



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (Consulting services – individual consultant selection)

From : 15/03/2022 to 7/04/2022

Client : ECOWAS Commission

Type : Expression of Interest (EOI)

Title : **Recruitment of a Consultant for the Development of Communication Actions *for a Better Knowledge of the Regional Competition Framework *and Visibility of the Actions of the Ecowas Regional Competition Authority**

Reference No. N° ECW/ERCA-CTCF/ADM/ (DU (006) /15/03/22) kn

In the framework of the execution of the 2021 Budget, ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA) intends to apply a portion its budgeted funds for Recruitment of a Consultant for the Communication Actions for a Better Knowledge of the Regional Competition Framework and Visibility of the Actions of the Ecowas Regional Competition Authority

I - BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In 2008, ECOWAS adopted a Regional Competition Policy and, at the same time, established the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA) responsible for its implementation. This regional initiative aims to support and promote the free play of competition within the ECOWAS region and the protection of consumers' economic interests through the implementation of the Community Competition Rules.

The awareness-raising, information and advocacy activities carried out during the second half of 2021 in six (6) Member States revealed a lack of knowledge of the regional competition mechanism and of the ERCA among the majority of national actors. Having effectively launched its activities only in 2019, the ERCA's relative operational youth could largely justify the limited awareness of its existence and activities.

In an effort to strengthen dialogue and information sharing among all stakeholders, as well as to raise awareness of this recent mechanism for promoting competition within ECOWAS, the ERCA has decided to strengthen its communication activities. The outlines of this proactive communication are described in a global plan, the implementation of which should improve the visibility of the ERCA and its action.

This plan should include information and awareness-raising activities to significantly improve knowledge of the ECOWAS Competition Policy and the ERCA.

II - THE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this work is to prepare a communication plan that will describe the actions to carry out among all private and public economic actors operating on the regional market and consumers in order to strengthen their knowledge of the ECOWAS Competition Policy and the ERCA itself. In this respect, the objectives of the Communication Plan could be broken down as follows:

- inform the national competition structures and economic operators about the regional competition provisions and the opportunities they offer to extend their actions beyond the national borders. No national competition authority can extend its actions beyond the national borders. Basically, it is the impact of their actions or those of companies operating on the national territory that could go beyond these national borders;
- promote public awareness of the importance of implementing the competition policy and law for the improvement of product quality, lower prices, innovation and fairness in the markets, for the benefit of the final consumer;
- enhance the ERCA's visibility in the public opinion as a regional agency, concerned with the improvement of the free competition conditions for the well-being of the Community's populations.

III - THE TARGETS

The information and communication actions to be implemented will be aimed at four (04) categories of targets which could be grouped as follows:

- 1st category: the national competition structures of the Community Member States which are the key players in the implementation of the Community competition rules. This category forms one of the main targets on which most of the information actions will be focused;
- 2nd category: the state actors (all national competition structures are State actors, category 1), in particular Ministries, Government Agencies, Legal and Judicial Systems of the fifteen (15) Member States for a better national appropriation and domestication of the Community Competition Rules. Because of their status as decision-makers in terms of market regulation, which pass and enforce laws, this category is key to the internalisation and application of Community competition provisions;
- 3rd category: the actors operating in the business community who intervene in the production system and in commercial exchanges in the regional market. In this case, we are talking about the companies and enterprises involved in the manufacturing, distribution and service sectors;
- 4th category: this is the general public to whom the information will be relayed through various transmission channels. This category includes non-governmental organisations, civil society, opinion-makers and consumers whose defence of economic interests is one of the main objectives entrusted to the ERCA.

IV - ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

For better efficiency, the actions to be implemented will be grouped according to the main stages of the communication actions towards the stakeholders and the general public.

Phase 1: Design

- Creation or update of the database that contains the names and addresses of all the structures to which the information and awareness-raising materials are sent;
- Conception, writing and sending of personalised and/or general messages to the targets;
- Creation and popularisation of awareness and information campaign spots;
- Adaptation and popularisation of the ERCA website. As the Internet has become an essential working tool for information and awareness-raising, the creation of a specific space for this purpose could

facilitate direct access to information by stakeholders. In addition, for the sake of increased efficiency, this web page could be designed to enable online exchanges between the latter and the ERCA;

- Effective and increased use of social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, etc.).

Phase 2: Communication activities

Although not exhaustive, this list of communication channels could be explored while clearly presenting the modalities of their use in the framework of the ERCA actions.

- **Media coverage:** In order to reach the general public, the activities of the ERCA will be covered and widely relayed in ECOWAS Member States by the national and international media, which will be invited to do so;
- **Virtual meetings:** The aim is to organise online meetings in order to deliver clear and heart-breaking messages, focusing on the promotion of free competition and the need to take ownership of the regional competition framework;
- **Mailing:** Using the list of addresses compiled by the ERCA, advertisement and information messages will be sent by e-mail to stakeholders so that they are regularly informed about ongoing activities;
- **Press release:** When the ERCA's activities take place, a one-page press release will be published in the international press, particularly in a well-known magazine such as "Jeune Afrique". The use of this magazine, which is renowned for the quality of its publications and its wide readership, will make it possible to reach out in particular to partners living in or outside the region;
- **Broadcasting messages on mainstream media:** Given the wide international audience of these media, messages could be broadcast on these channels during major events. In this respect, the ERCA could enter into a partnership with a media outlet in order to give more credibility to the message and to lower the costs of dissemination.
- **Broadcasting of radio and television spots, including on rural radio stations;**
- **Dissemination of messages on social networks:** These internet platforms are widely used by the general public and constitute an important channel of information and dissemination of ERCA's actions;
- **Advertising (kakemonos):** Kakemono-format posters will be designed and displayed at the centres in the offices of the ERCA and at certain events. The message on the kakemonos should be short and punchy, with a clear informative character;
- **Press kit:** A press kit providing useful and comprehensive documentation on the Prize will be made available to journalists invited to cover the launch ceremony;
- **Publication and distribution of an information leaflet:** produced and circulated during the main ERCA events;
- **Publication of a press release:** prepared and posted on the ERCA website, the ECOWAS Commission's communication channels and in the national newspaper of each Member State of the Community in order to inform public opinion of the existence of the regional competition framework and to prepare minds for the ERCA's next intervention;
- **Production of a press book:** With the aim of providing a documentation on the basis of media coverage in the written press in particular, a press book could be produced from newspaper clippings;
- Conception and popularisation of the annual report of the ERCA's activities in all possible communication spaces.

Phase 3: Follow-up and monitoring/evaluation

An informational follow-up by the ERCA and an evaluation could be envisaged in order to identify the communication impact of its actions and to propose the implementation of specific actions if necessary.

V - DELIVERABLES/ EXPECTED RESULTS

At the end of the service, the Consultant must provide a document containing a comprehensive communication plan on the ERCA's actions. In particular, he/she should present:

- a relevant list of potential targets;
- the communication actions to be considered and their implementing rules;
- an information monitoring mechanism.

VI - TIMETABLE

The work will be carried out according to the following timetable:

- the service will last thirty (30) days from the date of signing the contract;
- the Communication Plan should be submitted to the ERCA for review and comment;
- the final version of the database and related documents should be available one (01) week after the effective consideration of the ERCA's comments. It is expected that the final report clearly outlines the elements relevant to the objectives of the mission as mentioned above.

VII - CONSULTANT PROFILE

The Consultant must have a higher degree (at least Master's degree) in Communication or an equivalent qualification in the field. The Consultant must also have at least ten (10) years of experience in the field of communication and in particular in the development of communication plans. He/she must have a good knowledge of the ECOWAS media and press bodies and the new channels of communication.

VII Language

The individual consultant shall be fluent in one of the ECOWAS official languages (English, French or Portuguese) and the practical knowledge of another ECOWAS Official language will be an advantage.

NB: The attention of interested Individual consultants is particularly drawn to Article 118 of the ECOWAS Revised Procurement Code ("Infringements by Candidates, Bidders and Awardees"), providing information on corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for or executing a contract. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment as per "Article 119 of the ECOWAS Revised Procurement Code.

The Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultant set out in the Consultant Guidelines. The shortlisted candidates will be interviewed for the position.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the email addresses below during office hours: Monday to Friday from 9.00 am GMT to 5.00 pm (GMT), The Gambia Time.

Email: knkuako@ecowas.int avec copie à : kkoffi@ecowas.int

Expressions of Interest (1 original and 3 copies) can be delivered in sealed envelopes and clearly marked "**Recruitment of a Consultant for the Communication Actions for a Better Knowledge of the Regional Competition Framework and Visibility of the Actions of the Ecowas Regional Competition Authority**", Do not open except in the presence of the Evaluation Committee" to the address below latest by April 7, 2022 at 11.00 am (GMT), The Gambia Time.

The Ecowas Regional Competitive Authority (ERCA) whose address is at Bertil Harding, KSMD, Bijilo, The Gambia P.O Box 4470 Tel :+2202330006/3486966.

Please note that electronic submissions are also accepted and shall be addressed to: knkuako@ecowas.int avec copie à : kkoffi@ecowas.int

This EOI is also published on the ERCA and the ECOWAS websites info@arcc-erca.org and <http://www.ecowas.int/doing-business-in-ecowas/ecowasprocurement>

Ag. Executive Director ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA)