TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY TO ASSESS AND IMPLEMENT TiSSTAT FOR TRADE IN SERVICES PERTAINING TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) OF 2 MEMBER STATES IN SADC REGION

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Background

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a Regional Economic Community comprising 16 Member States, namely, Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Established in 1992, SADC is committed to Regional Integration and poverty eradication within Southern Africa through economic development and ensuring peace and security.

Article 14 of the SADC Treaty establishes the SADC Secretariat as the principal executive institution of SADC. The Secretariat performs its mandate and functions within the policy, strategic and programme provisions outlined in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

Demand for quality and harmonized statistics has been on the rise to monitor progress in developmental agendas at national, regional, continental, and global level. The scope of data demand cuts across economic, social, and also on emerging issues such as climate change, disaster-risk, environment and others related. The implementation of statistical programmes requires substantial and sustainable financial resources. In this regard, support from development partners and donor institutions plays a critical role in ensuring the successful execution of these programmes. The services sector in the SADC region is characterised by moderate levels of investment, relatively high service delivery costs, and limited access to services for a significant proportion of the population. At the same time, international trade in services has become an increasingly important component of Southern African economies and serves as a key input to production across all economic sectors.

Statistics on International Trade in Services (SITS) are essential for monitoring the performance of Pillar I of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), particularly in relation to industrial development and market integration objectives aimed at increasing intra-SADC trade in services. Given the growing significance of services, and trade in services, to economic growth and social development within the SADC region and globally, policymakers, trade negotiators, and economists require timely, reliable, and comprehensive data. This necessitates improved data availability, enhanced data quality, and the production of harmonised regional and international statistics to support evidence-based decision-making and facilitate comparability across countries.

1.2 Current situation in the sector

Secretariat is prioritizing statistical capacity building as part of its implementation plan guided by its strategy, the Regional Strategy for Development of Statistics (RSDS) 2020-30. The RSDS seeks to strengthen the statistical systems of Member States and promote the production and harmonization of high-quality, timely, and internationally comparable statistics to support regional integration, evidence-based policymaking, and sustainable development. Capacity-building interventions are being implemented in a strategic and results-oriented manner to ensure lasting and measurable

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improvements in the ability of Member States to produce and disseminate official statistics.

The SADC Protocol on Statistics identifies trade statistics, particularly statistics on trade in services, as a key intervention area. Member States are committed to strengthening cooperation within their National Statistical Systems (NSSs) to improve the coordination, production, and dissemination of trade in services (TIS) statistics. Furthermore, Member States are encouraged to implement the recommendations contained in the United Nations Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) to produce annual statistics on international trade in services, inward foreign affiliates statistics (IFATS), and outward foreign affiliates statistics (OFATS) by partner country. These statistics are essential for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of trade in services policies and commitments across the region. Most important of all, breakdown of TIS by partner country is very important to measure trade integration on services sector within the region.

To support the implementation of these commitments, SADC Secretariat collaborated with UNCTAD in September 2025 in a regional capacity building workshop to demonstrate and test the TISSTAT tool. This tool is very effective for data collection, validation and generation of detailed TIS and breakdown by partner country attribute. Across the world and in some developing states, this tool has been successfully tested and implemented on a pilot basis subject to necessary conditions met.

Within this background and to continue the progress made in this area, Secretariat has planned an activity for a consultant to undertake an assessment of 2 SADC Member States readiness on IT matters to qualify for a pilot implementation of TISSTAT tool in near future.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT AND EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1 Overall objective

The overall objective of this exercise is to capacitate two Member States in the region towards production of disaggregated trade in services (TIS) statistics to support regional integration priorities on trade policies.

2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objective of this assignment is to undertake a comprehensive scoping and assessment exercise pertaining to IT within the respective national statistical systems (NSSs) of 2 Member States and to support as IT expert for pilot implementation of the TISSTAT tool for production and dissemination of detailed TIS statistics in 1 Member State.

2.3 Expected results

The consultant is expected to achieve the following results in the following chronological order:

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(i) Scoping and Assessment Reports for 2 Member States (one for each) on IT matters describing the readiness of each Member State assessed against agreed criteria.
(ii) Findings Report of TiSSTAT in one Member State for collection of TIS statistics based on pilot exercise pertaining to IT matters and TiSSTAT installed and technically operational in one Member State. Designated users trained and able to perform assigned functions.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Scope of work

The assignment primarily consists of developing a scoping and assessment report documenting mainly the necessary findings obtained from stakeholders' engagement with relevant institutions to measure the readiness for implementation of TISSTAT tool for collection of disaggregated TIS statistics. Some desk review work is required prior to the start of the assignment as a form of pre-assessment. The assignment shall also involve travel to the 2 Member States to evaluate all IT criteria for successful implementation of TISSTAT between the 2 main institutions, NSO and Reserve Bank. Some trainings are required for the task team identified for leading the process at national level. Finally, all findings including gaps identified, necessary resources required for running a pilot exercise and other related need to be produced, discussed with the respective Member State and finalised for subsequent action. In addition, TiSSTAT tool to be implemented and tested in one Member State, basically on data collection and validation.

3.2 Geographical area to be covered

The scope of implementation of this activity shall involve travel to 2 Member States of SADC region and working remotely.

3.3 Target groups

The consultant will work closely with the SADC Secretariat Research and Statistics Unit, responsible for statistical matters in SADC. At Member States level, the task shall include engagement with all stakeholders institutions involved in production and dissemination of TIS statistics and IT professionals involved in TIS statistics, business registers and others, mostly the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Reserve Bank Statistics department.

3.4 Specific work

The assignment will primarily be undertaken remotely with some engagements at national level in the 2 Member States, complemented by consultations with the SADC Secretariat and relevant stakeholders. In carrying out the assignment, the consultant shall:

(i) Produce an Inception Report that provides the approach, methodology, timelines, identified risks, results framework, relevant assumptions, specific questionnaires/tools to be administered and any other relevant as deemed essential for successful execution of the consultancy;





(ii) Assess the state of IT infrastructure and related specific needs, capacities for TiSSTAT implementation, and identify IT bottlenecks within the national statistical system for successful implementation of the tool;

(iii) Install TiSSTAT for testing within the systems of the relevant national authorities;

(iv) Facilitate self-guided exploration of the TiSSTAT demo and user manuals, specially on IT aspects;

(v) Deliver a in-person kick-off training workshop providing overarching guidance on TiSSTAT implementation, with a particular focus on management and use of IT for data collection, validation, tabulation and dissemination;

(vi) Produce a scoping and assessment report that highlights all findings including gaps with recommendation for moving with a pilot exercise;

(vii) Validate the report produced with the respective Member State and SADC Secretariat for next course of action;

(viii) Provide technical support on IT matters pertaining to pilot exercise to one Member State on collection, editing and validation;

(ix) Adapt and adjust the IT system to the national needs of the Member State undertaking the pilot exercise;

(x) Produce a Findings Report with the pilot exercise undertaken assessing the readiness from IT matters for launching the exercise on a larger-scale survey covering the whole economic territory.

4. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

This assignment is expected to be carried out by a consultant with in-depth knowledge in TISSTAT IT tool deployment and management. The specific profile is provided below:

Qualifications and Skills

- A minimum of a Degree in IT or related field. A Masters degree and above shall be an advantage.

General Professional Experience

- The Consultant must have at least 10 years of specific experience in IT development.

Specific Professional Experience

- Demonstrated experience of doing a scoping and assessment of countries for implementation of TISSTAT on IT factors in at least 2 countries;
- Demonstrated experience in providing training to developing countries on TISSTAT tool pertaining to IT matters in at least 2 countries; and
- Demonstrated experience in implementation of TISSTAT tool with validated results in at least 2 countries as technical assistance.

The expert must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration, of the partner country or of international/regional organizations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND TIME SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERABLES

5.1 Reporting requirements

The consultant shall operate under the guidance of the Director – Policy Planning & Resource Mobilization (PPRM) with direct supervision of the Senior Programme Officer (SPO) – Research and Statistics from the SADC Secretariat. Clerance of the tasks/deliverables shall also be subject to approval by respective Member State NSO.

All the deliverables shall be delivered to the SPO – Research and Statistics, Technical Lead - TL.

All reports shall be in electronic format in MS Word, Excel or PowerPoint as the case may be. The Expert shall work with the Secretariat up to the end of the assignment, shall have delivered the following in electronic format within seven (7) months: The consultant will produce the following deliverables:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission
Inception report	As per 3.4 (i) above	No later than 1 week after the start of implementation
Draft Scoping and Assessment Report for first Member State	As per 2.3 and 3.4 above	6 weeks after submission of inception report
Final Scoping and Assessment Report for first Member State	Inputs from SADC Secretariat and respective Member States	3 weeks after submission of draft Report.
Draft Scoping and Assessment Report for second Member State	As per 2.3 and 3.4 above	6 weeks after submission of Final Report of first Member State
Final Scoping and Assessment Report for second Member State	Inputs from SADC Secretariat and respective Member States	3 weeks after submission of draft Report of second Member State.

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Findings Report from 1 Member State pilot implementation of TiSSTAT	As per 2.3 and 3.4 above	8 weeks after submission of Final Report of second Member State

5.2 Submission and approval of report

The TL is responsible for reviewing the deliverables and seeking final approval from the Director - PPRM. The deliverables must be written in English and submitted in Word firstly for review prior to finalization. Upon clearance of the Word version, a pdf version must be submitted with a signed cover page that does not have SADC logo but should contain the following details: ***Title/reference number of the consultancy; date; deliverable description (Inception Report or Training Report), amount claimed***. Any associated documents from this consultancy are also required for submission for this assignment. The pdf document of the deliverables as per stated requirements above need to be accompanied by an invoice claim with all necessary details to process payments.

5.3 Project management

Overall responsibility for supervision of the Consultancy will lie with the TL. The Consultant shall be responsible for the operational day-to-day management and coordination of the consultancy work as agreed by the TL.

5.4 Management structure

The Consultant shall report directly to the Senior Programme Officer – Research and Statistics and perform agreed tasks.

6. LOGISTICS AND START DATE

6.1 Location

The assignment will involve traveling to 2 Member States and shall also be done remotely by the Consultant.

6.2 Office accommodation

None required

6.3 Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority

For the expert working on this consultancy, the Contracting Authority shall facilitate visa entry in the selected Member States, if required.

6.4 Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor must ensure he/she is adequately prepared and equipped for delivery of the training and drafting of deliverables. The consultant will be responsible for his/her logistical and operational arrangements required for the assignment, including travel, accommodation, insurance, and technical equipment (laptop, software licenses, etc.).

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6.5 Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority / procuring entity as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority / procuring entity at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract that is to be acquired by the procuring entity must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

6.6 Start date and period of implementation

The intended start date is as soon as both parties have signed the contract agreement and the period of implementation of the contract will be 180 calendar days from the date of signing the agreement. ***Note: the 7 months is the duration of the assignment and not the number of days required to undertake it. It caters for coordination of work to be done by recipients of the assignment and to a certain extent, flexibility for the consultant to deliver on the outputs.***

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 Definition of indicators

The indicators to be used are timeliness, technical coverage and analytical quality of the Report as detailed in the section 5 above.

7.2 Special requirements

The Consultant must declare any potential conflict of interest between the provision of the requested services, and other activities in which, a member of their consortium of group (s), or any expert proposed in their offer is engaged.

8. ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

8.1 Assumptions underlying the project

It assumed that the consultant would be procured within the reasonable timeframe and activities implemented within the schedule provided of 90 calendar days spread over 3 months.

8.2 Risks

The nature of the assignment presents negligible risks associated with the consultancy. Some of the foreseen risks are the following:

Possible risks	Risk Level	Mitigation Measures
1. Unavailability of key stakeholders to provide relevant information due to change in the working environment	Medium	Plan and communicate ahead with key stakeholders; have more than one communication means

9. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

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9.1 Financial proposal

The financial proposal should include all consultancy fees and all costs.

9.2 Schedule of payment

Payments for the assignment shall be related to the reports and their approval as follows:

10% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable Inception report;

20% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable draft report for first Member State.

10% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable final report for first Member State.

20% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable draft report for second Member State.

10% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable final report for second Member State.

30% of the contract price shall be paid upon submission of an acceptable Findings Report of 1 Member State on TiSSTAT pilot implementation

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Email Evidence			
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Email Sent Timestamp:	Not available in Silent Mode	Email Opened Timestamp:	Not available in Silent Mode
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Email Evidence			
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Email Sent Timestamp:	Not available in Silent Mode	Email Opened Timestamp:	Not available in Silent Mode
Web Evidence			
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Text Annotation Count:	0	Initial All Pages Count:	1
Single Initial Count:	0		
Signing Evidence			
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Security Challenge:	NONE	Part of Workflow:	NONE
Action:	APPROVE	Reason for Action:	Proceed
Chain Of Custody Generation			
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