

Terms of Reference (TORs) for Consultants/Individual Contractors

Project Title:	Strengthening the agriculture and agri-food value chain and improving trade policy in Iraq (SAAVI)
Project Number:	B960
Duty station:	Home-based
Hiring Manager:	Mr. Khemraj Ramful, Senior Adviser, Export Quality Management, Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business.
Type of Consultant:	National Consultant
Title of assignment:	National Expert on quality infrastructure
Country:	Iraq
Tentative start date:	1 November 2021
Tentative end date:	15 January 2022
Estimated no. of work days:	
Travel:	Travel within the country to different regions as needed to visit different quality infrastructure related institutions

Deadline for applications: 17 October 2021

Background:

The International Trade Centre (ITC, www.intracen.org) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), fully dedicated to supporting the development and internationalization of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). ITC's mission is to foster inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development. ITC Headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland.

ITC started implementing the 5-year project "Strengthening the agriculture and agri-food value chain and improving trade policy in Iraq" (SAAVI) on 01 November 2020. This 22.5 Million EUR project, funded by the European Union, aims to contribute to inclusive growth and job creation for Iraq citizens, particularly for youth. It seeks to enhance the competitiveness of Iraq's agribusiness value chain, while improving the country's trade policy. It is hoped that eventually, projects to improve the competitiveness of the private sector may revitalize Iraq's bid to join the World Trade Organization.

The principal government counterparts for this project are the Ministry of Planning (MoP), the Ministry of Trade (MoT), and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

Under Expected Result 3 to increased capacities in the enabling business environment to better support value chain competitiveness (with particular emphasis on the improvement of knowledge and skills for employment among youth) it is envisaged to identify key institutions in the field of quality management and support them in promoting the use of standards and conformity assessment among MSMEs of the selected sectors for market access.

This work involves firstly mapping of the institutions comprising the quality infrastructure in Iraq, and then building of their capacities according to the needs assessed.

A properly functioning quality infrastructure is not only important for domestic market operations. When aligned with national trade development priorities, it can lever improved competitiveness and foreign market access towards social and environmental wellbeing. Quality infrastructure is the ecosystem of public and private institutions, along with the policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, and practices needed to support the quality, safety and environmental soundness of goods, services and processes. A quality infrastructure relies on standardization, metrology, conformity assessment (testing, inspection, certification, market surveillance) and accreditation.

A technical regulation is a “Document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including administrative provisions, with which compliance is mandatory”. — Annex 1 WTO/TBT Agreement

A sanitary or phytosanitary measure is “Any measure applied: (a) to protect animal or plant life or health within the territory of the Member from risks arising from the entry, establishment or spread of pests, diseases, disease-carrying organisms or disease-causing organisms; (b) to protect human or animal life or health within the territory of the Member from risks arising from additives, contaminants, toxins or disease-causing organisms in foods, beverages or feedstuffs; (c) to protect human life or health within the territory of the Member from risks arising from diseases carried by animals, plants or products thereof, or from the entry, establishment or spread of pests; or (d) to prevent or limit other damage within the territory of the Member from the entry, establishment or spread of pests.” — Annex A WTO/SPS Agreement

“Standardization is the activity of establishing, with regard to actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context

In particular, the activity consists of the processes of formulating, issuing and implementing standards.” Important benefits of standardization are improvement of the suitability of products, processes and

services for their intended purposes, prevention of barriers to trade and facilitation of technological cooperation. — ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004. **Standard** is a “Document approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products and their related processes or production methods, with compliance is not mandatory.” — Annex 1 WTO/TBT Agreement

Metrology is the “science of measurement and its application”. — OIML International Vocabulary of Metrology V 2-200:2007

Conformity assessment is any procedure used, directly or indirectly, to determine that relevant requirements in technical regulations or standards are fulfilled. Conformity assessment procedures include, inter alia, procedures for sampling, testing and inspection; evaluation, verification and assurance of conformity; registration, accreditation and approval as well as their combinations. An agency, organization or institution performing conformity assessment is a conformity assessment body. — Annex 1 WTO/TBT Agreement

Accreditation is a formal recognition of competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks (inspection, testing, certification). Accreditation provides confidence in the competence, integrity and impartiality of the conformity assessment body.

In this regard it is necessary to deploy a national expert who understands the role of a national quality infrastructure, and is familiar with the institutions, departments, and bodies in Iraq performing above mentioned functions and to be able to easily contact the various staff and officials in these bodies, gather information, relevant documentation, exchange views, and carry out fact finding through visits if needed.

The National Consultant will undertake the following duties.

DUTIES:

The National Consultant will work under the overall guidance and direct supervision of the Senior Adviser, Export Quality Management, in consultation with the Trade Training Officer, Export Quality Management at ITC Geneva and in collaboration with the National Coordinator of the SAAVI project based in Baghdad. Specifically, s/he will perform the following tasks.

*Description of
Duties /
Responsibilities:*

1. Identify and map the various public institutions and private agencies responsible for technical regulations, SPS measures (food safety, animal health, plant health), standardization, metrology, conformity assessment, (testing, inspection, certification), market surveillance and accreditation in Iraq.
2. List the mandate, role and entire range and scope of different services provided by each institution and/or agency. Determine their accreditation status and scope of accreditation or regional/international affiliations
3. Identify, review and assess the needs of the public institutions and bodies related to developing and reinforcing their capacities and competence in fulfilling their roles and mandates in a coordinated and holistic manner, specifically the technical needs, and in relation to the export development strategy or market access plan of Iraq. Present the information in a tabulated manner as far as possible.
4. Prepare and submit a well-structured, clear, and succinct assessment report including above information, with observations, and recommendations, annexing lists of persons contacted, meetings held, visits made and other pertinent information, as well as referencing any other sources of information (laws, regulations, publications, journals, studies, reports and websites). Revise the report as per ITC comments and suggestions and submit the final report.

*National
Consultant
expected outputs
and timelines:
Skills:*

Report on the institutions forming the quality infrastructure and their needs related to strengthening their capacities.

- Engages tactfully and interactively with senior and mid-level staff in ministries, departments and national institutions to build professional rapport and garner commitment to set goals and support systems.
- Excellent technical comprehension, and analytic skills.
- Objective and rational thinker with good organization and problem solving skills able to create/enjoys good professional rapport with key persons in quality infrastructure institutions, departments and their responsibilities.
- Good communicator especially on technical matters with excellent ability to express clearly and succinctly, complex/interrelated themes in a logical and methodological manner.
- Works easily with standard office email and communications software, MS-Word, PowerPoint, Excel, other MS-Office and online file-sharing applications.

Education: University degree in Engineering, Quality Management, International Trade, Law, Science, or a related field.

Required Experience: In-depth knowledge and at least 7 years of practical technical experience within national quality infrastructure institutions dealing in depth with standardization and conformity assessment. Familiarity/experience with implementation of standardization, and conformity assessment. Work experience in Iraq and/or the middle-east will be an advantage.

Languages: Must be able to communicate and draft well in English.
Good ability to converse in and read Arabic.

How to apply?

Prospective candidates are invited to submit their application by sending their CV to Ms. Hema Menon (menon@intracen.org) by midnight CEST 17 October 2021.