Terms of Reference (ToR)

Private Sector Engagement Coordinator

General Information

Description of Assignment: Private Sector Engagement Coordinator

Procurement Reference: ET-AFCFTA-520422-CS-INDV

Type of Contract: Individual Consultant

Reporting to: Senior Advisor in charge of Private Sector Engagement

Duration of Assignment: One (1) Year

Start Date: January 2026

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference (ToR) are prepared to engage an Individual Consultant to support the effective implementation of the BIASHARA Afrika Programme under the technical assistance Grant for an Institutional Support Project for the AfCFTA Secretariat. The assignment focuses on advancing the effective implementation of the Private Sector Engagement Programme and its initiatives, including the support to state parties and private sector to trade under the preferences of the AfCFTA Agreement.

2. Background

2.1 The AfCFTA Secretariat has received a grant to finance the Institutional Support Project for the effective implementation of the AfCFTA. The AfCFTA Secretariat is a pan-African organisation legally established and mandated to coordinate and monitor the negotiations and the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, whose main objective is to create a single continental market for goods and services to deepen the economic integration of the African continent, in accordance with the Pan African Vision of "An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa" enshrined in Agenda 2063.

2.2 The AfCFTA Secretariat is the sole institution responsible for the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement. Its core functions encompass the facilitation of seamless, predictable, and liberalized trade among State Parties across the African continent through the implementation of dedicated support programmes.

2.3 The Seventeenth (17th) Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), held in Niamey, Niger, in November 2022, directed the AfCFTA Secretariat to support the private sector in the creation of AfCFTA Trading Companies. AfCFTA Trading Companies are

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designed to serve as commercial intermediaries and aggregators for African small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and smallholder farmers. They aim to enhance intra-African trade by consolidating goods and services, thereby addressing challenges related to fragmented supply chains and limited economies of scale.

2.3 These companies are able coordinate transport and logistics services, offering essential trade facilitation support such as warehousing, shipping, and cargo handling to streamline intra-African supply chains and reduce the transaction costs associated with cross-border trade. In addition to logistics, AfCFTA Trading Companies can act as platforms for delivering trade-related information. This includes market intelligence, regulatory requirements, and real-time trade opportunities, enabling businesses and governments to make informed decisions in planning and executing trade operations.

3. Context

3.1 Adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union during their Extraordinary Summit that was held in Kigali, Rwanda in March 2018, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement came into force on 30 May 2019. Its operational phase was launched during the Extraordinary Summit held in Niamey, Niger on 7th July 2019. Trading under the AfCFTA commenced on 1 January 2021.

3.2 During the 9th Meeting of the Council of Ministers held in July 2022, the Secretary General of the AfCFTA announced the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative (GTI) as a strategic mechanism to kick-start commercially meaningful trade among State Parties. The Guided Trade Initiative was launched on 7 October 2022 in Accra, on the margins of the 10th Council of Ministers, with the participation of **eight (8)** pioneer State Parties – Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania and Tunisia.

3.3 Over time, the AfCFTA Secretariat conducted a number of stakeholder engagements in the five regions of the continent, expanding the GTI participating States from the initial 8 recorded in 2022 to 39 State Parties by end of 2024.

3.4 Following a successful pilot program of the GTI, the AfCFTA Council of Ministers, at their 15th Meeting held on 9 November 2024, decided to discontinue the GTI and to integrate it into a broader Private Sector Engagement (PSE) programme.

3.5 The functions of the GTI are now embedded into a wider programme of the PSE Unit called the Biashara Afrika Programme, which aim to accelerate intra-African Trade, empower MSMEs, and promote sustainable economic integration under the AfCFTA, through the deployment of targeted Roadshows, Trade missions and Business Development Tours, capacity Building and skills development for MSMEs, including targeted support to State Parties and businesses to trade under the AfCFTA.

3.6 In addition, the Secretariat developed in 2022 a pragmatic approach to mobilise private sector support and involvement in the AfCFTA. This approach aims to leverage the private sector's role as driver of intra-African trade, ultimately contributing to achieve the objectives of the agreement and the broader objectives of Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The areas of intervention include:

- Sensitization and awareness raising
- Policy Dialogue
- Investment promotion
- Capacity and skills development
- Resource mobilization

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4. The Assignment

4.1 The objective of this consultancy is to support the effective operationalization of all functions, activities and programmes of the AfCFTA Secretariat related to the implementation of the Private Sector Engagement initiatives and interventions, including the above mentioned BIASHARA AFRIKA Programme.

5. Scope of Work

5.1 The Consultant will support Member States in the effective implementation of the AfCFTA. This support will include the following specific responsibilities:

a) Coordinate the work of relevant departments and divisions within the AfCFTA Secretariat to enable businesses to trade efficiently under the AfCFTA preferences.
b) Collaborate with the relevant departments and divisions within the AfCFTA to promote and coordinate the role of the private sector within National/Regional AfCFTA Implementation Committees or Coordination Offices Liaise with and respond to enquiries from enterprises and other entities from the private sector interested in trading under the AfCFTA framework.
c) Create and maintain a database of enterprises involved in meaningful trade and of products traded under the AfCFTA Agreement.
d) Support State Parties in establishing AfCFTA Trading Companies.
e) Promote active participation of the private sector in AfCFTA activities, – including the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF), the AfCFTA Business Forum (Biashara Afrika), and regional Roadshows - through panel discussions, exhibitions, and networking platforms. Enhanced engagement of private sector actors, particularly SMEs and MSMEs, can also be achieved through their integration into AfCFTA Trading Companies, facilitating more effective intra-African trade.
f) Facilitate stakeholder engagement for the BIASHARA AFRIKA Programme activities.
g) Provide appropriate technical support to the various committee and sub-committees established to facilitate businesses and to State Parties that participate in trade under the AfCFTA Agreement.
h) Provide capacity building and technical support to State Parties and RECs to ensure wider participation in trade under the AfCFTA.
i) Provide policy notes and facilitate policy dialogue among stakeholders on the challenges encountered in intra-African Trade.
j) Undertake subject specific research and analysis of areas of concern to the AfCFTA State Parties, mapping participating countries and private sector participation.
k) Perform any other tasks as may be assigned by the Senior Advisor in charge of Private Sector Engagement or the Office of the Secretary-General.

6. Reporting

6.1 The Consultant will report directly to the Senior Advisor in charge of Private Sector Engagement or any other officer that may be designated by the Secretary-General for the execution of contracted services.

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7. **Duration**

The Consultancy service shall commence in December 2025 but latest January, 2026 and shall continue for a period of 1 year.

8. **Qualifications and Experience**

The Consultant shall have the following minimum qualifications:

a) Hold at least a Master's degree in Economics, Business Administration, Global Supply Chains/Logistics, Statistics, International Relations or related fields.
b) Have a minimum of seven (7) years of professional experience in trade policy formulation, negotiation, implementation at national and regional levels.
c) Possess a demonstrable ability to communicate fluently with different stakeholders (civil society, government authorities, businesses, etc.) as well as public speaking and presentation skills.
d) Have a good understanding of the regional integration, trade and economic growth within the African continent.
e) Have experience in working on AU, RECs and other regional institutions, particularly in Africa.
f) Have experience in managing a project with multiple institutions/teams would be an advantage.
g) Demonstrate good networking skills, and ability to work in multi-cultural and multi - disciplinary project team.
h) Be proficient in one of the AfCFTA working languages. Fluency in an additional AfCFTA working language is desirable.
i) Advanced skills in use of MS Office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), preferably combined with knowledge and experience of SAP operations.

9. **Team Management and Further Information**

a) The Consultant's role include team management responsibilities including, amongst other:
b) Managing junior staff under supervision by delegating specific tasks;
c) Oversee the work of consultants under supervision and capacitating them where and when needed;
d) Review consultant reports before submission to the Senior Advisor in charge of private sector Engagement; and
e) Assign any other task as may be required.
f) The Consultant will be posted in Accra-Ghana, at the Secretariat of the AfCFTA. However, he/she may be required to travel to Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as necessary for the execution of his/her duties.
g) Qualified female candidates are encouraged to apply for this role.

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10. **Evaluation and Qualification Criteria**

10.1. The eligibility criteria, the establishment of a short list and the selection procedure shall be in conformity with the World Bank Procurement Regulations for the Selection of Consultants. Interest expressed by a consultant does not imply any obligation on the part of the AfCFTA Secretariat to include him/her in the shortlist. Interested individuals must provide information on their qualifications and experience demonstrating their ability to undertake the assignment (CV, reference to similar services, experience in similar assignments, etc.). The consultants on the shortlist will be judged on the following criteria based on their updated resume and attachments.

#	Requirement/criteria	Points
1.0	General Education, Qualification and Relevant Training as stated in the TOR. Consultant to indicate the name and type of degree obtained, the year of the degree and must attach copies of certificates to support qualification. • Relevance – 10% • Attached certificates – 10%	20%
2.0	Experience and technical expertise • Have a minimum of seven (7) years of professional experience in trade policy formulation, negotiation, implementation at national and regional levels. (10%) • Practical experience in trade policy formulation, negotiation, implementation at national and regional levels. (10%) • Experience working on AU, RECs and other multilateral institutions, especially in Africa. (10%) • Experience in managing a project with multiple institutions/teams would be an advantage. (10%) • Demonstrate good networking skills, judgment and ability to work in multi-cultural and multi - disciplinary project team. (10%)	50%
3.0	Oral interviews	30%
	Total	**100%**

10.2 The minimum technical qualification is 70%. Consultants scoring above the threshold will be ranked and the highest-ranked candidate will be invited for negotiations.

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