



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP BUSINESS DIRECTORY FOR CROSS-BORDER TRADERS

#### Summary of Assignment:

Nature of assignment	Short term
Timeframe	40 working days
Reporting	To Executive Director/CEO
Date of Advertisement	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
Application Deadline	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2024

#### 1. Background

The East African Business Council (EABC) and the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (TCCIA), in partnership with AGRA, are implementing a project titled "Promoting Intra-EAC Agri-Food Cross-Border Trade by Addressing Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) to Trade." The project commenced on July 1, 2024, and will run until June 2026, covering all East African Community (EAC) Partner States. It targets approximately 2,440 youth and women-led cross-border traders across the region.

The project aims to increase the participation of women and youth-led agri-food traders and boost the volume of trade in key agri-food commodities—specifically maize, rice, beans, soybeans, and horticulture—along the targeted corridors. It also seeks to address trade barriers, particularly NTBs, and improve the business environment to enhance the participation of small-scale traders, predominantly SMEs, women, and youth, in intra-EAC trade.

The targeted corridors include Taveta/Holili, Busia, Namanga, Nimule/Elegu, Serari, Kibirizi/Kigoma, Mutukula/Kagera, and Tunduma/Mbeya.

To support these objectives, EABC is seeking a qualified technical consultant to develop a WhatsApp-based and mobile app business directory to enhance business linkages for cross-border traders in the EAC.

#### 2. Objective

The technical consultant will develop a WhatsApp-based/mobile app business directory for cross-border traders.

### 3. Scope of Work

The selected consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

#### 1. System Design and Development

- **Backend Database Development:**
  - Design and develop a secure, scalable, and easily manageable backend database to store the details of cross-border traders, including their business names, product categories (e.g., maize, rice, beans), contact information, physical locations, and affiliations (EABC, Chamber of Commerce, etc.).
- **WhatsApp Business API Integration:**
  - Develop and integrate the WhatsApp Business API to link with the backend database. The system will allow users to query trader information, receive automated responses, and interact with the directory in real-time.
- **Mobile App Development:**
  - Design a mobile application with similar features to the WhatsApp-based platform, offering a more versatile way for users to access the directory.
- **Automation Logic Development:**
  - Create logic for handling various user inputs and queries (e.g., location, product category) and automating appropriate responses, providing users with relevant trader information.

#### 2. Data Collection and Entry

- **Information Gathering:**
  - Collect relevant data from cross-border traders via surveys, interviews, and partnerships with trade associations and government officials. Data will include business details, contact information, product categories, and other pertinent information.
- **Data Entry and System Integration:**
  - Ensure that all collected data is accurately entered into the backend database and linked to the WhatsApp platform and mobile app directory. Develop a system for ongoing data updates, allowing traders to update their profiles.

#### 3. Directory Features

- **User Interface Development:**
  - Design an intuitive user interface for both the WhatsApp-based platform and the mobile app, allowing users to easily search for traders based on product categories or locations.
- **Search Functions:**
  - Develop a search feature to enable users to find traders by location, product (e.g., maize, rice), or services offered.
- **Educational Content Integration:**
  - Include an FAQ section providing essential information on business registration, export procedures, the EAC Simplified Trade Regime, and other relevant trade-related topics.
- **Additional Support:**

- Incorporate emergency contacts, logistics and transport services, and legal services for trade disputes to ensure traders have access to comprehensive support.

#### 4. Testing and User Training

- **System Testing:**
  - Conduct rigorous testing of the WhatsApp-based directory and mobile app to ensure functionality, efficiency, and reliability. This will involve scenario-based testing to simulate real user interactions.
- **User Training:**
  - Develop training materials, including user manuals, instructional videos, and guides to ensure cross-border traders and service providers can easily navigate and use the platform.

#### 5. Maintenance and Support

- **Technical Support:**
  - Offer technical support during the initial rollout phase to address any issues or challenges users may encounter.
- **System Maintenance:**
  - Develop and implement a system maintenance plan that includes regular updates, troubleshooting, and data verification.
- **Continuous Improvement:**
  - Ensure the platform is scalable and flexible to accommodate future enhancements, based on the evolving needs of traders and the project.

#### 4. Deliverables

- Update EABC website to integrate the EABC-AGRA Project page and the WhatsApp-based/mobile app directory.
- Fully functional WhatsApp-based and mobile app directory with an integrated backend database.
- User manual and training materials for traders and service providers.
- Data collection and implementation plan.
- Test report, including feedback from traders and stakeholders.
- Maintenance and support plan.

#### 5. EABC and TCCIA will Provide the Following Information:

1. List of cross-border traders and businesses to be included in the database.
2. Information on trade associations, affiliates, and service providers such as logistics, financial institutions, and customs agencies that support cross-border trade.
3. Educational content on the EAC Simplified Trade Regime (STR), including lists of eligible products and step-by-step guides.
4. Simplified Guides for reporting Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).

5. Guides/Information on export procedures, business registration requirements, and legal processes related to cross-border trade.
6. Information on organizations providing trade support services, emergency contacts, and authorities that traders can reach out to.

## 7. Placement and Timeline of Assignment

The assignment will be carried out both physically and virtually. EABC will cover travel and accommodation directly for undertaking the assignment. The assignment will take place between October and December 2024 and will require up to 40 consultancy days. The professional fee attracts withholding tax at a rate of 5% for residents and 15% for non-residents.

## 8. Reporting

All reports and deliverables will be the property of the EABC-TCCIA AGRA Project and should be sent to the Executive Director of the EABC Secretariat and Project Lead.

## 9. Qualifications/Competencies

A suitable consultant/firm should hold the following qualifications and key competencies:

- a) **Academic qualifications:** A degree in Information Communication Technology or any other relevant field is required.
- b) **Proven experience:** Software development, particularly in WhatsApp API integration and digital mobile phone applications.
- c) **Strong analytical and project management skills.**
- d) **Communication and Networking:** Must be able to identify key stakeholders, seek their views, correctly interpret their messages, and respond appropriately.
- e) **Knowledge of EAC integration.**
- f) **Languages:** Fluency in oral and written English is required as it is the main EAC working language. Good working knowledge of French and Kiswahili is an advantage.
- g) **Nationality:** Open to nationals of any EAC Partner States: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Sudan.

## 10. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Maximum Score
Academic and other professional qualifications (Degree in ICT, Computer Science, etc.)	10

<b>Proven experience in software development, particularly in WhatsApp API integration and mobile app development</b>	20
<b>Proposed methodology, menu structure, and work plan</b>	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed methodology- 25</li> <li>• menu structure of the directory informed by Annex1-35</li> <li>• work plan -10</li> </ul>	
<b>Total Technical Score</b>	<b>100</b>

## 11. Mode of Payment

<b>Time</b>	<b>Amount to be Paid</b>
<b>Upon update of EABC website with project information and submission of the non-functional prototype</b>	20% of the total amount
<b>Upon submission of the functional prototypes and test report, including feedback from traders and stakeholders</b>	30% of the total amount
<b>Upon approval of the functional WhatsApp-based and Mobile App directory</b>	30% of the total amount
<b>Upon implementation of user training, maintenance, and support plan</b>	20% of the total amount

## 12. Application Process

Applicants are required to send technical and financial proposals to [procurement@eabc-online.com](mailto:procurement@eabc-online.com) with a copy to [director@eabc-online.com](mailto:director@eabc-online.com) clearly marked "Proposal for Business Directory Development – EABC-TCCIA-AGRA Project."

Interested consultants should submit their technical proposals outlining:

1. A detailed methodology, menu structure of the directory and work plan.
2. CV(s) of the consultant/team with a portfolio of relevant projects completed.

The financial proposal should be secured with a password.

**Applications close on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 at 5:00 PM.**

EABC is an equal opportunity employer, and recruitment is based on merit, with no regard to age, gender, marital status, disability, race, or creed. Canvassing shall lead to automatic disqualification. Environmental aspects will be taken into consideration.

**END**

## Annex 1 – Proposed Functions of the Cross-Border Traders Business Directory

1. **Trader Search**
  - Users can search for cross-border traders based on location, product type, or business category.
  - Traders can be filtered by specific border points (e.g., Taveta/Holili, Busia, Namanga, etc.).
2. **Product-Based Search**
  - Users can find traders selling specific products such as rice, beans, maize, onions, and other agricultural goods.
  - Search results provide contact details and location of traders offering the selected products.
3. **Buyer Search**
  - Allows traders to search for potential buyers of their products in various EAC partner states.
  - Connects buyers and sellers directly through contact information.
4. **EAC Simplified Trade Regime (STR) Information**
  - Provides educational content and step-by-step guides on trading under the EAC Simplified Trade Regime for goods valued under USD 2,000.
  - Includes access to lists of products eligible under the STR and videos/audios explaining the process.
5. **Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) Reporting**
  - Enables users to report non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that hinder their cross-border trade.
  - Provides a direct mechanism to raise complaints or concerns about trade barriers.
6. **Business Registration Assistance**
  - Guides users through the process of registering their businesses, outlining the required steps and benefits of formal registration.
  - Provides links to relevant trade bodies, such as chambers of commerce, to facilitate registration.
7. **Export Procedures**
  - Offers detailed information on export requirements for various products (e.g., vegetables, cereals).
  - Guides users through inspections and verification procedures for agricultural goods, including health and phytosanitary inspections.
8. **Support Services**
  - Lists additional services that support cross-border trade, including:
    - Currency exchange rates
    - Legal services for trade disputes
    - Insurance services for traders
    - Financial services (loans, trade finance)
    - B2B tools such as Isoko (exhibition platform)
9. **Emergency Contacts**
  - Provides contact information for authorities or emergency services in case of issues during cross-border trade activities.
10. **Information Sharing**

- Users can share directory details and product offers with other traders or potential buyers directly through the platform.
- The directory can be easily forwarded via WhatsApp, promoting broader networking and engagement.

#### **11. Feedback and FAQs**

- Allows users to provide feedback or ask questions about the platform and its services.
- Provides an FAQ section to address common queries about cross-border trade, business registration, and the use of the directory.

#### **12. Platform Information (About Us)**

- Offers information on the EABC-TCCIA-AGRA Project, its objectives, and its role in facilitating cross-border trade in the EAC.

Below functionality could be included later

#### **13. Logistics and Transport Services**

- Provides a directory of logistics, transport service providers, and clearing agents to assist traders in moving goods across borders.
- Helps traders identify trusted transport options for their goods.