



**Terms of reference for the recruitment of a consultant to conduct a baseline study for the project entitled: « Strengthening women and youth participation in cross-border trade in West Africa ».**

**Mastercard Foundation Funding**

**Working language: French and English**

September 2024



## 1. Background and rationale

The proliferation and persistence of non-tariff barriers contribute greatly to the increase in trade costs and the weakness of cross-border trade flows in West Africa. Indeed, the sustainable development of cross-border trade in agricultural products and the increase in the incomes of women and youth in West Africa is hampered by the persistence of non-tariff barriers (prohibitions or restrictions, specific conditions or requirements that make trade difficult or costly for women and youth, incorrect application of non-tariff measures such as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and other technical barriers to trade) and the multiplicity of illegal payments on the corridors make the business climate very unfavorable for the majority of commercial actors, specifically women and youth who can no longer make a decent living from their commercial activities. This has a strong impact on (i) the trade of small and micro-enterprises owned by young people and women, (ii) the policy to combat food insecurity; (iii) compliance with and application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures; (iv) the growth of the economies of ECOWAS States; (v) the effective fight against growing insecurity in the sub-region and the high cost of living, especially among women and young people <sup>12</sup>.

The objectives sought by the AfCFTA, in particular, the stimulation of intra-African trade, economic growth, industrial development and the improvement of the livelihoods of citizens, particularly women and young people, will be difficult to achieve if the challenges mentioned are not effectively addressed with the strong involvement of government services, the private sector and civil society <sup>3</sup>.

The multiplication and/or strengthening of innovative and adapted mechanisms to combat obstacles to cross-border trade, coupled with actions to strengthen the capacities of women and young traders in mastering the trade promotion regulations in force in the ECOWAS region, will contribute enormously to (i) the gradual removal of all obstacles to the development of cross-border trade; (ii) the facilitation of the cross-border movement of agricultural products; (iii) the supply of low production areas for the effective fight against food insecurity; (iv) the improvement of the livelihoods of commercial actors, especially women and young people; (v) the sustainable promotion of cross-border trade by women and young people in order to effectively increase intra-African trade <sup>4</sup>.

It is with this in mind that the West African Association for Cross-Border Trade, in Agro-forestry-pastoral, Fisheries products and Food (WACTAF) requested and obtained the support of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) with funding from the Mastercard Foundation to implement the project "Strengthening the participation of women and youth in cross-border trade in West Africa".

The project aims to remove the many barriers that hinder cross-border trade in agricultural products. The main actions of the project include activities related to the development of the Commercial Information and Border Assistance Offices (BICAF), the digitalization of its Road Fluidity Operation (OFR), the sharing of knowledge and experiences, the strengthening of the

<sup>1</sup> Mobilizing Traders in West Africa to Eliminate Non-Tariff Barriers - Borderless Alliance , October 15, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Rethinking informal cross-border trade in Africa - Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), November 2023

<sup>3</sup> Strengthening the effectiveness of the fight against non-tariff barriers - SheTrades , document on the AfCFTA

<sup>4</sup> Study on small-scale cross-border trade in West Africa - ReliefWeb , June 2023



organizational capacities of young people and institutional support to the WACTAF Permanent Secretariat. The overall objective is to reduce cross-border trade barriers, improve knowledge of trade regulations and promote youth and gender equality in trade policy. The expected duration of the project is 24 months and covers three ECOWAS countries including Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo. The objective is to support 100 inter-professions, federations, cooperatives with 15,000 direct beneficiaries, 45% of whom are women and 35% young people.

As part of this project, a baseline study is required to establish a solid foundation on which future activities will be built. It is with this in mind that it is planned to recruit a consultant to carry out the feasibility study.

## **2. Objective of the study**

### **2.1. Overall objective of the study**

The recruited consultant will have to carry out a baseline study for the project in order to collect precise and measurable baseline data at the start of the project. This study will provide a detailed baseline situation, establishing qualitative and quantitative values for the key impact, outcome, and results indicators of the logical framework. These indicators will serve as a basis for monitoring progress and evaluating the performance of the project throughout its implementation.

### **2.2. Specific objectives**

Specifically, it is up to the recruited consultant to:

- Design a data collection questionnaire via Kobocollect and make it available to WACTAF so that the latter can ensure data collection;
- Process, analyze and write the study report;
- Participate in the project launch workshop with a view to presenting the results of its basic study.

## **3. Expected results**

The expected results of the baseline study are as follows:

- A data collection questionnaire will be designed via Kobocollect and made available to WACTAF to ensure data collection;
- The consultant will have to process and analyze the collected data, thus providing an in-depth understanding of the current situation in relation to the defined indicators;
- A full report will be written, presenting the results of the study, including recommendations based on the data analyzed.

## **4. Deliverable of the study**

The recruited consultant will have to provide the following deliverables:

- Data collection questionnaire, a detailed questionnaire, designed via Kobocollect, integrating all the key indicators of the project (impact, effects, results), ready to be used by WACTAF for data collection in the field;



- Methodological report, a report describing the methodology adopted for the design of the questionnaire, the sampling plan, the data collection tools, as well as the data analysis strategy;
- Raw database, a file containing all data collected in the field, neatly organized and ready for statistical analysis;
- Baseline Study Analysis Report, a detailed report presenting the analysis of the data collected, including qualitative and quantitative baseline values for each indicator in the logical framework, conclusions and recommendations for monitoring project progress.
- Presentation of results, a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the results of the study.
- Final report of the basic study, the complete report, integrating the reference data, the analysis of the results, the recommendations, as well as the methodological annexes, validated by the WACTAF.

All deliverables must be submitted in French and English.

### **5. Methodology of the study**

The consultant will work under the supervision of the project management committee, which will facilitate access to the necessary documentation and contacts with the structures and resource persons for the conduct of the study. The study execution phases essentially include a framing meeting and a results restitution workshop. The framing meeting will take place at the beginning of the mission between the consultant and the project management committee. The project management committee will ensure the recruitment of ground staff for data collection and processing.

### **6. Role, responsibility and coordination**

The recruited consultant will be under the functional responsibility of the Project Manager. As such, the latter will be responsible for:

- Identify or contract with the consultant,
- Supervise the achievement of study results and the quality of deliverables submitted by the consultant,
- Respond to requests for support from the consultant, particularly with regard to facilitating access to country offices, contacts and documents identified as relevant by the consultant.

The Consultant is responsible for conducting the Baseline Study and all deliverables listed in Chapter 4, in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

### **7. Consultancy period**

The consultancy will take place from November 25 to December 13, 2024. The contract is scheduled for a duration of 15 working days. There will be a deadline of one week to submit the final report.



## 8. Consultant profile

The consultant must have the following profile:

- Postgraduate university training in international development, project management, social sciences or other relevant fields;
- Research capabilities;
- Good knowledge of the Gender and Development approach;
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in research or evaluation, ideally in the field of cross-border trade or rural development;
- Excellent writing skills in French and English, with proven experience in writing technical reports;
- Skills in statistical analysis and data interpretation;
- Ability to work in a team and communicate effectively with diverse stakeholders, including local partners and project beneficiaries.

## 9. Submission of Applications

The application files of the candidate interested in this consultation must consist of a separate technical offer and a financial offer. The technical offer in French or English must include:

- A technical offer including a note on the understanding of the mission, as well as the detailed and up-to-date CV of the consultant. The working methodology must be concrete and clearly developed, in particular on how he/she intends to deploy the consultancy (max. 5 pages).
- Copies of at least two similar studies carried out;
- A detailed timetable for carrying out the study;
- Confirmation of availability on the dates indicated.

The financial offer must include:

- The financial proposal submission letter;
- The detailed estimated budget of the study.

Applications should be sent by email to the following address: [WACTAF.wactaf@gmail.com](mailto:WACTAF.wactaf@gmail.com); [WACTAFwactafregionale@gmail.com](mailto:WACTAFwactafregionale@gmail.com)

Copy: [justinmatitoma@gmail.com](mailto:justinmatitoma@gmail.com); [cyrilleabilimi@gmail.com](mailto:cyrilleabilimi@gmail.com); [agbovianani7@gmail.com](mailto:agbovianani7@gmail.com)

## 10. Bid evaluation criteria

- Methodology proposed and adapted to the context (30%);
- Relevance of professional experience (knowledge and experience in the field of cross-border trade in agricultural products) in the target countries (30%);
- Financial offer (30%);
- Work experience in similar work (10%).

## 11. Deadline

The deadline for submitting applications is midnight (GMT) on 24 November 2024. Successful candidates will be contacted for an interview. The Management Committee reserves the right not to proceed with this call for expressions of interest.

