TERMS OF REFERENCE – INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT

This vacancy is open for locally residing Sierra Leonean nationals ONLY

Vacancy No: ITC/ICA/25/2024

Assignment Title	Project Management Officer
Category/Grade	UNOPS – LICA 10
Requesting Division / Section	Division of Sustainable and Inclusive Trade / Women, Youth and Vulnerable Communities
Duty station	Freetown, Sierra Leone
Duration	One (1) year with possibility of extension
Application period	20 September – 6 October 2024

BACKGROUND

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization based in Geneva. ITC's mission is to enable small business export success in developing and transition- economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions (TSIs) and policymakers.

Having worked with SMEs for 60 years, ITC is familiar with the unique needs of SMEs, including youth and women-led enterprises, and has vast experience in improving their international competitiveness and connecting them with markets:

• ITC's Youth & Trade Initiative takes a market-led approach to address gaps in skills and enhance the competitiveness of young entrepreneurs. The programme works with ecosystem actors to strengthen the business environment for youth-led companies and provide pathways to youth employment in key value chains. ITC manages a global community supporting young entrepreneurs – Ye! Community, which connects youth entrepreneurs and key ecosystem actors to provide access to resources, tools, opportunities, and networks, to enhance their entrepreneurial capacities.

• ITC ecomConnect has developed a well-practiced methodology accompanies SMEs on their digital journey through its training programme, research, and facilitation of innovative solutions, collaborative structures, partnerships, and digital tools and technologies. In addition, the ecomConnect programme works closely with a wide range of local stakeholders and partner agencies, especially BSOs, and provides them with capacity building and knowledge on online trade and exports.

• ITC's Tech Sector Development team supports the internationalization of African tech start-ups. ITC has implemented projects in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Uganda focused on supporting local tech companies and digital freelancers, as well as the local innovation ecosystems. In 2019, ITC launched the #FastTrackTech initiative. FastTrackTech provides targeted coaching, matchmaking with potential clients and investors to digital entrepreneurs who aspire to international growth in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia.

• ITC SheTrades Initiative aims to create an ecosystem of integrated solutions that empower women economically through greater integration in trade and investment. The Initiative ensures that the right capacities and conditions are present for women to trade and that they are supported by an ecosystem of market partners and effective support organizations. At the same time, SheTrades works to remove inequalities in the trade policy space that hinder women's participation.

• ITC Institutions and Ecosystems section is dedicated to support and enhance the performance of business support organizations (BSOs). The support to BSOs is structured in three key pillars: assess, improve, and connect organizations. The end goal of the support is to ensure that MSMEs and startups receive targeted and well-structured support from efficient and professional organizations.

• The ITC Trade Policy and Investment Facilitation (TPIF) Unit supports trade and investment policy formulation and implementation by working with policymakers to review and update policies and regulatory frameworks and informing and advising trade and investment negotiators. TPIF also assists chambers of commerce and other business support organizations (BSOs) to articulate MSMEs views effectively to ensure that policies, regulatory reforms, and negotiations all reflect a well-informed business perspective.

Unemployment and underemployment are key drivers of poverty in Sierra Leone. At 10.1%, the youth unemployment rate is over double the national average, and 60-70% of the working population are classified as working poor. The digital economy provides opportunities for more and better paid jobs, and digitalization has the potential to drive SME competitiveness and growth.

However, Sierra Leonean youth, especially young women, lack awareness of opportunities available in the digital economy as well as the relevant knowledge and skills to take advantage of them. Consequently, many youths are not employable in technology-related jobs. Youth entrepreneurship is key to reduce unemployment in Sierra Leone, yet most youth-led MSMEs, especially those led by young women, lack skills to adopt digital technologies in their businesses, maximize e-commerce opportunities, and secure financing. Young people and young entrepreneurs lack an effective and coordinated voice to influence policymaking processes related to the digital economy to ensure that their needs are met.

At the business ecosystem level, entrepreneurship support provided by the government, development agencies, and NGOs rarely offer a combination of sector, digital, and entrepreneurship-oriented programmes. There is a lack of coordination among BSOs, tech service providers, and market partners. Business and digital support services are insufficient and not adapted to the needs of young people and young entrepreneurs. BSOs and tech hubs do not provide sufficient digital entrepreneurship support to youth-led MSMEs, and financial institutions have limited service offerings to support young women entrepreneurs to contribute to the digital economy.

Implemented over a four-year period from June 2024 to 2028, the 'Sierra Leone: Empowering youth through digital technologies' project has the overall objective of contributing to economic growth and job creation in Sierra Leone by enhancing the participation of youth in the digital economy.

To achieve this, the project will:

- Increase the capacity of youth to use digital technologies for work, entrepreneurship and social inclusion;

- Enhance the competitiveness of young entrepreneurs through the adoption of digital technologies;

- Improve youth-specific service offerings of business support organizations and tech hubs;

- Strengthen the inclusive national strategies and policies related to the digital economy

FUNCTIONS

Under the direct supervision of the Programme Officer, READY Salone Project and the general guidance of the Senior Programme Officer, Women and Trade Programme the incumbent will be responsible for the following duties:

- Participates in the implementation and evaluation of assigned project; monitors and analyzes project implementation; reviews relevant documents and reports; identifies problems and issues to be addressed and proposes corrective actions; liaises with relevant parties; identifies and tracks follow-up actions.

- Performs consulting assignments, in collaboration with partner organizations, by planning facilitating workshops, through other interactive sessions and assisting in developing the action plan the partner organizations will use to manage the change.

- Researches, analyzes and presents information gathered from diverse sources.

- Assists in policy review and development, including the review and analysis of issues and trends, preparation of evaluations or other research activities and studies.

- Undertakes survey initiatives; designs data collection tools; reviews, analyzes and interprets responses, identifies problems/issues and prepares conclusions.

- Prepares various written outputs, e.g. draft background papers, analysis, sections of reports and studies, inputs to publications, etc.

- Provides substantive support to consultative and other meetings, conferences, etc., to include proposing agenda topics, identifying participants, preparation of documents and presentations, etc.

- Undertakes mobilization and outreach activities; conducts training workshops, seminars, etc.; makes presentations on assigned topics/activities.

- Participates in or leads field missions, including provision of guidance to external consultants, government officials and other parties and drafting mission summaries, etc.

- Coordinates activities related to budget and funding (project preparation and submissions, progress reports, financial statements, etc.) and prepares related documents/reports (pledging, work programme, programme budget, etc.).

- Performs other duties as required.

Work implies frequent interaction with the following:

- Counterparts, senior officers and technical staff in ITC headquarters and field offices, as well as counterparts from other UN specialized agencies in Sierra Leone.

- Representatives and officials in national governments, international organizations, consultants

- Project implementing partners – NGOs, tech hubs, incubators, business support organizations

- Project beneficiaries – young women and men and people with disabilities; youth entrepreneurs and SMEs

KEY DELIVERABLE AND MONITORING / PROGRESS CONTROLS

Implements, monitors and evaluates assigned project. Provides thorough, well reasoned written contributions, e.g., background papers, analysis, sections of reports and studies, inputs to publications, etc. Develops and maintains effective working relationships. Promulgate coherent policies, and consistent adherence to these by clients. Efficiently uses of resources.

RECRUITMENT QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum education and qualifications (level and field of study)

Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in business administration, management, economics or a related field.

A first-level university degree in combination with additional two (2) years qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Minimum experience (nature, length and field of experience)

A minimum of five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in project or programme management, administration or related area.

Desirable experience

Experience of working on the following topics is an advantage: digital and trade; digital upskilling; youth entrepreneurship and employment; women and trade; persons with disabilities and trade.

Minimum language requirement

Fluency in English (both oral and written) is required. Knowledge of Krio is an advantage.

Critical job-specific competencies

ITC core values: Professionalism, Integrity, Respect for Diversity

Competencies:

- **Professionalism:** Knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts and approaches relevant to particular sector, functional area or other specialized field. Ability to identify issues, analyze and participate in the resolution of issues/problems. Ability to conduct data collection using various methods. Conceptual analytical and evaluative skills to conduct independent research and analysis, including familiarity with and experience in the use of various research sources, including electronic sources on the internet, intranet and other databases. Ability to apply judgment in the context of assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities. Shows pride in work and in achievements; demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations. Takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.

- **Communication**: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

- **Planning& Organizing:** Develops clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; identifies priority activities and assignments; adjusts priorities as required; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.

- **Accountability**: Takes ownership of all responsibilities and honours commitments; delivers outputs for which one has responsibility within prescribed time, cost and quality standards; operates in compliance with organizational regulations and rules; supports subordinates, provides oversight and takes responsibility for delegated assignments; takes personal responsibility for his/her own shortcomings and those of the work unit, where applicable.

- **Technological Awareness:** Keeps abreast of available technology; understands applicability and limitation of technology to the work of the office; actively seeks to apply technology to appropriate tasks; shows willingness to learn new technology.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For information on how to apply please click here. Applicants will be contacted only if they are under serious consideration. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.