

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES_FIRM)**

SOUTH AFRICA

STUDY ON REIMAGINING THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CUSTOMS UNION (SACU)

TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY TO INFORM THE REIMAGINATION OF
SACU AS A DYNAMIC REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

Public Sector Reform / Trade Integration

Financing Agreement reference: 5500155016452

Project ID No.: P-ZA-K00-013

The Government of South Africa, on behalf of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), has been allocated grant funds from the Middle-Income Country Technical Assistance Fund (MIC-TAF), which are administered by the African Development Bank and executed by the National Treasury of the RSA. The National Treasury of the RSA intends to apply the funds to eligible payments under the contract for consulting services for the Study on Reimagining the Southern African Customs Union (SACU).

SACU comprises five Member States: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa. Recognising the evolving regional and global economic landscape, the SACU Council of Ministers has directed a fundamental reimagining of SACU to better align with Member States' expectations and strategic priorities, in line with the SACU Strategic Plan.

The consultancy will provide strategic, evidence-based proposals to inform the transformation of SACU, including:

- Exploring optimal models for regional integration, considering geopolitical and regional dynamics.
- Recommending feasible and actionable reforms for the tariff-setting regime, optimal Common Revenue Pool (CRP) management, establishment of regional funding mechanisms, adopting resilient export strategies, promotion of movement of people, and creation of growth-inducing cross-border economic zones.
- Collaborating with the SACU Commission and Council to ensure alignment with the SACU Strategic Plan and continental initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The key services and deliverables expected under this assignment include:

- Conducting a comprehensive diagnostic of SACU's current integration framework, including gaps and challenges.
- Proposing models and governance structures for:
 - Transparent and equitable tariff setting and national tariff bodies.
 - Efficient and inclusive management of the CRP, including options for administration, portfolio management, oversight, and risk mitigation.
 - Regional innovation funding mechanisms to support bankable industrialisation projects.

- Movement of people policies and frameworks for cross-border special economic zones.
- Advising on legal, institutional, and operational reforms necessary for SACU's resilience and relevance.
- Presenting findings through inception, draft, and final reports, and participating in a Validation Workshop with stakeholders.

The consultancy is expected to be completed within 21 weeks from commencement, with clearly defined deliverables at each stage (Inception Report, Draft Report, Validation Workshop, Final Report).

Interested Consulting Firms must demonstrate:

- Proven expertise in economic analysis, policy development, regional integration, tariff setting, and management of common revenue pools in a regional context.
- Experience designing and implementing regional funding mechanisms and industrial policy.
- Strong understanding of SACU economies and regional/continental industrial landscapes.
- A diverse team with qualifications in relevant fields (Economics, International Trade, Finance, Public Policy) and expertise in areas aligned with the study's focus. Experience with similar assignments in the SADC or African context will be an advantage.
- The ability to constitute joint ventures to enhance capacities and expertise.

Interested firms should submit:

- A statement of capability and relevant experience (company profile, areas of expertise, similar assignments).
- Organizational capacity and resources relevant to the assignment;
 - A list of verifiable references for previous relevant work.
 - Experience in the target sector and geographical region;
 - Any additional supporting documentation demonstrating qualification.
- For joint ventures, information shall be provided for each partner together with evidence of the intended association and identification of the lead partner

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's ***"Procurement Framework for Bank Group Funded Operations"*** dated 2015, which is available on the Bank's website at: <https://www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/procurement/new-procurement-policy>.

A Consultant will be selected under the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method as set out in the Bank Procurement Framework.

Expressions of interest must be submitted electronically to the email address below in a PDF format by **19 October 2026 at 17:00 hours SAST**. Please include the subject: **"Expression of Interest for the Study on Reimagining the Southern African Customs Union (SACU)"**.

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