TERMS OF REFERENCE

E-COMMERCE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

SHETRADES Empowering African women through e-commerce (C098)

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1.1. Trade, especially by women-owned enterprises, can be an effective driver for the economic inclusion of women. Women-owned exporting firms earn more, employ more people, and pay higher wages. Enabling women to participate in trade and improving the performance of micro, small and medium- sized (MSMEs) can translate into increased trade, productivity, and competitiveness. This can help drive overall economic expansion, job creation, innovation, and human development. If women are to play an active role in shaping institutions, social norms, and the well-being of their communities, their participation in trade is crucial.

1.1.2. The COVID-19 pandemic has vastly accelerated the growth and adoption of e-commerce, prompting a significant increase in e-commerce's share of global retail trade from 14% in 2019 to 17% in 2020. As governments imposed nation-wide lockdowns and restrictions, an unprecedented number of consumers resorted to online shopping to purchase their goods. In June 2020, global retail e-commerce traffic stood at a record 22 billion monthly visits, with demand being exceptionally high for every-day items such as groceries, clothing, but also retail tech items. It is critical that women- led businesses can harness the power of e-commerce to internationalize their business and reach new markets

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE SHETRADES E-COMMERCE PROJECT

2.1.1. The SheTrades: Empowering African women through e-commerce project, funded by GIZ, aims to promote economic growth and job creation in Nigeria and South Africa through the increased participation of women-led businesses in digital trade. The project will build the competitiveness, digital skills and e-market connectivity of 100 of women-led SMEs and will work with two key partners, specifically the SheTrades Hubs hosted by The Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) and South Africa's Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). This project will also work with market partners including buyers, to help them implement strategies to support women in their supply chains.

2.1.2. SheTrades Hubs are decentralized platforms of the ITC SheTrades Initiative implemented and funded by local host institutions. The SheTrades Hub in Nigeria was established in 2016 and has already shown a track record in support women in trade. The SheTrades Hub in South Africa was launched in August 2021 and has already shown considerable commitment, including completing an extensive provincial roadshow to mobilise 2,000 South African women entrepreneurs on SheTrades.com.

2.1.3. Other key stakeholders include:
   o Women-led businesses
   o Business Support Organisations (BSOs)
   o Private sector

2.1.4. **E-commerce in Nigeria:** In Africa, leading e-commerce platforms, like Nigeria's Jumia, reported a 50% increase in transactions during the first six months of 2020. The Nigerian e-commerce market grew by 42% in 2020. It is projected that current e-commerce spending in Nigeria will reach $75 billion in revenues per year by 2025, up from $12 billion in 2020. Digital payments and electronic banking are becoming more popular across the country. The increasing adoption of electronic payments and the entrance of trusted payment providers will further fuel e-commerce opportunities for Nigerian SMEs to participate in cross-border digital trade.

2.1.5. **E-commerce in South Africa:** The increase in online shopping in South Africa also presents ample growth opportunity for SMEs. In 2020, the South African e-commerce market increased by 29%. Thirty-five per cent of the South African population have bought at least one product online in 2020. Approximately 22 million consumers shopped online in South Africa in 2020. This number is expected to grow by 44% to 32 million users by 2024. Furthermore, in a 2021 consumer survey, over 70% of respondents indicated that they shop online at least once a month.

2.1.6. Shifting consumer demand for goods from brick-and-mortar stores to e-commerce in South Africa and Nigeria presents a significant opportunity for women-led SMEs across Africa to benefit from new digital trade opportunities.

2.1.7. Coupled with the opening of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which aims to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers across 55 countries, with a population of over 1 billion people, women-led businesses have a historic opportunity to increase their participation in cross-border pan-African trade through e-commerce

2.1.8.   To seize both the opening of digital trade opportunities and the benefits of digital technologies, women-led businesses will need to adapt, digitalize their operations and take their businesses online. For SMEs, shifting to e-commerce platforms requires complying with new requirements (logistics, e-payments, return policies) and acquiring new digital marketing skills. In addition, SMEs will also have to adjust to changing consumer demand, identify opportunities to replace physical with digital processes and gain online consumer trust. The digitalization of SMEscan not only be costly but also require digital skills and technical knowledge, which women-led businesses in Africa will need support in acquiring.

3. REQUIRED SERVICES

3.1.1.   The required services aim to build capacities of women-led businesses in South Africa and Nigeriato leverage e-commerce for their business growth ITC expects the selected bidder to train and mentor – via a combination of webinars, workshops, and customized online coaching sessions – at least 100 women-led businesses from across various sectors, in each country, i.e.: South Africa or Nigeria. The programme should be implemented over a period of at most four (4) months.

The digital digital upskilling curriculum **must** contain both theoretical and practical components preferably with the use of (free) online tools. The selected bidder is encouraged to use toolsoffered by the ITC ecomConnect project in their training.

CURRICULUM
The project proposes that the training curriculum cover the following **four themes** which are essential to businesses' success in e-commerce:

1.   **Analysis and Preparation of Offering**
     o   Business Management for E-Commerce (e.g. customer persona, valueproposition, etc)
     o   Export Management for E-commerce
     o   Market Research and Strategy
     o   Productizing for E-Commerce (especially for services, i.e. IT and BusinessProcess Outsourcing or Tourism)

2.   **Content Development and Optimisation**
     o   Digital content creation, management, and marketing
     o   Branding

3.   **Marketplaces, E-commerce websites, and Online Payment Solutions**
     Selling through:
     o   International e-marketplaces
     o   Social stores
     o   Own E-Commerce platforms
     International E-Payments

4.   **Logistics, packaging, customer service, and digital marketing**
     o   Duties and taxes in cross-border e-commerce
     o   Logistics for e-commerce
     o   Packaging for e-commerce
     o   Customer service and returns management
     o   Digital marketing (e.g. content marketing, email marketing, analytics, SEO, etc)

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN CURRICULUM DESIGN
DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT
In designing the training programme, the selected bidder must take into consideration two desired outcomes of the project:
     o   That women-led businesses have implemented changes to their business practices to support their participation in e-commerce; and
     o   That women-led businesses have made sales through one or more e-commerce platforms

Profile of Women-Led Businesses for Small Group coaching
The pool of women-led businesses comprises businesses with different levels of digital literacy, e-commerce readiness, level of export experience, products and services, number of resources, etc. Accordingly, to ensure that small group coaching is effective and produces concrete results for women-led business, the selected bidder may categories the businesses based on one or more of the abovementioned characteristics.

The training programme must comprise two of the below components
- o Webinars and/or workshops (open to all women-led businesses)
- o Small group coaching in groups comprising 5 to 10 women-led businesses (open to a maximum of 80 selected women-led businesses per country). The coaching should be aimed at supporting entrepreneurs with applying/operationalizing the acquired knowledge and skills to their businesses (see below example)

The curriculum proposed by the selected bidder need not adhere to or be limited by the above example.

Month / Week	1	2	3
1	**Theme 1** 1. Introduction to E-Commerce 2. Business and Export Management for E-Commerce *Webinars open to all*	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country
2	**Theme 1** 3. Market Research and Strategy 4. Productising for E-Commerce *Webinars open to all*	**Theme 3** 6. Selling through international e-marketplaces and social stores *Webinars open to all*	**Theme 4** 9. Duties, Logistics, Packaging 10. Customer service and Returns Management 11. Digital Marketing *Webinars open to all*
3	**Theme 2** 4. Digital content creation, management, and marketing 5. Branding *Webinars open to all*	**Theme 3** 7. Selling through own e-commerce platforms 8. International E-Payments *Webinars open to all*	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country
4	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country	Small Group Coaching for Groups of 5-10 Women-Led Businesses. Max. of 80 selected businesses per country

Under the overall guidance of the Head of the Women and Trade Programme, and the direct supervision of the ITC SheTrades' Empowering African women through e-commerce (C098) Project Manager, the selected bidder will undertake the following:

- o **Task 1:** to deliver webinars and/or virtual workshops on proposed topics above to **all selected WLBs.** The proposed curriculum will be subjected to review by ITC and the selected bidder is expected to incorporate all feedback provided by ITC to revise the curriculum. Implementation will only begin once ITC has given the final approval of the revised curriculum.

- o **Task 2:** Following each group of webinars and/or virtual workshops, the selected bidder isexpected to provide online coaching sessions to a maximum of 80 selected women-led businesses per country, and in groups of no more than ten WLBs per session. The coaching groups are to be organised by the selected bidder, based on similarities of products/services offered, digital readiness of their companies, and any other relevant criteria approved by ITC.

- o **Task 3:** Over the course of the 12-week training programme the selected bidder shall monitor progress made by all groups of women-led businesses participating in its coachingsessions. The selected bidder shall also, one month after the completion of the training programme, conduct one final, comprehensive evaluation of these women-led businesses to ensure that they have effectively implemented all necessary changes to their business practices and online platforms; and

- o **Task 4:** to submit a tracking report after each month of the training curriculum, and one final report on all activities delivered. ITC will provide the selected bidder with the template for the tracking report as well as key indicators to include in the final report.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Using a proven and suitable export capacity building methodology, the selected bidder will be required to undertake the following specific tasks:

4.2 Task 1:

The selected bidder will deliver online trainings on topics presented above, via webinars, to all selected WLBs in Nigeria and South Africa, over a period of three (3) months after the signature ofthe contract. Selection of beneficiaries will be performed by ITC. Activities under this task include:

o Design, review and validate content of the online trainings in consultation with the ITC project team (Headquarters and field staff);
o Conduct webinars or virtual workshops at dates and times agreed with ITC. Online platforms to deliver webinars to be provided by selected bidder.
o Submit reports on each webinar or virtual workshop delivered, including presentation (PowerPoint and/or PDF), participant lists, links to recorded webinars, evaluation (by participants) of webinar, and results obtained (evaluation forms to be provided by ITC);

4.3 Task 2:

The selected bidder, over a period of three (3) months after the signature of the contract, will provide online coaching sessions to groups of selected women-led businesses. Each session should have a maximum of ten WLBs. Coaching sessions to selected participants will be delivered after each group of webinars and/or virtual workshops. Each coaching session should focus on supporting women-led businesses enter e-commerce or increase their sales through online platforms. Activities under this task would include:

o Cluster WLBs in groups of five to ten, based on criteria such as digital readiness, producUservices offered, export readiness, etc;
o Conduct online coaching sessions at dates and times agreed with WLBs. The selectedbidder should   ensure that its coaching cohere with the content delivered during its webinars and/workshops and customise its coaching according to the profile of each coaching group. The coaching must support women-led businesses with implementing changes to their business practices (in the context of e-commerce) and increasing theirsales through e-commerce;
o Submit report one week after each round of coaching sessions, including participants list, topics covered, links to recorded sessions, outcomes, and evaluation of session (evaluation forms to be provided by ITC);

4.4 Task 3:

Under the guidance of the selected bidder, and following the completion of all coaching sessions, each WLB is expected to complete an e-commerce action plan (e.g. new webpage plan, new payment solution to be implemented in the following 3 months, digital marketing strategies, etc.) no later than one month after the delivery of the last online coaching session. The selected bidder will follow up with each WLB coached, and report on its progress made on the e-commerce action plan and changes made to its business operations or online platforms. The e-commerce action plan should be developed by the selected bidder and the finalised version should be approved by ITC prior to dissemination.

o Conduct follow-up calls (via Skype, Zoom, mobile, etc.) with all participants of the coaching programme, provide additional guidance, and monitor progress made on the e-commerce action plan and implementation of operational changes related to the topics covered during the webinars, virtual workshops, and coaching sessions.
o Submit individual reports for each WLB participating in the coaching session, including an assessment of the progress made by each WLB on the e-commerce action plan and on the implemented changes related to the topics covered in the webinars, virtual workshops,and coaching sessions.

4.5 Task 4 (Final report):

Submit a final report on all activities delivered

5. CONTRACT DETAILS

5.1   Contract duration

The total duration for the contract is estimated to be four (4) months starting from the contract award.Work should commence as soon as possible after the signing of the contract.

5.2   Scope in terms of countries

The selected bidder may present offers to provide services for one or both countries (e.g. South Africa only, Nigeria only, or both countries). The final decision on whether the selected bidder getsto deliver training to one or both countries will be made by ITC.
Each proposed offer must demonstrate an expert understanding of the e-commerce landscape inthe respective country.

5.3   Expected Deliverables and timelines under the contract

- o   Task 1 must be completed within 3 months after signature of the contract;
- o   Task 2 must be completed within 3 months after the signature of the contract;
- o   Task 3 must be completed within 1 month after completion of Tasks 1 and 2;
- o   Task 4 must be completed within 1 month after completion of Tasks 1 and 2;
- o   Payments will be released monthly, upon satisfactory delivery of specific units (according to Annex B – Financial Table).
- o   Delivery schedules will be agreed between ITC and the contracted company.

5.4   Payment

ITC will pay the service provider upon receipt of monthly invoices and confirmation that theservices and reports have been delivered to ITC's satisfaction.

5.5   Language

The reporting and communication language must be in English.

6. CONTENT OF THE PROPOSAL

6.1.1.   The bidder must submit proposal that contains the following information:
- o   Company description
- o   Mission statement
- o   Organizational setup and branch network
- o   Description of complete proposed solution for ITC needsProven understanding of the services to be provided Legal form and incorporation
- o   Previous experience in managing similar scheme including references.
- o   Your pitch and additional creative ideas to be developed in the framework of this project which would help ITC to achieve its goals.
- o   And any supporting documents needed

6.1.2.   Please note that it is **MANDATORY**:
- o   to fill in the excel financial table (Annex B), and to sign it
- o   accept the UN Conditions of contracts for the provision of services
- o   to be registered in the UNGM (United Nations Global Market) by clicking www.ungm.org. Kindly communicate the 6 digit numbers.

6.1.3.   Qualifications, Competencies, and experience required:
- o   Expert knowledge on ICT sector, digital economy, digital literacy skills/digital literacy framework,
- o   Experience in designing and implementing ICT development programs, entrepreneurship development, and skills development initiatives is an advantage