ARISE PLUS LAO PDR
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A NATIONAL CONSULTANT (NC) FOR EBA BUSINESS GUIDE AND RELATED AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

Title of assignment: Support for development of a practical business guide for Lao enterprises to export under the EU’s EBA initiative and facilitate related training-awareness-raising workshops

Duty Station: Home based (Lao PDR)

Contract Start Date: 04 May 2020

Contract End Date: 18 September 2020

BACKGROUND

The International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), is the only multilateral agency fully dedicated to supporting internationalization of SMEs. ITC’s mission is to foster inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development. ITC’s projects and programmes contribute to the global efforts to achieve UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development and Aid for Trade Agenda.

ITC is the implementing agenda for the “Lao PDR Trade-Related Assistance (ARISE Plus – Lao PDR)” project, funded by the European Union (EU). The Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) is the focal point for the project in Lao PDR.

ARISE Plus – Lao PDR is the national Lao component of the regional ARISE Plus Programme supporting regional economic integration under focal sector 1 of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Indicative Program for Asia. In line with the new European Consensus on Development “Prosperity” chapter and its focus on inclusive and sustainable growth and jobs, it supports the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) to reap the benefits of regional integration in line with multilateral trade frameworks such as the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA). The four year project contributes to integration of the Lao economy into global production chains through targeted support to both public and private sectors, with a focus on smallholders and SMEs.

The overall objective is to promote inclusive economic growth, increased climate change resilience, mitigate vulnerability (especially due to dependence on a limited number of sectors and markets) and create jobs in Lao PDR.

The specific objectives are to: (i) improve the business environment in targeted sectors with a focus on regional economic integration (ASEAN); and (ii) increase trade and participation in global value-chains in targeted sectors.

Within the scope of this project, the Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business (TFPB) section within the ITC is in charge of trade policy components, both at the private and public sector levels. TFPB aims to strengthen institutional capacities to develop and coordinate design and implementation of coherent domestic regulatory reforms, trade policies and trade negotiations. To achieve the above objectives, TFPB is involved with achieving certain expected results, in particular:

- ER2: Increased awareness of trade preferences for exports, including to the European Union, with greater use of Everything But Arms (EBA), and on the requirements for placing products on the EU market; advanced preparation of Lao PDR to shift to a new trade preference scheme (post-EBA).
Under ER2, a consolidated business guide on EU’s EBA preference scheme is to be developed and related training/sensitization workshops are to be organized in Vientiane and other parts of the country using the business guide. The objective of this guide is to enhance awareness and understanding amongst exporters and related stakeholders, about the EBA market access conditions (preferences, rules of origin and other market access requirements) and related opportunities, with a view to improve export performance to the EU.

This ToR covers the tasks that a National Consultant (NC), under the guidance of the International Consultant (IC), will undertake in order to develop the EBA Business Guide and conduct relevant awareness raising activities.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

The NC will work under the direct guidance and overall supervision of the Senior Officer, Business and Trade Policy, TFPB.

The NC is responsible for all submitted documents and must ensure that they are not plagiarized. Any plagiarism, copying or closely reproducing another’s work without crediting the legitimate author, in the documents submitted would result in a refusal of the submitted document.

In close collaboration with Lao PDR’s Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), European Chamber of Commerce of Lao PDR (ECCIL), and the IC hired for this assignment, the NC will:

- Assist with the development of a Lao PDR specific EBA Business Guide;
- Facilitate training/awareness-raising workshops in Vientiane and other provinces.

The guide will aim to help Lao exporters in making use of the EBA Scheme in their trade with EU by detailing procedures/steps to export under the scheme, with a focus on products with the highest potential. To do so, the guide will provide first, a detailed description of all the requirements applicable to all sectors and second, sector specific information. The guide should also take into account frequently asked questions that arise from a trader’s perspective in Lao PDR and provide practical information such as contact details of business associations (EU based traders, importers, sector specific, customs offices, etc.) and EU’s Trade Helpdesk relevant sections.

Specifically, this guide will.
- Provide a first part with information on the procedural requirements applicable to all sectors;
- Provide a second part with sector specific information. The trade potential of these sectors shall be explained in specific terms, both from a risk and opportunity perspective (examples and case studies will be used, where appropriate, to illustrate the implications described);
- Detail the steps and procedures required to benefit from the EBA scheme for the specific sectors identified;
- Detail the obstacles faced by traders while exporting to the EU – clarify market access requirements to EU market & clearly layout the compliance procedures;
- Provide a clear and simple guidebook format, using questions-answers style. Practical references shall be incorporated – such as contact details of relevant authorities, forms to be filled up, enquiry points, etc.; and
- Ensure that concepts and language used remains simple – if necessary, a glossary at the end may be incorporated. The objective however is to provide a guide that simplifies the complexity of the scheme and makes it a comprehensive tool for exporters that could export under the scheme.

**Deliverables and Timelines:**

The NC is to undertake the following duties:

1. Undertake detailed research into the procedures and requirements for Lao to export under the EU’s EBA scheme – on a general and sector specific basis, and background information on questions raised by Lao exporters about EU’s EBA scheme, as well as any areas and topics requested by the International Consultant;
2. Facilitate and participate in meetings with relevant public and private sector stakeholders to understand obstacles faced and concerns raised by traders in Lao, identify relevant procedures and processes for exports to EU, and identify frequently asked questions on the part of Lao traders in relation to such exports;
3. Collect documentation on regulations, processes and measures on export processes, and related material;
4. Participate and present in the launch event and at 3 to 5 training/awareness raising workshops in Vientiane and other provinces in Lao PDR

**EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND TIMELINES**

**Activity 1:** Provide information to the International Consultant in charge of developing the Lao PDR EU EBA Business Guide by providing information on the sectors/goods that used to be exported to the EU under the EBA Scheme.

**Output 1:** Background information on sectors that used to and which could now potentially benefit from the EU EBA Scheme.

**Timeline 1:** May – August 2020

**Activity 2:** Provide background information on questions asked by Lao exporters about EU EBA Scheme.

**Output 2:** Information provided on the questions frequently asked by Lao exporters on the EU EBA Scheme.

**Timeline 2:** May – August 2020

**Activity 3:** Participate in and present the developed Lao EU EBA Business Guide at the launch event and other training workshops in Vientiane and other provinces in Lao PDR.

**Output 3:** Presentations of the Lao EU EBA Business Guide at the launch event and training workshops in Vientiane and other provinces in Lao PDR.

**Timeline 3:** August – September 2020
EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

Skills:
- Solid research and drafting skills;
- Strong communication and presentation skills;
- Capacity and readiness to work with ITC colleagues

Experience:
- Minimum 5 years of academic and practical experience in trade policy;
- Knowledge of EU trade preferential schemes;
- Ideally, experience should be related to advising private sector stakeholders on international trade related issues;
- Good communication and presentation skills
- Proven ability to work independently with minimum supervision

Education:
- Advanced degree in trade, law or economics.

Language:
- The consultant is required to have excellent communication and drafting capacities in English and Lao.