



**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA
MINISTRY OF COMMECE AND INDUSTRY**

Terms of Reference

For

**CONSULTANCY TO UNDERTAKE AN ASSESSMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF A NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW IN SOMALIA**

August 2024

A. Background

Under the Horn of Africa Initiative, the World Bank is funding the De-Risking, Inclusion and Value Enhancement of Pastoral Economies Project (DRIVE) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industries is one of the project beneficiaries. DRIVE Project aims to protect pastoralists against drought shocks, using a package of financial services including drought insurance, payment, savings, and provision of credit funding, and to connect the pastoralists better to markets by upgrading the livestock value chains and facilitating the regional livestock trade. This project is regional, and Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia are the participating countries. The development objective of the Project is to enhance de-risking, financial inclusion, and value addition of pastoral economies in the HoA.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industries of Somalia is responsible for facilitating trade and improving the competitiveness of the country's businesses through three main categories: policy, legal framework, and management. The Ministry formulates, develops, and implements policies to strengthen commerce, develop industries, promote domestic and foreign investment, and enhance the use of advanced technologies for increased productivity. In addition, it oversees the creation and enforcement of relevant investment laws and regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, the Ministry manages and collaborates on the collection, research, and sharing of commerce and industry information to attract investment, while also focusing on capacity development and advancement of its offices and staff.

The HOA DRIVE project aims to facilitate trade in the region. One of the activities of the project is to undertake trade facilitation measures such as —the simplification, modernization and harmonization of export and import processes—that could play a key role in helping HOA countries to build back better and be more resilient for future emergencies. Under the HOA Initiative and under the DRIVE project, this activity will provide a platform for a coordinating mechanism with border agencies to ensure the speedy clearance of goods. The aim is to avoid that the private sector often had to seek multiple approvals and submit duplicate documents.

Reducing trade costs at the border requires a partnership approach between the private sector and government to ensure the identification of trade challenges and the validation of trade facilitation reforms. This activity also complements the trade portal that the DRIVE is also supporting for collecting information on livestock trade.

Overview of Single Window (SW)

Single Windows are online platforms, which automate trade procedures and replace the need for physical, manual, and duplicative processes. These digital platforms play an important role in speeding up border procedures, allowing seamless processing, and reducing the need for physical contact between border agencies and traders.

Single Windows combined with Trade Information Portals enhance transparency for trade. Often, these platforms provide access to trade-related information, ensuring all formalities are accessible to all traders including micro, small and medium-sized-enterprises (MSMEs) and woman traders. Trade facilitation reforms to automate and streamline border procedures, simplify fees, and foster inclusion of MSMEs, pastoralists and women traders will have most effect in growth.

The Single Window system is a comprehensive and integrated platform designed to provide a one-stop-shop for the submission and processing of trade-related documents in Somalia. The system aims to reduce the time and cost associated with the clearance of goods, enhance transparency and accountability in trade-related processes, facilitate cross-border trade and investment.

A future Single Window system in Somalia will need to be designed to meet the specific needs of the stakeholders, including government agencies, importers, exporters, and other users. Equally, it will need to be designed to accommodate the maturity of the information and communications technology infrastructure of Somalia as well as the capacities of those charged with using and operating the platform. It automates the exchange of information among all stakeholders involved in the trade process, ensuring compliance with national and international trade regulations.

The Single Window system can offer a user-friendly interface to help users manage their trade transactions more efficiently, such as electronic applications, processing, issuance of certificates and permits, and payments with online tracking.

In summary, a Single Window system for trade facilitation in Somalia should be designed to promote economic growth and development by providing a user-friendly, efficient, and reliable platform that meets the needs of all stakeholders involved in the trade process. This Single Window will also facilitate faster and easier documentary processing of livestock in the HOA and align with international and regional trade facilitation measures of the WTO, EAC, COMESA and the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement.

The World Bank Group assists countries in achieving successful automation by helping to build a roadmap for National Single Windows that encompasses not only recommendations for information technology aspect but also considers the necessary legal, governance, and operational needs to catalyze stakeholder consensus amongst both the public and private sectors, for the reform.

A National Single Windows can be a complex undertaking and one that is best approached gradually, stage-by-stage. The first stage begins with an environment and feasibility assessment. This is then followed by a second stage of determination of a vision for the countries NSW taking into account the countries unique circumstances uncovered during the feasibility assessment. With the NSW vision agreed and adopted by government the final stage of

preparation is a comprehensive Blueprint (or Roadmap) that encompasses all facets needed for the NSW implementation addressing not only technology matters but those concerned with governance, operations and financing amongst others.

B. Objectives of Assignment

The primary objective of this assignment is to undertake the first stage of preparation for the introduction of a NSW: to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and feasibility study for the development of a National Single Window (NSWNSW) for Somalia, tailored to the country's unique trade ecosystem and challenges.

The needs assessment will provide valuable insights into the current trade processes, infrastructure, and stakeholder capacities, and will serve as the foundation for the future development of a Vision for the Somalia NSW and a subsequent Blueprint (or Roadmap) for the implementation of a robust and efficient NSW.

The specific objectives of the assignment are:

1. To identify the current state of trade facilitation in Somalia, including the existing trade-related systems, processes, and procedures.¹
2. To analyze and document the trade ecosystem in Somalia, including key industries, import and export volumes, major trading partners, and the specific challenges faced by businesses and government agencies involved in trade.
3. To map and engage all relevant stakeholders in the trade ecosystem, including government agencies, private sector entities, and regional and international organizations, ensuring their active participation and buy-in throughout the needs assessment process.
4. To identify the challenges and constraints facing stakeholders in the trade process, including government agencies, importers, exporters, and other users.
5. To document the existing trade processes, including detailed business process maps of all, regulatory compliance and clearance procedures, , identifying inefficiencies, bottlenecks, and areas where improvements are needed.
6. To evaluate the current state of ICT infrastructure and technology nationally and at all involved trade agencies determining the extent to which electronic data interchange (EDI) and other digital systems are currently used in trade-related processes.

¹ Note that the Somali Trade Information Portal recently implemented provides a comprehensive source of available and documented procedures.

7. To identify capacity building needs among government agencies and businesses, focusing on areas where training, education, and technical support may be needed to ensure effective adoption and use of the NSW.
8. To assess potential risks and challenges related to NSW implementation, such as political instability, security concerns, or resistance to change among stakeholders, and recommend mitigation strategies.
9. To gather, catalogue and analyze the existing legal and regulatory frameworks governing trade and information exchange between stakeholders, identifying gaps, inconsistencies, or potential barriers to the successful implementation of an electronic NSW viz-a-viz laws on electronic transactions, data confidentiality and data security.
10. To develop a comprehensive needs assessment report that details the key findings, requirements, and recommendations for the implementation of a NSW in Somalia, highlighting the potential benefits and improvements it can bring to the country's trade ecosystem.

C. Scope of the Assignment

The scope of this assignment encompasses the range of activities and outputs designed to provide a thorough understanding of the current trade environment and challenges associated with implementing a National Single Window (NSW) in Somalia. Selected firm(s) should ensure their approach covers the following key components:

1. **Desk Study:** Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature, data, and resources related to Somalia's trade ecosystem, ICT infrastructure, legal and regulatory frameworks. This study will serve as the foundation for subsequent activities.
2. **Field Research:** Carry out field research to gather firsthand information on trade processes, information and communications technology, stakeholder capacities, and potential risks and challenges associated with NSW implementation. This will involve site visits to government agencies, businesses, infrastructure and technology service providers and other relevant organizations, as well as interviews and surveys with key stakeholders.
3. **Draft Report:** Develop a draft needs assessment report detailing the key findings, requirements, and recommendations for the implementation of an NSW in Somalia, with adequate detail to enable the Ministry of Commerce to use in the tendering process for the development of the National Single Window. This report should also highlight the potential benefits and improvements the NSW can bring to the country's trade ecosystem.

4. **Feedback and Validation:** Present the draft report to the client and key stakeholders for feedback and validation, ensuring that the findings and recommendations accurately reflect the needs and expectations of all parties involved.
5. **Final Report:** Incorporate feedback and revisions from the client and stakeholders into the final needs assessment report.

Outline:

- i. **Assess feasibility and scalability:** Evaluate the feasibility of implementing a NSW platform in Somalia, considering factors such as available resources, ICT infrastructure, and stakeholder capacities, plus that of having in place an enabling legal environment that will support the introduction and operation of a NSW.
- ii. **Enhanced interoperability:** Examine the potential for interoperability between the proposed NSW models and existing systems used by government agencies (where they may exist), businesses, and regional and international organizations. This will ensure seamless integration and efficient data exchange among stakeholders.
- iii. **Evaluate risks and challenges:** Assess the potential risks and challenges associated with each NSW model and provide recommendations for mitigation strategies.

D. Firm and Core Team Qualifications

The selected firm (or consortium of firms) undertaking the needs assessment for implementing a NSWs in Somalia should have extensive experience and a proven track record in trade facilitation, ICT system implementation, and capacity building projects, preferably within the sub-Saharan African region or in countries with similar contexts and challenges. The firm should also demonstrate a strong understanding of international trade, regulatory frameworks, and best practices in NSW Specifically,

1. **General Core Experience:** The ideal firm should have extensive experience in trade facilitation, customs processes, NSWs experience and ICT system implementation. They should have a proven track record of delivering successful projects in similar contexts, preferably within sub-Saharan Africa. The firm should also have a strong understanding of international trade, regulatory frameworks, and best practices in Single Window Policies and Single Window Systems.
2. **Minimum Years of Operation:** The ideal firm should have been in operation for a minimum of 10 years.
3. **Specific Experience Related to this Assignment:** The ideal firm should have specific experience in implementing or conducting needs assessments for implementing NSW and Policies, preferably in developing countries or regions with similar challenges to Somalia. The firm should also have experience in stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and risk management to ensure the successful implementation of the NSW.

The team within the firm should consist of experts with diverse skills and experience to ensure that the final output meets the objectives of the assignment. The required expertise within the team should include, as a minimum:

1. National Single Window Expert (Team Leader)

The National Single Window (NSW) Expert will lead the needs assessment and feasibility study for implementing a NSW in Somalia. Given the project's complexity and importance, the expert should possess a robust blend of educational qualifications, professional experience, and specific expertise in trade facilitation and NSW implementation.

Educational Qualifications:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in International Trade, Economics, Business Administration, Information Technology, Law, or a related field.

Professional Qualifications:

- Project Management Professional (PMP) or PRINCE2 certification is highly desirable.
- Certification in Customs and Trade Facilitation (e.g., from the World Customs Organization) is desirable.

General Experience:

- A minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience in international trade, customs procedures, trade facilitation, and ICT system implementation.
- Proven track record in leading and managing complex projects, preferably in developing countries or regions with similar challenges to Somalia.
- Demonstrated experience in stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and risk management.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and report writing skills.

Specific Experience:

- Direct experience in implementing or advising on National Single Window systems, including needs assessments, feasibility studies, and blueprint development.
- In-depth knowledge of international trade agreements, customs regulations, and trade facilitation best practices.
- Experience in working with government agencies, private sector entities, and international organizations in the context of trade facilitation reforms.
- Familiarity with ICT infrastructure, system design, and data exchange standards relevant to NSW implementation.
- Experience in conducting training and capacity-building programs for government officials and businesses on trade facilitation and NSW usage.

1. Legal and regulatory expert:

The Legal and Regulatory Expert will play a crucial role in ensuring that the necessary legal framework exists to enable the NSW introduction and to identify whatever legislative and regulatory gaps that may exist at national or agency level can be identified and addressed.

Educational Qualifications:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Law, with a specialization in International Trade Law, Commercial Law, or a related field.

Professional Qualifications:

- Bar admission in a recognized international jurisdiction is required.
- Certification in Customs Law or Trade Facilitation Law is desirable.

General Experience:

- A minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience in legal practice, with a focus on international trade law, commercial law, or regulatory compliance.
- Demonstrated experience in legal research, analysis, and drafting of legal documents.
- Proven track record in advising clients on legal and regulatory matters related to trade and information exchange.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and interpersonal skills.

Specific Experience:

- Experience in analyzing and drafting legal and regulatory frameworks related to trade facilitation, customs procedures, and electronic data interchange.
- Understanding of Somalia's legal and regulatory environment, including trade laws, customs regulations, and data protection laws.
- Familiarity with international trade agreements, such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and their implications for national legislation.
- Experience in identifying and addressing legal and regulatory gaps or inconsistencies that may hinder the implementation of a NSW.
- Experience in working with government agencies, legal professionals, and other stakeholders to ensure compliance with legal requirements and promote effective implementation of trade facilitation reforms.

2. ICT and Systems Integration Expert:

An ICT and Systems Integration Expert will be required in assessing the technological feasibility and requirements for implementing the National Single Window (NSW) system in Somalia. Their expertise will ensure the seamless integration of the NSW with existing systems and infrastructure.

Educational Qualifications:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Computer Science, Information Systems, Software Engineering, or a related field.

Professional Qualifications:

- Certifications in relevant technologies (e.g., Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert, Oracle Certified Professional, Cisco Certified Network Associate) are highly desirable.

General Experience:

- A minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience in ICT infrastructure, system design, development, and implementation.
- Proven track record in leading and managing technical projects, preferably in the public sector or trade facilitation domain.
- Demonstrated experience in systems integration, data exchange, and interoperability.
- Strong understanding of software development methodologies, database management, and network security.

Specific Experience:

- Experience in designing and implementing electronic data interchange (EDI) systems, web portals, or other digital platforms for trade facilitation.
- Familiarity with international standards and best practices for data exchange and system interoperability in the context of trade facilitation (e.g., UN/CEFACT, WCO Data Model).
- Experience in assessing ICT infrastructure and identifying technology requirements for implementing complex systems like the NSW.
- Knowledge of cybersecurity risks and mitigation strategies for digital platforms handling sensitive trade data.
- Experience in working with government agencies, technology vendors, and other stakeholders to ensure successful system integration and implementation.

E. Deliverables and Timelines of the Assignment

This summary table outlines the key deliverables and indicative timeline for the assignment. The entire project is expected to be completed in five months, with each deliverable being completed at specific milestones throughout the project's duration.

The timeline may be adjusted based on the specific requirements of the client and the progress of the work.

Delivery No. Deliverable Item Title

Brief Explanation of Deliverable

Indicative Timeline

1 Inception Report and work plan

A report outlining the project's scope, methodology, team members, and work plan, including key milestones and tasks - 2 weeks.

2 Desk Study Report

A comprehensive review of existing literature, data, and resources related to Somalia's trade ecosystem, ICT environment and legal framework - 4 weeks.

3 Field Research Findings

Detailed findings from the field research, including outcomes of site visits, interviews, and surveys with stakeholders – 11 weeks.

4 Stakeholder Consultation Report

A report detailing the insights, opinions, and feedback gathered during stakeholder consultations, workshops, and focus groups – 16 weeks.

5 Draft Feasibility Report that includes all the points of the assignment

A draft report presenting the key findings, requirements, and recommendations – 18 weeks.

6 Final Validation Workshop

Present the draft report to the client and key stakeholders for feedback and validation, ensuring that the findings and recommendations accurately reflect the needs and expectations of all parties involved – 20 weeks.

7 Final Single Window Report

The final needs assessment report, incorporating feedback and revisions from the client and stakeholders, providing a comprehensive needs assessment and feasibility report for the development of a National Single Window (NSW) for Somalia – 22 weeks.

F: Payment Structure:

Deliverable 1: Inception Report and work plan: 10 percent

Deliverable 2, 3 and 4: 10 percent

Deliverable 5: 20 percent

Deliverable 6: 10 percent

Deliverable 7: 50 percent

F. Reporting Arrangements/Structures

The consultancy firm(s) will work under the direct supervision of the Director General of the Ministry of Commerce and Industries and shall provide weekly progress reports summarizing progress; challenges and presenting any issues that require action from the Ministry and the DRIVE Project. The consultant firm will coordinate with the PIU of the DRIVE project and the World Bank and to include inputs from the relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies since the development of the policy needs to be harmonized and coherent with the regulations of the other institutions. Sharing of work progress updates, stakeholder meetings, and workshops shall be conducted within the agreed timelines by the parties and the final validation workshop shall be stakeholder sensitive, consultative, and inclusive. A validation workshop shall be conducted for a final consultative opportunity by the stakeholders.