (CW) tools. *(20% part of Output 1 / 20% part of Output 2 / 20% part of Output 3 / 20% part of Output 4 / 20% part of Output 5)*

Expected activities

- Review the Programme's capacity development strategy as well as other CW instruments applied by the Programme on an annual basis.
- Facilitation of workshops with the project team and counterparts to revise CW tools.
- Prepare, conduct and document internal and partner workshops, such as annual planning workshops, technical and steering committee meetings, etc.

The exact timelines for the individual assignments will be discussed after awarding the contract, as soon as the project's partners have made requests.

2.3 Project and knowledge management requirements

Requirements on the assignment of experts:

- The contractor is responsible for selecting, preparing, training and steering the experts assigned to carry out the advisory services.

Requirements on equipment and operating costs:

- The contractor makes the required equipment and consumables available and covers their operating and administrative costs.

Requirements on expenditure management and cost control:

- The contractor manages costs and expenditures, accounting processes and invoicing in line with GIZ requirements.

Monitoring and reporting requirements:

The contractor plays an active role in the results-based monitoring of the project. Regular monitoring activities must cover at least the following areas:

- Degree to which activities are implemented
- Degree to which the contractor has contributed to achieving the objectives and outputs listed in section 2.2 of these ToRs
- Other intended or unintended results that have occurred in the contractor's sphere of responsibility
- Results that have occurred outside the contractor's direct sphere of responsibility, such as for example new relevant policies or new actors. The tenderer should examine and assess, whether these results occurred due to the project's intervention
- Risks

The contractor reports to GIZ regularly in accordance with the version of the General Terms and Conditions of Contract for supplying services and work on behalf of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ AVB) that is applicable to this contract.

In addition to the reports provided for in GIZ's General Terms and Conditions of Contract, the contractor submits the following reports:

- Inception report with the concrete implementation strategy. The strategy will have to be approved by the GIZ.
- Contributions to the report to GIZ's commissioning parties as well as to public relation material concerning all outputs.

The above-mentioned reports shall be written in English.

The contractor is required to have regular update meetings with the GIZ project team.

Requirements for company-wide learning, knowledge and innovation:

- Contributions to conferences, if necessary
- The contractor's experts might be involved in online sessions of GIZ's sector network Economic Development in Africa (NEDA).

- The contractor provides support in implementing a project evaluation with special emphasis on ensuring the effectiveness of the knowledge management process.
- The contractor shares the training material and methodology with the project team. In addition, lessons learnt, business cases and recommendations are provided to GIZ.
- The contractor expresses willingness, if required, to support project assistants or staff members on temporary placements who, in the context of GIZ's separately financed training programmes for junior employees, work in and undertake special tasks for the project.

Backstopping requirements:

The contractor ensures appropriate backstopping. The following services form part of the standard backstopping package. In accordance with GIZ's General Terms and Conditions for supplying services and work on behalf of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, these services – as well as the ancillary personnel costs – must be priced into the fee schedules of the staff listed in the tender:

- The contractor's responsibility for its own staff;
- Ensuring the flow of information between GIZ and the contractor's field staff;
- Process-oriented technical and conceptual steering of the consulting services;
- Steering adaptations to changing framework conditions;
- Performance monitoring;
- Ensuring the administrative management of the project;
- Ensuring compliance with reporting requirements;
- Technical support by the contractor's staff for its personnel on the ground;
- Making local use of and sharing the lessons learned by the contractor with the GIZ team.

2.4 Data protection and information security

The provisions on data protection and information security of the current version of GIZ's General Terms and Conditions of Contract (section 1.11 Data protection) apply.

The performance of the contract may be associated with the processing of personal data by the contractor, such as (but not limited to) names and contact information. In such cases, the contractor shall act as an independent DATA CONTROLLER and must alone comply with ALL applicable data protection obligations, including those stemming from regional and local laws. The contractor shall process personal data only when a given goal cannot be reasonably attained without such data. The data protection principles such as lawfulness, data minimization, accuracy, purpose limitation, storage limitation, transparency, integrity and confidentiality, and accountability, as well as the numerous rights of the data subject must be paid due attention. The GIZ is NOT in any way responsible for such processing.

Whenever the contractor executes the instructions of a partner to the GIZ with regard to such processing, the partner shall be the data controller, and the data processing shall be carried out in accordance with the partner's instructions as well as laws and standards to which it is subject.

If the contractor is not subject to the GDPR and the applicable laws do not contain any explanation on the data protection principles and rights mentioned here, the definitions and meanings provided by the GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) should be considered.

2.5 Other requirements

Safeguards and gender measures with specific reference to services:

In order to promote gender equality and avoid or mitigate possible unintended negative impacts in its area of responsibility, the contractor should implement the following measures:

- **Gender equality:** The AfCFTA project is a GG1 project with particular focus on improving the trading environment in the ECOWAS region for female and youth-led businesses. Gender considerations are cross-cutting across all activities, but are especially relevant for BMZ Outputs 3 to 5. The contractor should ensure that women and young entrepreneurs are meaningfully included in consultations and capacity-building measures, provide sex-disaggregated data for reporting, and proactively identify and address gender-specific barriers linked to services trade, such as access to finance, compliance processes or digital skills gaps.
- **Environmental protection and climate action (climate change mitigation/adaptation):** The project contributes to climate-friendly trade under BMZ Output 5 as well as EU Output 4, which aims to enhance the availability of harmonised Trade in Services (TiS) tools and knowledge products that integrate social and climate considerations. In addition, under BMZ Output 2, the digitalisation of trade procedures plays a significant role in reducing environmental impacts by accelerating processes, decreasing paper consumption and lowering the overall carbon footprint of cross-border operations. In general, the contractor should adopt climate-sensitive approaches in the organisation of activities, for instance by prioritising paperless workflows, environmentally responsible travel planning and other measures that minimise environmental impact as outlined in the GIZ Corporate Sustainable Handprint (CSH) guidelines.
- **Conflict and context sensitivity:** The contractor is expected to follow a clear Do-No-Harm approach. Some ECOWAS countries operate in fragile or politically sensitive environments, and project activities must not exacerbate local tensions or contribute to unequal access to benefits. The contractor should pay close attention to local dynamics, ensure that activities do not reinforce exclusion or competition between stakeholders, and propose solutions that encourage cooperation, transparency and peaceful engagement.

The contractor's staffing profile should be balanced in terms of gender and age.

3. Technical-methodological concept

In this section, the tenderer is required to present the technical-methodological concept for completing the tasks listed in section 2 and achieving the set objectives. In addition, the tenderer must describe the design of the project management process.

3.1 Interpretation of objectives

(section 1.1 of the assessment grid)

– Not applicable –

3.2 Processes and actors in the partner system
(section 1.2 of the assessment grid)

– Not applicable –

3.3 Strategy
(section 1.3 of the assessment grid)

The strategy for delivering the services in the tender is the core element of the technical-methodological concept. It is composed of the following elements:

- Procedure for achieving the objectives stated in section 2.2 of these ToRs
- Development of partnerships with the relevant actors
- Approaches for leverage effects and measures for scaling-up
- Consideration of environmental and social compatibility requirements (including gender equality)
- Appropriate consideration of further requirements

3.3.1 Strategic approach to achieving the objectives mentioned in the ToRs
(section 1.3.1 of the assessment grid)

The tenderer is required to describe and justify the approach it plans to adopt in order to achieve the milestones, objectives and results (see section 2) for which it is responsible.

3.3.2 Building partnerships with the relevant actors
(section 1.3.2 of the assessment grid)

The tenderer is required to develop and describe a strategy for developing the cooperation with the actors in the partner system who are relevant for the implementation of the services in the tender. The project partnerships already mentioned in section 1 must also be taken into account.

3.3.3 Approaches for leverage effects and measures for scaling-up
(section 1.3.3 of the assessment grid)

The tenderer is required to state whether there are promising approaches for leverage effects beyond the measures mentioned in section 2 (for example through targeted measures in the field of 'knowledge management') and to describe them. In doing so, the tenderer is required to present and explain measures that promote both horizontal and vertical scaling-up. In particular, the tenderer must submit proposals on how innovations that have been developed in the context of implementation can be disseminated beyond the sphere of influence of the project.

3.3.4 Consideration of environmental and social compatibility requirements
(section 1.3.4 of the assessment grid)

Gender equality

The tenderer is required to outline in the tender how gender aspects can be integrated into trade policy advice, trade facilitation and trade in services, and how potential negative impacts on gender equality in these areas can be prevented. The tenderer should also explain how

experts in the respective trade-related fields can contribute to improving gender equality (see also relevant requirements in section 2.5).

Environmental protection and climate action (climate change mitigation/adaptation)

The tenderer is required to outline in the tender how it can prevent negative impacts on the environment and the climate in its area of responsibility and, in addition, how it can contribute to improving the environmental and climate situation through corresponding measures (see also relevant requirements in section 2.5).

Conflict and context sensitivity

The tenderer is required to outline in the tender how it is planning its activities in the context of conflicts or violence and what specific measures it has adopted for conflict- and context-sensitive implementation (see also relevant requirements in section 2.5).

Gender equality	3 points out of 10 (maximum)
Environmental protection and climate action (climate change mitigation/adaptation)	3 points out of 10 (maximum)
Conflict and context sensitivity	4 points out of 10 (maximum)

3.4 Project management

(section 1.4 of the assessment grid)

In this section, the tenderer presents the operational plan for implementing the services in the tender, describes the procedure for coordination with GIZ or the project and the project partners, and explains its backstopping strategy and the monitoring procedure.

3.4.1 Operational plan

(section 1.4.1 of the assessment grid)

– Not applicable –

3.4.2 Coordination with GIZ or the commissioning project

(section 1.4.2 of the assessment grid)

In the tender, the tenderer is required to describe the procedure for coordinating with GIZ or with the commissioning project.

3.4.3 Steering or coordination of measures with the relevant implementing partner

(section 1.4.3 of the assessment grid)

– Not applicable –

3.4.4 Monitoring

(section 1.4.4 of the assessment grid)

In the tender, the tenderer is required to describe how it will regularly capture and document the status of completion of the tasks, the achievement of objectives, the results achieved and

the risks in the area for which it is responsible in accordance with the specifications set out in section 2.

3.5 Further requirements

(section 1.5 of the assessment grid)

– Not applicable –

4. Human resources

The tenderer is required to provide 'experts' for the positions referred to and described (scope of tasks and qualifications) in this section on the basis of corresponding CVs. Depending on the assignment, the contractor can be required to identify further experts, whose qualifications will be defined by the project. **The requirements on the format and content of the CVs are described in section 6.**

The qualifications mentioned below correspond to the requirements for achieving the highest number of points in the technical assessment.

'One year of professional experience' is therefore defined as a cumulative 12 expert months with at least 18 expert days per month, provided no diverging definition is specified for individual qualifications. The number of actual days per month must therefore be stated for each reference (pls. see chapter 6: Requirements on the format of the tender).

For all experts we explicitly ask to include the period of assignments as well as the concrete number of assignment days (e.g. assignment from May until September with 15 assignment days). Short-term assignments without this information will not be counted in the evaluation of the bid and therefore render less points. Yet, bids without this information will not be excluded.

Expert 1: STE-Pool Coordinator with international expertise

(section 2.1 of the assessment grid)

This position is a key expert.

Tasks of expert 1:

- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor
- Ensuring the coherence and complementarity of the contractor's services with other services delivered by the project at national and regional level
- Taking cross-cutting themes into consideration (i.e. gender equality)
- Expert management, in particular identifying the needs for short-term assignments within the available budget, planning and managing the assignments and supporting international experts, particularly with regards to onboarding
- Quality assurance and editing of written deliverables
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines
- Responsibility for checking the use of funds and financial planning in consultation with the officer responsible for the commission at GIZ

- Supporting the officer responsible for the commission in updating and/or adapting the project strategy, in evaluations and in preparing a follow-on phase
- Briefing of experts on the security situation, procedures and rules of GIZ for missions in country

Qualifications of expert 1:

Education/training (section 2.1.1 of the assessment grid):	Post-graduate degree (e.g. 'master's or German Diplom') in the fields of trade, economics, law, business development or international relations. A bachelor's degree in the above mentioned fields will be awarded with 6 out of 10 points.
Language (section 2.1.2 of the assessment grid):	English, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (6 out of a possible 10 points) and French, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (4 out of a possible 10 points).
General professional experience (section 2.1.3 of the assessment grid):	4 years of general professional experience in working in international consultancy services in the field of international trade.
Specific professional experience (section 2.1.4 of the assessment grid):	2 years of backstopping experience in providing quality control of deliverables and negotiations with experts and drafting of ToRs and reports.
Leadership/management experience (section 2.1.5 of the assessment grid):	1 year of management experience in projects, companies or other organisations with disciplinary leadership responsibility of at least two people.
International professional experience outside the country/region of assignment (section 2.1.6 of the assessment grid):	1 year of professional experience in international advisory, strategy development or project management (cumulative) outside their home country.
Professional experience in the country/ region of assignment (2.1.7 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable
Experience in the field of development cooperation (section 2.1.8 of the assessment grid):	2 years of professional experience in development cooperation projects
Other (section 2.1.9 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable

Expert 2: Short-term expert pool 1: Trade policy and trade facilitation experts with international expertise (2 experts)
(section 2.2 of the assessment grid)

The experts will be selected on a case-by-case basis during the actual implementation of the project and are expected to deliver the following tasks:

Tasks of expert 2:

The tasks of expert 2 include all activities required to complete Work Package 1, 2 and 3 (section 2.1 of these ToR). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Technical, operational, and strategic policy advisory
- Support for developing, drafting and reviewing reports, studies, analyses, position papers, guidelines, action plans, strategies, implementation plans, legislation, regulations
- Research and analysis, including diagnostic missions to assess implementation efforts and identify obstacles
- Facilitation of private sector participation in policy-making processes, facilitation of dialogue and coordination between public and private sector actors
- Facilitation of national and regional workshops and conferences, including interpretation and translation services and providing expert inputs

Qualifications of expert 2:

Education/training (section 2.2.1 of the assessment grid):	All experts with a post-graduate degree (e.g. 'master's or German Diplom') in the fields of economics, law, business development, international relations, political science, trade or public administration. A bachelor's degree in a similar field will be awarded with 7 out of 10 points.
Language (section 2.2.2 of the assessment grid):	All experts with knowledge of English, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (4 out of 10 points) In addition, 1 expert with knowledge of French, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (3 out of 10 points) In addition, 1 expert with knowledge of Portuguese, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (3 out of 10 points)
General professional experience (section 2.2.3 of the assessment grid):	All experts with 4 years of general professional experience in delivering trade policy advisory services to developing countries
Specific professional experience (section 2.2.4 of the assessment grid):	One expert with 2 years of specific professional experience in trade facilitation (4 out of 10 points) One expert with 2 years of specific professional experience in TiS (4 out of 10 points) In addition, one of the above-mentioned experts with 2 years of specific professional experience in multi-day capacity-building for SMEs (2 out of 10 points)
Leadership/management experience (section 2.2.5 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable

International professional experience outside the country/region of assignment (section 2.2.6 of the assessment grid):	All experts with 2 years of professional experience outside of West Africa.
Professional experience in the country/ region of assignment (2.2.7 of the assessment grid):	All experts with 2 years of professional experience in West Africa (5 out of 10 points), with 1 year of work experience in two ECOWAS Member States (5 out of 10 points)
Experience in the field of development cooperation (section 2.2.8 of the assessment grid):	All experts with 3 years of professional experience in development cooperation projects
Other (section 2.2.9 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable

Expert 3: Short-term expert pool 2: Trade policy and trade facilitation experts with regional expertise (2 experts)
(section 2.3 of the assessment grid)

The experts will be selected on a case-by-case basis during the actual implementation of the project and are expected to deliver the following tasks:

Tasks of expert 3:

The tasks of expert 3 include all activities required to complete Work Package 1, 2 and 3 (section 2.1 of these ToR). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Technical, operational, and strategic policy advisory
- Support for developing, drafting and reviewing reports, studies, analyses, position papers, guidelines, action plans, strategies, implementation plans, legislation, regulations
- Research and analysis, including diagnostic missions to assess implementation efforts and identify obstacles
- Facilitation of private sector participation in policy-making processes, facilitation of dialogue and coordination between public and private sector actors
- Facilitation of national and regional workshops and conferences, including interpretation and translation services and providing expert inputs

Qualifications of expert 3:

Education/training (section 2.3.1 of the assessment grid):	All experts with post-graduate degree (e.g. 'master's or German Diplom') in the fields of economics, law, business development, international relations, political science or public administration. A bachelor's degree in a similar field will be awarded with 7 out of 10 points.
Language (section 2.3.2 of the assessment grid):	1 expert with knowledge of English, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (4 out of 10 points)

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	1 expert with knowledge of French, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (4 out of 10 points) In addition, one of the above-mentioned experts with knowledge of Portuguese, C1-level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2 out of 10 points)
General professional experience (section 2.3.3 of the assessment grid):	All experts with 4 years of general professional experience in delivering trade policy advisory services to developing countries
Specific professional experience (section 2.3.4 of the assessment grid):	One expert with 2 years of specific professional experience in trade facilitation (4 out of 10 points) One expert with 2 years of specific professional experience in Trade in Services (4 out of 10 points) One of the above-mentioned experts with 2 years of specific professional experience in multi-day capacity-building for SMEs (2 out of 10 points)
Leadership/management experience (section 2.3.5 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable
International professional experience outside the country/region of assignment (section 2.3.6 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable
Professional experience in the country/ region of assignment (2.3.7 of the assessment grid):	4 years of professional experience in West Africa
Experience in the field of development cooperation (section 2.3.8 of the assessment grid):	3 years of professional experience in development cooperation projects
Other (section 2.3.9 of the assessment grid):	Not applicable

UN DESA regions are defined as East Africa, Central Africa, North Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa, South America, the Caribbean, Central America, North America, Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia/Middle East, Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe, Australia, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia; refer to [UNSD methodology](#) for country assignment.

Soft skills

In addition to their specialist qualifications, the experts in “expert pool 1” and “expert pool 2” are also expected to have the following qualifications:

- Team skills
- Initiative

- Communication skills
- Sociocultural and intercultural skills
- Efficient partner- and client-oriented working methods
- Interdisciplinary thinking

5. Costing requirements

5.1 Assignment of experts

Given the current situation on-site, the information provided is intended solely as a guide for preparing the offer and reflects the current status. However, the quantity may still be subject to adjustment.

Expert	Expert days in the country of residence/ remote	Availability of expert in the country of assignment* in expert days	Expert days in total	Consecutive stay > 3 months (see General Terms and Conditions, section 3.3.2)
Expert 1: STE-Pool Coordinator	30	200	230	No
Expert 2: STE-Pool 1	140	110	250	No
Expert 3: STE-Pool 2	250	250	500	No
Backstopping (to the extent travel is required)	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

In your tender, please do not deviate from the specification of quantities required in these ToRs (the number of experts and expert days, the budget specified in the price schedule). This is part of the competitive tender and is used to ensure that the tenders can be compared objectively. Please note: only services that were commissioned by GIZ and rendered by the contractor will be remunerated. We would also like to point out that it may not be necessary to make use of the total number of proposed expert days.

The number of expert days corresponds to full working days.

5.2 National administrative staff

– Not applicable –

5.3 Travel expenses

5.3.1 Travel – sustainability considerations

GIZ would like to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, for example by selecting the lowest-emission booking class (economy) or using means of transport, airlines and flight routes that are more CO₂-efficient. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility are the preferred options.

CO₂ emissions caused by air travel must be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

There are many different providers in the market for emissions certificates, and they have different climate impact ambitions. The [Development and Climate Alliance](#) has published a [list of standards](#) (only in German available). GIZ recommends using the standards specified there.

5.3.2 Travel expense requirements

Travel expense budget: EUR 266,000.00

Budget for CO₂ offsets for flights: EUR 11,960.00. An unalterable budget for CO₂ offsets for settlement against evidence is specified.

As the number, duration and exact destination of the business trips is not yet clear, the above-mentioned unalterable travel expense budget for all trips in Germany and abroad for all experts is specified in the price schedule. The budget contains the following travel expenses:

- Per-diem allowances and accommodation allowances
- Flights and other transport costs
- Ancillary travel expenses (visa, etc.)

The costs are reimbursed as a lump sum (per-diem allowances up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law for each country) as set out in the country table in the circular from the German Federal Ministry of Finance on the reimbursement of travel expenses (see <https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de>), or on presentation of evidence (airfares and other main transport costs).

Notes on the settlement of accommodation allowances outside Germany:

- Accommodation allowances up to 75% of the maximum amounts permissible under tax law as per the BMF circular on travel expense reimbursement will be reimbursed **on a lump-sum basis**.
- Accommodation allowances up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law as per the BMF circular on travel expense reimbursement will be reimbursed in the **amount evidenced**.

- Accommodation allowances outside Germany that unavoidably exceed the maximum amount permissible under tax law as stipulated in the BMF circular on travel expense reimbursement **can only be settled against evidence on presentation of a written individual justification.**

All travel activities must be agreed in advance with the project manager. Travel expenses must be kept as low as possible.

5.4. Equipment

– Not applicable –

5.5 Operating costs in the country of assignment

– Not applicable –

5.6 Workshops, education and training

The contractor runs the following workshops/study trips/training courses as specified under Work Package 2.2:

- 30 training sessions for public sector stakeholders on AfCFTA-related policies, negotiations, and implementation.
- 10 training sessions to strengthen regional and national capacities on trade facilitation instruments, including SIGMAT, Guarantee Mechanism, and e-Certificate of Origin.

Workshop budget: EUR 584,000.00

The fixed, unalterable budget above is earmarked for workshops and entered in the price schedule. The budget includes the following costs relating to the planning and running of workshops:

- Room hire
- Technical systems
- Translation/interpreting services
- Catering
- Workshop materials
- Travel expenses for partner experts (subsistence, accommodation, travel costs)
- Other costs relating to the workshops

The budget does not include the fees and travel expenses for the contractor's experts incurred in connection with the planning and running of the workshops. These are covered by the corresponding number of expert days and travel expenses (see sections 5.1 and 5.3 above).

5.7 Local contributions

– Not applicable –

5.8 Other costs

– Not applicable –

5.9 Flexible remuneration item

Budget for flexible remuneration: EUR 65,000.00

The fixed, unalterable budget above is earmarked in the price schedule for flexible remuneration. Flexible remuneration is intended to facilitate the flexible management of the contract by the officer responsible for the commission at GIZ. The contractor can make use of the funds in accordance with section 3.3.5.7 of the General Terms and Conditions.

6. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond with the structure of the ToRs. It must be legible (for example Arial, font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. The tender must be written in English.

The technical-methodological concept of the tender (section 3 of the ToRs) must not exceed 10 pages (not including the cover page, list of abbreviations, table of contents, brief introduction and CV for the backstopper). Additional annexes not requested will not be assessed.

The CVs of the staff proposed in accordance with section 4 of the ToRs must be in the EU format and not more than four pages in length. The CVs can also be submitted in French or Portuguese.

The CVs must clearly and unequivocally show what position the proposed person held, which tasks they performed and how long they worked during which period in the specified references. **For all experts we explicitly ask for short-term assignments to include the period of assignments as well as the concrete number of assignment days (e.g. assignment from May until September with 15 assignment days). Short-term assignments without this information will not be counted in the evaluation of the bid and therefore render less points. Yet, bids without this information will not be excluded.**

The references contained in the CVs must therefore include the following information:

- Name of the company/organisation/reference project in which the expert worked
- Position held and task(s) performed by the expert in the company/organisation/reference project
- Work outcomes or products produced by the expert, or expert's contribution to the completion of these outcomes and projects (if relevant)
- Duration of the expert's assignment in the company/organisation/reference project per calendar year in full-time expert days, period of assignment and number of assignment days for short-term assignments)
- Leadership experience/management: clear information on the reference projects or fixed positions within the company/organisation in which the requirements specified in section 4 were fulfilled (for example, period, number of persons for whom the expert had disciplinary responsibility, project budget) (if relevant)
- International professional experience/professional experience in the country of assignment: clear information on the reference projects or fixed positions in the company/organisation in which the requirements specified in section 4 were fulfilled (for example, actual duration of assignment on the ground in full-time expert days, weeks or months) (if relevant)

In order to facilitate the assessment, we request that you number the references sequentially and provide only references that are clearly related to the object of this tender.

7. Options or follow-on contract

7.1 Option to expand the service content/extend the contract term pursuant to section 132 (2) no. 1 German Act against Restraints of Competition (GWB)

GlZ can exercise the following option if it wishes to expand the tendered services. This is described in detail below.

Nature and scope:

While retaining the overall character of the contract, there is a possibility of GlZ continuing to obtain the services specified in section 2 of these Terms of Reference and/or of expanding the contract to include further services of the same kind. The overall contract term must not exceed three times the original contract term, and the overall contract value must not exceed twice the original contract value.

Precondition:

GlZ's commissioning party extends and/or provides additional funding for the current project or commissions a follow-on project and/or an agreement is concluded to provide cofinancing for the measure and/or an additional need for services specified in section 2 of these ToR has been identified by the partner institutions and the required funds are available.

7.2 Follow-on contract pursuant to Section 14 (4) no. 9 German Ordinance on the Award of Public Contracts (VgV)

Pursuant to Section 14 (4) no. 9 VgV, GlZ reserves the right to award a follow-on contract to the contractor in order to procure similar services.

Scope of possible services:

The term of the follow-on contract must not exceed twice that of the original contract, and the value of the follow-on contract must not exceed twice that of the original contract.

Condition:

The above option is subject to GlZ receiving a commission from the commissioning party or the conclusion of an agreement for cofinancing of the measure. Any follow-on contract must be awarded within three years of the award date of the original contract.

A follow-on contract under 7.2 can be considered only as an alternative to the option in 7.1.