

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

I. General information

Assignment name	Framework Agreement for work on Behavioral Science
Beneficiary	Private Sector, MoTRI
Country	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Total estimated number of days	150 working days

II. Context and justification of the need

Context

The ECOTRADE Project, implemented by Expertise France, supports Ethiopia's efforts to translate the opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) into increased and more inclusive trade. While policy, regulatory and institutional reforms are essential to AfCFTA implementation, their impact also depends on the decisions and actions of the individuals, firms and institutions expected to use and implement these systems.

Businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), may face behavioral and practical barriers that affect their ability or willingness to engage in cross-border trade. These may include limited awareness or understanding of available opportunities, uncertainty around procedures and requirements, perceived costs and risks, difficulties navigating information, limited confidence in engaging with institutions or markets, and other behavioral factors affecting uptake of trade-related services and opportunities.

Behavioral science can complement conventional technical assistance by identifying the behavioral drivers and bottlenecks underlying these challenges and by translating evidence into practical, user-centered interventions. A behavioral approach can help ECOTRADE better understand how target groups make decisions, test what works in practice, and design interventions that are more accessible, relevant and likely to result in sustained changes in behavior.

Justification

The engagement of a Behavioral Science Expert will enable ECOTRADE to systematically apply behavioral insights to selected project interventions and activities. The expert will work with the Project team and relevant stakeholders to identify priority behavioral challenges, conduct behavioral diagnosis, develop and test appropriate solutions, and generate evidence and recommendations for scaling successful approaches.

The assignment is intended to be practical and embedded within ECOTRADE implementation rather than a stand-alone academic exercise. The expert will therefore work closely with the Project team

and relevant government, private sector and other stakeholders to ensure that behavioral insights are translated into concrete improvements in the design, delivery and uptake of trade-related interventions and services.

This is also expected to be a build-up of the current work of behavioral science regarding the AfCFTA Step-by-Step Guide.

III. Objectives and desired results

1) General objective

The objective of the assignment is to provide behavioral science expertise to the ECOTRADE Project to identify and address behavioral barriers affecting the uptake, use and effectiveness of trade-related opportunities, services and interventions, particularly among target private-sector groups and other relevant stakeholders.

2) Specific objectives

- Identify and prioritize behavioral barriers, drivers and decision-making factors affecting the engagement of target groups with AfCFTA-related opportunities, information, services and processes.
- Apply appropriate behavioral science frameworks, research methods and analytical tools to diagnose priority behavioral challenges and understand the underlying causes.
- Translate behavioral insights into practical, user-centered recommendations and intervention options that can be integrated into ECOTRADE activities.
- Design, support and/or oversee the testing of behavioral interventions, where appropriate, using an evidence-based and iterative approach.
- Strengthen the capacity of the ECOTRADE team and relevant stakeholders to apply behavioral insights in the design, implementation and adaptation of trade-related interventions.
- Generate evidence and learning on what works, for whom and under what conditions, and provide recommendations for adaptation, institutionalization and potential scale-up.

3) Anticipated results

- Priority behavioral barriers and opportunities relevant to selected ECOTRADE interventions are identified and clearly documented.
- Behavioral diagnoses provide practical evidence on the factors influencing the decisions and actions of target groups.
- Behaviorally informed recommendations and intervention designs are developed and incorporated into relevant ECOTRADE activities.
- Where appropriate, behavioral interventions are tested and refined using feedback, monitoring data and other evidence.
- ECOTRADE staff and relevant partners have increased understanding and practical capacity to apply behavioral science approaches.
- Lessons, evidence and recommendations are documented to inform future programming and the potential scale-up of successful behavioral approaches.

IV. Description of the assignment

1) Planned activities

The exact scope of work will be agreed with Expertise France according to project priorities. Indicative activities include:

1. Behavioral diagnosis and research

- Review relevant ECOTRADE documents, interventions, processes, research and available monitoring or user data.
- Identify priority behaviors and target groups relevant to selected project interventions.
- Develop behavioral research questions and appropriate research approaches in consultation with the Project team.
- Conduct qualitative and/or quantitative research, including interviews, focus groups, observations, surveys, user journeys or other appropriate methods.
- Map behavioral barriers, motivations, decision points, contextual factors and opportunities for change.
- Present findings and validate behavioral diagnoses with the Project team and relevant stakeholders.

2. Behaviorally informed intervention design

- Develop practical intervention options based on the behavioral diagnosis and the specific objectives of the relevant ECOTRADE activity.
- Apply appropriate behavioral science frameworks and principles to the design of messages, services, processes, tools or other interventions.
- Develop prototypes, behavioral intervention concepts, communication approaches, user journeys or other practical solutions as required.
- Ensure proposed interventions are feasible within the institutional, regulatory and operational context in which they will be implemented.

3. Testing, experimentation and adaptation

- Develop appropriate testing or experimentation approaches for selected interventions, where feasible and relevant.
- Establish clear hypotheses, indicators and learning questions for behavioral interventions.
- Support implementation of pilots, user testing, experiments or other forms of iterative testing.
- Analyze results and user feedback and recommend adaptations to improve effectiveness.
- Document lessons and evidence generated through testing and experimentation.

4. Integration into ECOTRADE activities

- Provide behavioral science inputs to the design and refinement of selected ECOTRADE activities and work streams.
- Support the Project team in applying behavioral insights to engagement with SMEs, private-sector actors, public institutions and other target groups.
- Review selected communication, outreach, training, information or service-delivery approaches and recommend behaviorally informed improvements.

- Participate in relevant project meetings, workshops, consultations and technical sessions.

5. Capacity building and knowledge transfer

- Develop practical tools, guidance or templates that enable the Project team and partners to apply behavioral approaches.
- Provide coaching, technical advice and/or targeted training to relevant ECOTRADE staff and stakeholders.
- Share relevant behavioral science methods, lessons and good practices through presentations, workshops or other knowledge-sharing formats.

a. Anticipated deliverables

Deliverables	Description
1. Behavioral Diagnoses & Baseline Mapping Report	Synthesis of document reviews, user data, and primary field research (interviews, focus groups, user journeys). Identifies priority behaviors, target groups, and maps behavioral barriers, motivations, and decision points.
2. Behaviorally Informed Intervention Portfolio & Concept Designs	Practical intervention options, message designs, revised process flows, and prototypes grounded in behavioral science frameworks (e.g., EAST, COM-B) and evaluated for institutional and operational feasibility.
3. Experimentation Plan & Pilot Evaluation Report	Testing protocols with clear hypotheses, indicators, and methodology for pilots or experiments, followed by an evaluation report analyzing pilot results, user feedback, and lessons learned.
4. Behavioral Integration & Technical Advisory Briefs	Behavioral science inputs integrated into project work streams, including optimized outreach campaigns, SME engagement strategies, training formats, and public service delivery mechanisms.
5. Behavioral Science Toolkit & Capacity Building Package	Practical guidance, diagnostic templates, and tools empowering the project team and partners to apply behavioral approaches, supported by targeted training and coaching materials.
6. Final Report	Final report synthesizing results, lessons learned and next steps.

b. Coordination

- The service provider shall designate two contact persons for project implementation purposes.
- The expert will work under the direct supervision of an assigned official from the ECOTRADE Project.
- Coordination with specific stakeholders may be required

4. Place, duration and terms of performance

- a. **Implementation period:** December 2026 to February 2029
- b. **Start date:** December 2026
- c. **End date:** February 2029

5. Required expertise and profile

- a. **Number of experts per assignment:** to be determined per specific activity

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

- A. Qualifications and skills:

- Master's or PhD in Economics, International Trade, Agricultural Economics, Development Studies, Business Administration, or a related field.
 - Excellent qualities/capacities in:
 - Analysis and reporting,
 - Strong quantitative and qualitative research skills,
 - Knowledge transfer,
 - Problem identification and resolution,
 - Presentation and communication skills,
 - High proficiency in written and spoken in English.

- B. General professional experience

- Proven experience of at least 5 years in the field of trade analysis, value chain studies, and private sector development, preferably in Africa or similar emerging markets.
 - Experience Familiarity with AfCFTA implementation, regional trade agreements, or national trade policies.

- C. Specific professional experience

- Preferred prior experience in working with SMEs, agribusinesses, or commodity sectors (especially coffee, oilseeds, or other agricultural exports).
 - Solid experience in data collection, stakeholder consultations, and participatory research methods.