

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### I. General information

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Assignment name         | <b>Diagnostic of SMEs in the construction sector in Mauritius and Rodrigues : access to financing and technical support for Circular Economy</b> |
| Beneficiary             | Implementation of the Circular Economy Roadmap in Mauritius  |
| Country                 | Mauritius  |
| Deadline for submission | 22 April 2026 at 23:55 PM (Paris time)   |

### II. Context and justification of the need

**Expertise France** is the France's public agency and interministerial actor in charge of international technical cooperation, the second-largest in Europe. As a subsidiary of Agence Française de Développement Group (AFD Group), it designs and implements projects that sustainably strengthen public policies in developing and emerging countries. Expertise France works in key areas of development: governance, security, climate change, health, education, and more. Alongside its partners, it contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Implementation of the Circular Economy Roadmap of Mauritius:** The Republic of Mauritius considers the adoption of a Circular Economy (CE) model as a priority to effectively address the challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, women's empowerment, and inequality. This is reflected in the Vision 2050 outlined in the Mauritian CE Roadmap, which envisions a circular economy deeply embedded in the culture—generating sustainable production and consumption, driving the regeneration of nature, positively impacting people's lives and the environment, and fostering the creation of green jobs and sustainable business opportunities.

The proposed action, financed by the European Union, contributes to the specific objective of *"Supporting the government in achieving its own goals in renewable energy production, waste management, and environmental protection, as set out in the National Environmental Strategy 2020–2030."*

**The building and construction sector:** This sector is a major contributor to the economy and employs directly and indirectly some 120,000 workers in Mauritius representing around 22% of the total workforce. In 2019, the sector contributed to some 9.7% to the GDP. Over the past decades, the industry has progressed through many phases, evolving from the construction of small housing units to major projects like smart cities, port and airports, flyovers, motorway and more recently the light rail system. =

**Private sector support:** Within Expertise France activities, a component of the project aims is implementing to strengthen circular economy (CE) initiatives across the built environment value chain, with a focus on women entrepreneurship, in close collaboration with Business Mauritius. This objective is specifically dedicated to supporting the private sector in the construction and demolition (C&D) sector, helping businesses, SMEs, and women entrepreneurs adopt circular practices and overcome key barriers such as high costs of recycled materials, limited data availability, weak value chain coordination, and insufficient access to finance. Stakeholder consultations revealed that targeted

regulatory, financial, and technical support is needed to accelerate the transition, and these findings inform the three core activities developed under this objective.

To achieve its objectives, the project will implement activities across three interconnected areas:

- **Capacity reinforcement:** Focuses on establishing a facility as a central support platform for the C&D private sector, delivering training, technical assistance, and peer-to-peer exchanges to strengthen circular economy uptake across the value chain.
- **Access to finance:** improve access to finance for CE initiatives, mapping funding opportunities, engaging financial institutions, and supporting public sector actors and incubators to better integrate CE criteria into their mechanisms — with particular attention to SMEs and women-led enterprises. Finally,
- **Demonstrator projects:** provides direct support to innovative private sector initiatives through two targeted pilots: one focused on secondary construction materials, and one fostering public-private alliances to reduce the environmental impact of C&D waste.

### III. Objectives and desired results

#### 1) General objective

The project aims to strengthen the effectiveness and uptake of circular economy practices within the built environment value chain, with a particular focus on SMEs and women entrepreneurs.

It focuses on supporting the development and implementation of concrete circular initiatives, by enhancing technical capacities, facilitating public–private collaboration, and providing tailored support through tools such as the Circular Economy (CE) Hub, training programmes, incubation, and access to finance.

The project also seeks to address key barriers—including limited technical knowledge, weak business models, and restricted access to markets and finance—in order to enable the emergence of viable, scalable, and impactful circular solutions.

As part of the project supporting the implementation of the Circular Economy Roadmap in Mauritius, Output 2.2 aims to improve financing mechanisms for circular economy (CE) initiatives led by SMEs and NGOs. Initial analyses highlight several key challenges, including the limited structuring of CE financing tools and the difficulties faced by stakeholders in accessing suitable funding. More fundamentally, they point to the need to strengthen the economic viability of projects by better linking them to market opportunities and sustainable business models. In this context, the project intends to mobilize dedicated expertise to define an integrated approach combining financing mechanisms, business model structuring, and improved access to markets.

Across all three activities under Output 2.2 will include a focuses on mapping financing opportunities for circular economy (CE) initiatives, covering both banking and non-banking mechanisms, and public sector actors. It will also aim to develop guidelines and methodological tools for funding mechanisms and provide targeted support to financial institutions through training and workshops, promote the integration of CE criteria into banking procedures, and help define evaluation standards for construction and demolition waste investments

To support this task, and tailored the support dedicated to SMEs the expertise will carry out a comprehensive diagnostic of SMEs operating in the construction sector in Mauritius in order to design a strategy that facilitates their access to financing and strengthens their technical capacities to develop circular economy (CE) projects. Special attention will be given to women-led enterprises, to understand their specific financing needs.

### 2) Specific objectives

The following tasks aim to provide a structured analysis of SMEs operating across the construction value chain, in order to better understand their capacities, needs, and constraints in adopting circular economy practices. This analysis will inform the development of targeted and operational recommendations to support their effective engagement in circular economy initiatives. In this context, the assignment will pursue the following specific objectives:

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of SMEs operating across the construction value chain, including their typologies and roles
- To assess the financial and technical needs of SMEs for the development and implementation of circular economy (CE) projects
- To design a targeted and operational support strategy aimed at enhancing SMEs' capacity to develop viable CE initiatives
- To identify and address cross-cutting challenges, particularly those related to gender equality and the integration of the informal sector

## IV. Description of the assignment

### 1) Planned activities

The consultant present its methods of approach, including data collection, and stakeholder engagement strategy to realise the following tasks:

#### **1.1. Mapping of SMEs in the Construction Value Chain – (Indicative time 5 working days)**

Identify and categorise SMEs across key segments, including (non-exhaustive):

- Architecture, engineering, and consulting services
- Material production and products supply
- Construction and contracting
- Waste management and recycling

For each key segment the consultant will identify several SMEs - for a total of minimum 20 - relevant and representative if the sector in order to collect the following information:

- Typical size and structure
- Roles and activities in the construction value chain
- Integration of circular practices
- Potential gender approach

This initial work will allow the consultant will then produce a comprehensive value chain map highlighting key actors and the spectrum of SMEs currently operating in the construction and demolition sector.

In addition, the consultant will identify key actors currently supporting the SMEs development and their current actions.

### **1.2. Assessment of financial and technical needs (Indicative time 3 working days)**

The second phase of the mission will be based on the results of the mapping. The consultant will propose a method to collect the data to develop the two following assessments:

#### **Financial assessment**

- Identify existing/potential financial partners and current financing sources used by SMEs (e.g. banks, microfinance, grants, informal financing).
- Analyse barriers to accessing finance for CE projects, including:
  - o Financial constraints (collateral, risk perception, market)
  - o Institutional and regulatory barriers
- Assess type of demand for different financial instruments (e.g. loans, guarantees)

The main objective of this assessment is to understand for each type the SMEs their specific needs in terms of financing and the alignment with the current project scope and activities.

#### **Technical assessment**

- Identify key technical gaps preventing SMEs from developing CE projects, such as:
  - o Knowledge of CE principles and business models
  - o Access to technology and innovation
  - o Skills in project development and implementation
  - o Compliance with environmental standards and certifications
- Identify existing technical support providers (public, private, NGOs, academia)

This assessment have to be closely link with the financial assessment in order to identify for each actor the most critical support needed (financial, technical, both) and the alignment with the current technical support program developed by Expertise France.

The results of those assignments will lead the consultant to develop a strategy and action plan:

- Define priority target groups for the project scope
- Develop a strategy that includes:
  - o Financial support mechanisms tailored to SME needs for each key segment and types of SMEs
  - o Potential adaptation of the technical assistance programmes to further integrate SMEs needs
  - o Coordination of financial and technical support
  - o Specific action to improve gender equality
- Define specific actions to integrate in current Expertise France activities

The consultant team will work under the supervision of the Private Sector Expert of the CE Mauritius project (Expertise France project team in Mauritius), and other team members.

The consultant will contact Expertise France before each interview and will provide the minutes of each meeting. At the demand of Expertise France, some meetings will have to be organised with the private sector expert.

**2) Anticipated deliverables**

| Activities  | Deliverables  |
|---|---|
| <b>1.1. Mapping of SMEs in the Construction Value Chain</b>           |   |
| Mapping report<br><b>(indicative time 3 days)</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A mapping of the SMEs in the C&amp;D sector</li> <li>- Classification of the SMEs with their roles and activities and interactions</li> <li>- Identification of all actors involved in the support of SME development</li> <li>- Cross-cutting analysis note: Identifying key challenges and gaps related to gender equality and the integration of the informal sector</li> </ul> |
| <b>1.2. Assessment of financial and technical needs</b>               |   |
| Financial and technical assessment<br><b>(indicative time 3 days)</b> | A report including : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial assessment</li> <li>- Technical assessment</li> <li>- Minutes of meetings</li> </ul>  |
| Strategy and action plan<br><b>(indicative time 2 days)</b>           | Final report with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Types of financial and technical support</li> <li>- Proposed support mechanisms (financial and non-financial)</li> <li>- Activities to implement within Expertise France: Detailed and operational action plan</li> </ul>  |

**3) Coordination**

The service provider shall designate a single contact person for project implementation purposes. Mr Etienne BAUDON of the Sustainable Development Department will be the service provider’s sole contact person for Expertise France  
 E-mail: [etienne.baudon@expertisefrance.fr](mailto:etienne.baudon@expertisefrance.fr)

**V. Place, duration and terms of performance**

- 1) Implementation period: may 2026 to june 2027**
- 2) Start date: 15/05/2026**
- 3) End date: 30/06/2027**

**VI. Required expertise and profile**

**Profile of the designated expert(s) responsible for contract execution**

**A. Education**

- Master’s degree (minimum Bac+5 level)

### B. Required qualifications & professional experience

- Holders of a postgraduate degree (minimum Bac+5) in environmental management, waste management, civil / environmental engineering, environmental law or public policy (asset) or any other profile relevant to the tasks to be performed
- Proven experience in SMEs diagnostics and value chain analysis, including mapping of actors and identification of constraints and opportunities
- Proven experience in circular economy approaches and in the construction sector, including waste management
- Strong expertise in business models, particularly in sectors such as construction, waste management, or materials
- Solid understanding of access to finance mechanisms and technical support needs for SMEs (including incubation, advisory services, etc.)
- Experience in designing operational strategies and action plans for private sector support programmes
- Working with public authorities and regulatory bodies
- Experience with Data collection, stakeholder consultations and validation workshops
- Experience in developing countries or small island states (e.g. SIDS) is a strong asset

### C. Skills

- Ability to review and assess existing legal and institutional frameworks, identify regulatory gaps and enforcement challenges, draft clear, enforceable and practical regulations
- Strong understanding of Circular economy principles applied to the construction sector, Sustainable construction and green building practices, Resource efficiency and secondary materials markets
- Strong capacity for teamwork, coordination skills, flexibility, organizational skills, responsiveness;
- Strong writing skills (reports, strategies, regulation, etc.);
- Pragmatic with proven ability to produce tools and documents within tight deadlines;
- Excellent written and spoken English; written and spoken French is an asset
- Strong stakeholder engagement and facilitation skills
- Ability to adapt in a multicultural context.

### Contractual terms

The contract will be concluded as fixed and total prices. Payments will be made upon completion of deliverables, commissioned via purchase orders.

Payment is subject to validation of the content and receipt of a duly completed invoice addressed to the project. Upon receipt of this invoice, Expertise France ensures payment to the service provider within 30 days.

The contract is governed by French law, and its format is not adaptable. These terms are non-negotiable.

**Application Modalities**

Submission deadline: 22/04/2026, 23:59 (Paris time).

Expertise France reserves the right to choose a candidate before this date.

Bid composition:

- A resume, including 3 references
- A financial offer attached to the resume

Incomplete bids will not be considered.