Terms of Reference

Consultancy Service to Conduct Mid-Term Review of the Sida-WCO Trade Facilitation and Customs Modernization Programme for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa
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1. **BACKGROUND**

   i. **Beneficiaries**
   The intended users of the evaluation include the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the World Customs Organization (WCO) Capacity Building Directorate, the WCO Member Customs administrations directly benefiting from the Programme support, regional bodies particularly the East Africa Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as other stakeholder international organizations, and public or private entities interested in the Programme objectives.

   ii. **Contracting Authority**

   iii. **Relevant Background**
   Following the previous programme of cooperation between the WCO and the Government of Sweden from 2014 to 2018, through funding from the Swedish International Agency for Development Cooperation (Sida), a new partnership began with the signing of a Grant Agreement on 19 August 2020. This grant, totaling SEK 37,400,000 enabled the “Trade Facilitation and Customs Modernization Programme for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa 2020-2024” to be established with financial support for the activity period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2022.

   The Programme started in January 2021 due to delays brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and challenges faced in staff recruitment. A no-cost extension of the activity period’s end date from 30 September 2022 to 31 December 2022, allowed the Programme more time to complete the Inception Phase report and to initiate delivery of capacity building activities to the programme beneficiaries from 1 September 2021 to 31 December 2022. Furthermore, Sweden and the WCO concluded the signing of a no-cost Grant Agreement Amendment II on 22 December 2022 to allow the continuation of the Programme implementation from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024.

   iv. **Programme Overview**
   The Sida-WCO TFCM Programme is supporting (12) WCO Member countries selected from the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to implement the trade facilitation measures under the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA), with the following objective:

   **Programme Objective** (Impact):
   Improved business environment for cross-border trade in the beneficiary countries and regions through strengthening the strategic and operational capacity of customs administrations

   **Project Purpose** (Outcomes):
   1. Streamlined trade through modern and efficient Customs procedures;
   2. Improved capacity of Customs administrations to lead and implement new measures to boost trade facilitation and the control of cross-border trade under Multilateral Environmental Agreement instruments for transboundary waste and Ozone depleting Substances

   **Results** (Outputs):
   It was envisaged that these outcomes would be realized by achieving specific results from the Programme’s delivery of multi-year technical assistance and capacity building support to the 12 (twelve) Customs administrations of the following beneficiary countries (Botswana, Burundi, Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia,
and through initiatives at regional level in cooperation with the Secretariats of EAC and SADC; albeit the SADC Secretariat had not been fully on board in all the areas prioritized for cooperation, and the participation of Lesotho and Mozambique was registered rather later in September 2022. The results areas are elaborated under the Programme components listed below:

A. WTO TFA Articles Implementation: Improved Customs service delivery to and relations with stakeholders, ease of compliance, transparency, predictability and harmonization of cross border processes and procedures.

B. IT Connectivity and Automation: Inter-connected Customs systems that enable information exchange, better risk management and faster clearance; and automation that enhance regional AEO programme.

C. Regional Harmonization: Sustainable and harmonized regional approaches adopted through leveraged opportunities presented by RECs for standardized cross border procedures in the context of regional programmes and AfCFTA.

D. Organizational Capacity: Stronger leadership in Customs administrations, capable of leading change with more refined strategic and performance-based approaches to implement the TFA measures.

E. Gender Equality and Diversity / Integrity Promotion:  
   1) Greater opportunities for women to engage in safer, more profitable and more formal cross border trade; equal opportunities for all staff within Customs administrations devoid of gender discrimination to drive modernization and change; and  
   2) Strengthened controls, process rationalizations and positive incentives implemented in accordance with the principles of the revised Arusha Declaration.

F. Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEA): Increased awareness on MEA, specifically on cross border trade/transboundary movement of goods regulated by the Montreal Protocol and the Basel Convention; improved Customs capacity and strengthened coordination with Environment agencies to control and enforce MEAs regulations.

The Programme’s multi-annual work plans have been developed along with performance measurement criteria.

The Programme design took into account lessons learned from the previous partnership for the “WCO-Sweden Sub-Saharan Africa Customs Modernization Programme (2014-2018)” as well as incorporating the experiences from field-tested solutions offered to requesting Members under the framework of the WCO Mercator Programme - tailor-made track, to implement the TFA measures. The current Programme emphasized deeper support to the national Customs administrations and complementary regional level initiatives that have direct benefits for the Programme beneficiary countries and enabling to trade facilitation in general.

After the Inception Phase, the Programme Team delivered technical assistance and capacity building activities based on a short-term work plan from 1 September 2021 – 31 December 2021, and one full year work plan from 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2022. The progress on the programme implementation was reported based on the annual narrative reports, financial reports, and audit reports, for the respective reporting cycles: 1 October 2020 – 31 December 2021; and 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2022, in accordance with article 3.3 of the Grant Agreement Amendment I.

Following the signing of the no-cost extension Agreement Amendment II, the Programme activity duration was extended for additional two years effective from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

i. Overall Objective

The assignment is linked to the fulfilment of the terms of the WCO and Sweden Grant Agreement Amendment II article 13 “Evaluation”, specifically article 13.1 which states, among others,
“Sweden and the WCO shall undertake a mid-term review focusing on results achieved by the Programme, including a comprehensive outcome analysis”.

ii. Specific Objective
The purpose of this mid-term review is two-fold:

(a) To provide an independent assessment of the Programme’s progress to date; and
(b) To guide the direction of the remaining Programme, in particular to provide recommendations on adjustments and/or steps that could be taken to ensure sustainable achievement of Programme results.

iii. Requested services
Considering the two facets of the review, the Contractor is requested to:

(a) Evaluate Programme Progress
The evaluation will cover the period of the Programme from 1 October 2020 to 31 July 2023. Progress to date will be assessed, in relation to the plans as outlined in the original Sweden and WCO Grant Agreement as well as the latest approved project documents, work plans and budget.

The review should include, but not be limited to, an assessment of the following criteria and questions in accordance with OECD DAC evaluation criteria:

Relevance
- Is the project design (objectives and activities) in line with national needs and priorities in each country?
- Has the project included the most relevant activities and thematic priorities to achieve the overall goal in each country?

Coherence
- To what extent do other (internal and external) interventions support or undermine the interventions of the project, and vice versa? These include but are not limited to complementarity or duplication with other WCO or other donor-funded similar capacity building activities.

Effectiveness
- To what extent is the project on track to achieve the objectives in each country? Quantify results wherever possible.
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- Is the goal hierarchy sufficient and appropriate to track the results of the project?

Efficiency
- Has the project been cost-efficient in its design and implementation?

Sustainability
- Have the national beneficiary institutions demonstrated real ownership to the project?
- Has the project (activities and objectives) been designed and implemented in a manner that enables the national beneficiary institutions to benefit from the technical assistance and capacity building after the project has ended?
- Is WCO's approach to capacity building in line with international best practice and adapted to local needs?

In addition, the evaluation will look at risk management and cross-cutting themes
- How has WCO managed risks throughout the project, including the risk of corruption?
- Has the project had any negative effects on human rights, women’s rights and gender equality, climate and the environment, in addition to anti-corruption?

(b) Submit Recommendations for Sustainability
Following from the above analysis, the evaluation should provide recommendations on
adjustments and/or steps that could be taken to improve the project in relation to any of the evaluation criteria, but in particular to ensure sustainable achievement of Programme results in the context of the “Strategy for Sweden’s regional development cooperation with Africa 2022-2026”.

iv. Implementation of the Review

The evaluation team will coordinate with the WCO through the Sida-WCO TFCM Programme Manager.

The evaluation team should use a combination of analyses including: descriptive analysis, content analysis, quantitative/statistical analysis, comparative analysis, and network analysis to inform findings.

The review should consist of a desk review and field visits to WCO’s headquarters in Brussels. Interviews should also be held with Programme beneficiaries, in person or by email and/or video conference. The review should also include a visit to at least two of the beneficiary countries, if practically possible. To the extent possible, consultants should utilize the resourcefulness of the national coordinators for the Sida-WCO TFCM Programme for in-person interviews.

Progress to date will be assessed, in relation to the plans as outlined in the original Grant Agreement as well as the latest approved project documents, work plans and budget, which include the following:

- The Sweden-WCO Grant Agreement, concluded 19th August 2020
- The Sweden-WCO Grant Agreement Amendment I, concluded 19th August 2021
- The Sida-WCO TFCM Programme Inception Phase Report submitted to Sida 27th August 2021 and approved via E-mail communication on 30th September 2021.
- The Sweden-WCO Grant Agreement Amendment II, concluded 22nd December 2022
- Revised Results Framework of 30th November 2022 annexed to the signed Sweden-WCO Agreement Amendment II.
- Sida-WCO TFCMP Work Plans and Budgets approved for: 1st September 2021 to 31st December 2021; 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022; and 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

Other relevant documentation include but are not limited to:

- Sida-WCO TFCMP Annual Narrative and Financial Progress Reports submitted to Sida in 1st September 2021 to 31st December 2021; 1st October 2020 to 31st December 2021; and 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022
- Sida-WCO TFCM Programme Activity / Mission Reports and related materials
- Audit Reports for 2021 and 2022

3. EXPERTS PROFILE

The expert/contractor will be required to carry out this assignment in close cooperation with the Sida-WCO TFCM Programme Manager.

i. Profile required

- Proven business profile with extensive consulting experience in project evaluations, or a Master’s degree in Economics, Business Administration, International Trade and Development, Customs Administration; with significant experience in conducting reviews and/or evaluations of a similar nature, at least 10 years.
- Experience from international development cooperation, including a good understanding of project monitoring and evaluation, results-based management and risk management.
• Good understanding of the organization and operations of customs administrations and their roles in international trade and for revenue collection and a well-functioning private sector in Southern and/or East Africa.
• Good understanding of institutional capacity building in Southern and East Africa, preferably including in the countries included in the programme.
• Fluent in English, and ability to communicate in French and Portuguese is an advantage.

4. LOCATION AND DURATION

i. Commencement Date and Duration of Assignment and Payment
The tentative commencement date is 2 October 2023 and the execution of the contract is estimated on 25 working days period, and should be delivered within 60 days from the date of signature to the contract.

ii. Location
Part of the review should consist of a desk review and field visits to WCO headquarters in Brussels. Interviews should also be held with Programme beneficiaries, in person or by email and/or video conference. The review should also include a visit to at least two of the beneficiary countries, if practically possible.

iii. Suggested Milestones, Submission Dates, and Payment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone/Deliverable</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Signing of the contract</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Delivery of the experts’ schedule of work and commencement of the Mid-Term Review</td>
<td>2 October 2023</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Delivery of the first draft Review Report</td>
<td>17 November 2023</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Final Mid-Term Review Report with deliverables</td>
<td>30 November 2023</td>
<td>75%</td>
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The WCO will directly fund the costs of travels for the in-country field visits including an economy class air-travel ticket, and per-diem to cover the accommodation and daily subsistence allowance, based on the WCO travel rules.

Contract payments will be made upon satisfactory completion and submission of outputs/deliverables as per the suggested timelines above; corresponding to a total of 25 working days.

Interested candidates are invited to submit CV and Financial Proposal to the World Customs Organization, Capacity Building Directorate, Brussels – Belgium, by Email: program.Sida-WCOTFCM@wcoomd.org not later than 20 September 2023. The assignment reference is “Sida-WCO TFCM Programme Mid-Term Review”