

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

<b>RFP Number:</b>	TFCS-RFP-2021-001
<b>Issuance Date:</b>	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> of July 2021
<b>Deadline for Receipt of Questions</b>	12:00 pm, Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> of July 2021 (Ramallah local Time)
<b>Deadline for Offers:</b>	05:00 pm, Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> of July 2021 (Ramallah local Time)
<b>Description:</b>	Study on the impact of applying Israeli standards on Palestinian imports' transaction costs and trade competitiveness.
<b>For:</b>	Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme (Tasdeer) for the benefit of The Palestinian Standard Institute (PSI)
<b>Funded By:</b>	UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
<b>Implemented By:</b>	Cowater International
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Hanadi Musleh – Finance & Operations Lead – <a href="mailto:procurement@tasdeer.ps">procurement@tasdeer.ps</a> - +972569838398

### ETHICAL AND BUSINESS CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS

Cowater is committed to integrity in procurement, and only selects offerors based on objective business criteria such as price and technical merit. Cowater expects offerors to comply with our Standards of Business Conduct, available at <https://www.cowater.com/en/about-us/#history>

Cowater does not tolerate fraud, collusion among offerors, falsified proposals/bids, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this procurement, barred from future procurement opportunities, and may be reported to the Client.

Employees and agents of Cowater are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation from current or potential vendors or offerors in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported to the client.

Offerors responding to this RFP must include the following as part of the proposal submission:

- Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with Cowater or project staff. For example, if an offeror's cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
- Disclose any family or financial relationship with other offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the offeror's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the offeror must state this.
- Certify that the prices in the offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- Certify that all information in the proposal and all supporting documentation are authentic and accurate.
- Certify understanding and agreement to Cowater prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact [procurement@Tasdeer.ps](mailto:procurement@Tasdeer.ps) with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations. Potential violations may also be reported directly to Cowater at to [codeofconduct@cowater.com](mailto:codeofconduct@cowater.com).

## Section I: Introduction and Instructions to Offerors

### I. Introduction

Cowater International, acting for the Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme (Tasdeer), is soliciting proposals from eligible and responsible firms and individuals for the supply of **Study on the impact of applying Israeli standards on Palestinian imports' transaction costs and trade competitiveness for the Palestinian Standard Institute (PSI)**, as described in Annex I (Detailed Terms of Reference and Requirements). The Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme (Tasdeer) is an official program of the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Contract No. POI0054, and is being carried out in West Bank and Gaza. The objective of Tasdeer programme is to improve the Palestinian private sector competitiveness and the PA's capacity in the fields of trade, customs and import policy regulation and administration. The TASDEER programme aims to increase sustainable private sector led economic growth and job creation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the PA's fiscal sustainability while ensuring equitable access to increased trade, and improved institutional capacity. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion are main tools and objectives for Tasdeer to ensure the benefits of the programme are equally accessed by the diverse groups of men and women in the supply chain.

Tasdeer is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and will work politically and technically to make progress across four-key interrelated Workstreams:

- **Work Stream 1: Support to expedite the movement of goods and reduce transaction costs.** This work stream aims to develop systemic interventions that will seek to expedite the movement of goods and contribute to impactful reductions in transaction costs for Palestinian imports and exports.
- **Work Stream 2: Support to improve Palestinian trade-related institutions and business enabling environment.** This work stream aims to improve the Palestinian trade-related institutions and strengthen the trade operating environment.
- **Work Stream 3: Support to improve the private sector's skills and innovation to export and create jobs.** This work stream aims to support activities that will help Palestinian firms increase their exports through the application of a market-driven approach. This market-driven approach will identify potential buyers/markets while exploring the linkages between the buyer, the firms, and its offerors.
- **Work Stream 4: Support to improve PA's Customs readiness to assume functions from Israel and revenues from trade-related taxes.** This workstream aims to provide technical assistance to enhance the capacity of the PA Ministry of Finance Customs Department including the possible transfer of additional custom functions from Israel to the PA and to limit fiscal losses from inefficient clearance mechanism of trade-related taxes between the PA. The interventions implemented by each work stream are designed to take into consideration the roles and needs of women, youth, and people with disabilities, including those in marginalized areas (i.e., East Jerusalem, seam zone, area C and Gaza), ensuring that all interventions and activities are GESI responsive, as main principle to achieve their expected results.

#### **About the Palestinian Standards Institute:**

The Palestinian Standard Institute (PSI) was established in 1994 and started its operations in 1997 as the sole body at the Palestinian Authority (PA) responsible for issuing Palestinian standards and is also considered the focal point for Palestinian participation in the global system of harmonized standards.

The MoNE plays a central role in Tasdeer programme and in its success. Together with the FCDO and the MoF, MONE is a member in the programme's Steering Committee that is responsible for:

- Programme oversight
- Decision making on interventions identified and designed by TASDEER Team.
- Monitor results and feedback on implementation, performance and results
- Strategic advice and alignment with national priorities

Part of Tasdeer's planned interventions for 2021 is to enhance the role and capacity of the Palestine Standards Institute (PSI) to fully assume its responsibility as a national standards institute and to facilitate imports and exports of goods across borders. To start off the intervention plan with PSI, Tasdeer and in close cooperation with the Office of the Quartet, will engage with PSI to prepare a study on the cost of impediments caused by subjecting Palestinian imports to Israeli standards at different Israeli international gateways, and on the potential for transfer of functions from the Standard Institute of Israel (SII) to PSI.

**Tasdeer is seeking a firm or a group of individuals (led by a lead consultant) to undertake a study on transaction costs and trade competitiveness in Palestine.**

Offerors are responsible for ensuring that their offers are received in accordance with the instructions stated herein. Failure to adhere with instructions described herein may lead to disqualification of a proposal from consideration.

## **2. Questions and Requests for Clarifications**

Questions regarding the technical or administrative requirements of this RFP may be submitted no later than 12:00 pm, 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2021 (Ramallah local Time) by email to [procurement@tasdeer.ps](mailto:procurement@tasdeer.ps). Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification and the responses thereto that Cowater believes may be of interest to other offerors will be circulated to all RFP recipients who have indicated an interest in bidding.

Only the written answers issued by Cowater will be considered official and carry weight in the RFP process and subsequent evaluation. Any verbal information received from employees of Cowater, or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any questions regarding this RFP.

## **3. Offer Deadline**

Offers must be received no later than 05:00 pm Ramallah Local time on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of July. Offers received after this date or time will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of Cowater.

## **4. Instructions for Submission of Offers**

**Each offeror must submit its proposal in two separate volumes: the Technical Volume and the Cost Volume. The Technical proposal shall be submitted in separate envelop from the financial proposal.**

All offers and related documents must be enclosed in sealed envelopes with the name and address of the offeror and the RFP number ("RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-001") clearly marked on the outside. The Technical Volume and the Cost Volume must be submitted separately. Envelopes must be clearly marked either "Technical Volume" or "Cost Volume". If multiple envelopes must be submitted due to the size of a proposal, offerors must ensure that each envelope is sealed and clearly marked with the information described above.

The proposal (consisting of both volumes) must be hand-delivered or sent by mail to: **6 Jaffa St. Al Bardouni Commercial Center, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Ms. Hanadi Musleh, +972569838398**

All offers must be prepared in English.

### **4.1 Technical Volume**

The Technical Volume should describe in detail the offeror's proposed plan for providing the commodities described in the technical specifications found in Annex 1. It should demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and the responsibilities of all parties involved. The plan should include details on equipment, personnel, and subcontractors that the offeror will make available to carry out the required activities. The plan should also provide details on the anticipated delivery schedule, including an estimated completion date.

At a minimum, the Technical Volume must contain the following required completed documents:

1. Completed Technical Requirements (see Annex 1)
2. Evidence of Responsibility Statement (see Annex 2)
3. Proposal Cover Letter (see Annex 3)
4. Past Performance Form (see Annex 5)
5. Proposal Checklist (see Annex 6)
6. Consultant LOC (Letter of Commitment) (see Annex 7)
7. Completed copy of the attached due diligence form signed by an authorized representative of the offeror.

8. In addition, offerors responding to this RFP are requested to submit the following:

- Organizations responding to this RFP are requested to submit a copy of their official registration or business license.
- Individuals responding to this RFP are requested to submit a copy of their identification card.

*Subcontracting arrangements:* If the execution of work to be performed by the offeror requires the hiring of subcontractors, the proposal must clearly identify the subcontractor(s), contact information of subcontractor(s), and the work they will perform. Cowater will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors; however, Cowater retains the right to approve or reject the specific subcontractors selected.

All electronic copies of documents in the Technical Volume must be in PDF, Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel format.

The information contained in the Technical Volume should not contain any cost- or price-related information.

#### **4.2 Cost Volume**

The Cost Volume must include a unit cost breakdown for every line item described in Annex 4, as well as a description of any other costs involved; see the Price Schedule in Annex 4 for the required format. The offer must preserve and clearly indicate the line-item numbers. All items, services, transportation costs, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total price. Prices must be quoted on a lump-sum, all-inclusive basis. No other costs, taxes, and/or fees may be added later.

Tasdeer Programme is exempt from VAT. Any award issued by Cowater on behalf of the Tasdeer Programme, an official program of the Government of the UK in Palestine, is free and exempt from VAT.

Quotations must be fixed price, expressed in GBP.

The Cost Volume must contain the following required documents:

1. Quotation on official letterhead or official quotation format, containing the information in Annex 3. Alternatively, offerors may complete the format found in Annex 3 and submit a signed/stamped version to Cowater.

The anticipated subcontract type for this procurement will be a firm fixed priced subcontract.

It is anticipated that Cowater will subcontract for the full quantities of commodities and services described in this RFP. However, Cowater reserves the right to subcontract for less or more quantities and/or services at its discretion. An offeror may present a proposal for less than the list of commodities as described in Annex 1, but Cowater's preference is for proposals that address the complete technical solution.

#### **Validity Period**

Offers must remain valid for at least 90 calendar days after the offer deadline.

#### **4.3 Past Performance**

In the Technical Volume, all offers should include information for at least three (3) client references for recently offered services of similar technical scope and/or capacity.

The information offered must include a.) the name, address, contact person, and current phone number of the organization for which services were performed; b.) a brief description of the work performed; c.) the duration (including the dates) of the work and amount (specify the currency) of the contracts/subcontracts. If the Offeror encountered problems in carrying out any of these contracts, it should provide an explanation of the problem encountered and describe any corrective action taken. Failure to submit complete and accurate information regarding previous similar or related contracts is grounds for disqualification from the evaluation process.

Cowater reserves the right to obtain past performance information obtained from sources other than those identified by the offeror. Cowater shall determine the relevance of similar past performance information.

#### 4.4 Negotiations

Best and final price quotations are requested from all offerors. It is anticipated that awards will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Cowater reserves the right to conduct negotiations and/or request clarifications prior to awarding a subcontract.

#### 4.5 Basis for Award

The award will be made to a responsible offeror whose offer follows the RFP instructions, meets the eligibility requirements, and is determined via a trade-off analysis to be the best value based on application of the following evaluation criteria. The relative importance of each individual criterion is indicated by the number of points below:

- **Technical approach – 25 points:** Responsiveness to the technical specifications and requirements. This will evaluate the offeror's proposed methodology and work plan. The methodology should demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the scope of work and firm grasp of the purpose of the required deliverables. The Work plan should include the organization of the tasks illustrating maximization of time and clarity in the assignment of personnel.
- **Past experience – 20 points in relevant field and corporate capabilities:** This will include an evaluation of the capacity of the organization to perform the scope of work, review of success stories of previous experience in similar jobs and the ability to illustrate past successes in performing similar assignment.
- **Consultant Composition 25 points:** This will include an evaluation of the qualifications of proposed consultants; mix of experience and technical capabilities and assignment of tasks to maximize resources' and meet deadlines. Evaluation of the CV and reference if needed.
- **Cost Proposal – 30 points:** The overall cost presented in the offer.

\* Technical proposals that get score less than 45/70, the financial offer might not be considered.

\* Proposals short listed based on highest scores in the technical evaluation maybe required to make a presentation, after which the technical scoring will be adjusted for those short listed proposals.

Best-offer quotations are requested. It is anticipated that award will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Cowater reserves the right to conduct any of the following:

- Cowater may conduct negotiations with and/or request clarifications from any offeror prior to award.
- While preference will be given to offerors who can address the full technical requirements of this RFP, Cowater may issue a partial award or split the award among various offerors, if in the best interest of Tasdeer Programme
- Tasdeer may cancel this RFP at any time.

Please note that in submitting a response to this RFP, the offeror understands that FCDO is not a party to this solicitation and the offeror agrees that any protest hereunder must be presented—in writing with full explanations—to Tasdeer Programme for consideration, as FCDO will not consider protests regarding procurements carried out by implementing partners. Cowater, at its sole discretion, will make a final decision on the protest for this procurement.

#### 4.6 Terms and Conditions of Subcontract

This is a Request for Proposals only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate Cowater to award a subcontract, nor does it commit Cowater to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal.

## **ANNEX I: DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **Terms of Reference**

Study on the impact of applying Israeli standards on Palestinian imports' transaction costs and trade competitiveness.

The Trade Facilitation and Customs Support programme (Tasdeer) is a three-year programme funded by The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and implemented by Cowater International in close cooperation and coordination with the Palestinian Authority (PA) Ministry of National Economy (MoNE).

**Tasdeer is seeking a firm or a group of individuals (led by a lead consultant) to undertake a study on transaction costs and trade competitiveness in Palestine.**

#### About Tasdeer

The objective of Tasdeer programme is to improve the Palestinian private sector competitiveness and the PA's capacity in the fields of trade, customs and import policy regulation and administration. The TASDEER programme aims to increase sustainable private sector led economic growth and job creation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the PA's fiscal sustainability while ensuring equitable access to increased trade, and improved institutional capacity. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion are main tools and objectives for Tasdeer to ensure the benefits of the programme are equally accessed by the diverse groups of men and women in the supply chain.

Tasdeer is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and will work politically and technically to make progress across four-key interrelated Workstreams:

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This work stream aims to improve the Palestinian trade-related institutions and strengthen the trade operating environment.
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This work stream aims to support activities that will help Palestinian firms increase their exports through the application of a market-driven approach. This market-driven approach will identify potential buyers/markets while exploring the linkages between the buyer, the firms and its offerors.
- **Work Stream 4: Support to improve PA's Customs readiness to assume functions from Israel and revenues from trade-related taxes.**  
This workstream aims to provide technical assistance to enhance the capacity of the PA Ministry of Finance Customs Department including the possible transfer of additional custom functions from Israel to the PA and to limit fiscal losses from inefficient clearance mechanism of trade-related taxes between the PA. The interventions implemented by each work stream are designed to take into consideration the roles and needs of women, youth and people with disabilities, including those in marginalized areas (i.e., East Jerusalem, seam zone, area C and Gaza), ensuring that all interventions and activities are GESI responsive, as main principle to achieve their expected results.

#### About the Palestinian Standards Institute:

The Palestinian Standard Institute (PSI) was established in 1994 and started its operations in 1997 as the sole body at the Palestinian Authority (PA) responsible for issuing Palestinian standards and is also considered the focal point for Palestinian participation in the global system of harmonized standards.

The MoNE plays a central role in Tasdeer programme and in its success. Together with the FCDO and the MoF, MONE is a member in the programme's Steering Committee that is responsible for:

- Programme oversight
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Part of Tasdeer's planned interventions for 2021 is to enhance the role and capacity of the Palestine Standards Institute (PSI) to fully assume its responsibility as a national standards institute and to facilitate imports and exports of goods across borders. To start off the intervention plan with PSI, Tasdeer and in close cooperation with the Office of the Quartet, will engage with PSI

to prepare a study on the cost of impediments caused by subjecting Palestinian imports to Israeli standards at different Israeli international gateways, and on the potential for transfer of functions from the Standard Institute of Israel (SII) to PSI.

**Background:**

Annex V of the Interim Agreement, referred to as the Paris Protocol, was intended to govern economic and trade relations between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Government of Israel (Gol) for an interim period of five years (4 May 1994 - 4 May 1999), to allow the Palestinian Authority to establish its own institutions and decision-making procedures in line with its own development plans and priorities as part of a transition to a two-state solution.

The failure of permanent status negotiations led to the de facto extension of the Protocol far beyond the initial interim period. Currently, the Paris Protocol arrangements suffer from two problems: The Protocol is only partially implemented, and its provisions have not kept up with developments including international rules and standards. As a result, it is hampering Palestinian economic development, industrial expansion, and international trade.

According to article III (5b, 10) of Paris Protocol in relation to the import policy, all imports not included in or exceed the quantity limits of A1 and A2 are subject to the Israeli standards. Palestinian importers must apply for import licenses and other relevant permits through the appropriate Palestinian Ministries, which then seek approval on their behalf from Israeli Ministries through the Civil Administration Authority; a process that reduces transparency and increases delays.

All Palestinian imports are at disparity due to Israeli unilateral/discriminatory policies at international/Israeli gateways. There are clear disparities between Palestinian and Israeli importers in terms of processing, specifically 'standards' related procedures. Palestinian importers must transfer shipments to bonded warehouses and incur additional storage fees until standards related procedures are completed and approvals are obtained. On the other hand, Israeli importers can clear their shipments immediately and move it to their own warehouse while awaiting the outcome of standard related tests, therefore, Palestinian imports incur additional warehousing storage charges and waiting time which creates business risks. In addition to the lack of evidence ( both qualitative and quantitative) on the influence of applying these standards on small scale traders and those in the supply chain, particularly women, youth people with disabilities and those in marginalized areas, this includes the lack of disaggregated evidence of costs and time of applying these standards on the diverse groups of women and men traders, this is a missed opportunity to address their issues, needs, constraints and opportunities, in the discussions and may risk overlooking them in the development plans. The planned study is expected to benefit from several reports/studies and other research previously conducted by the international community including:

- USAID's report "WB and Gaza Inclusive Growth Diagnostic, 2017"
- The World Bank's report "Unlocking the Trade Potential of the Palestinian Economy, 2017".
- The assessment conducted by the Office of the Quartet and funded by DFID in 2019, to provide technical and functional assessment of the PA Customs infrastructure, clearance systems, capacity building and training; and to propose solutions for customs functions and procedures.

**Objectives of the Assignment:**

Tasdeer in consultation with PSI has identified the following objectives for the assignment:

- The study in essence is a statistical analysis which seeks to assess the time and cost implications of the standards application process disparity at Israeli ports. Specifically, breakdown the time and cost implications of standards process application on Palestinian imports (by shipment(s) and type of products) carried out by Israeli Standards Authorities.
- The study will serve to inform PA and International Community engagement with the Gol with regards to the assumption of standards functions by relevant Palestinian institutions.
- Provide evidence through the collection of credible data including SADD and location wherever applicable and the generation of credible calculations as to the transaction cost and time implications of standards related impediments faced by Palestinian importers due the application of Israeli standards procedures.
- Identify the different effects of these impediments on different types of businesses (large, small and medium, micro, including those owned by women, youth, PWD and those in the marginalized areas).
- Identify sectors/products faced by these standards-caused impediments and the responsible Israeli authority in charge of applying those standards.
- Identify standards related functions applied to Palestinian imports that can be assumed by PSI immediately and identify other functions that can be assumed in the future.
- Develop a capacity development plan to enable PSI to effectively control standards functions in the short and medium terms.

Note: This statistical analysis should separate standards related delays from any other delays (e.g., security checks, customs)

### **Scope of Work:**

The consulting firm/group of individuals will engage with the following (but not limited to) Palestinian stakeholders: Ministry of National Economy (MoNE), The Palestinian Standard Institution (PSI), Ministry of Finance/customs, Palestinian private sector (Palestinian Federation of Industries (PFI), Palestinian Shippers Council, Pal Trade, Chambers of Commerce, Palestinian Customs clearing agents and individual female and male importers, business women networks and organizations and representatives of small scale traders of youth and PWD and those in marginalized areas. The consulting firm/group of individuals will also engage with the following (but not limited to) Israeli stakeholders: Israeli Standards Institution (SII), Israeli Customs, Israeli port authority, Customs clearing agents, Israeli logistics association, and any other Israeli related institution. The consulting firm/group of individuals is expected to implement this assignment in two consecutive phases:

#### Phase I:

1. Provide a detailed mapping of the standards process by type of imported products (9 digits HS code), frequency of shipment(s) sampling, type of procedure, location, time, cost, and related standards authority.
2. Conduct a statistical analysis that seeks to assess the time and cost implications of the standards application process disparity at Israeli ports and how these disparities affect different businesses (owned by women, youth and small and micro-businesses), using disaggregated data wherever applicable.

#### Phase II.

1. Based on data received from phase I, assess PSI and related institutions capacities and identify functions that can be assumed immediately by PSI
2. Apply a GESI perspective in assessing PSI capacities to assume responsibility for other functions that can be assumed at the short and medium terms
3. Develop a GESI responsive capacity development plan to enable PSI to effectively control standards functions in the short and medium terms.

### **Deliverables:**

1. A report that includes the following three chapters:
  - i) Cost Analysis: A methodologically sound statistical analysis of all imported Palestinian goods subject to standards certification procedure based on 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 imports, including types of goods, value, sector, types of standard procedures needed (sampling, inspection, testing, certification), cost of each process, cost of storage, demurrage, damage, confiscation, clearance and process duration, indicating associated time implications and costs, the analysis should include disaggregated data wherever applicable. This section should also provide an estimate of the aggregate value for standards impediments on the Palestinian economy.
  - ii) PSI Capacity Assessment: An Identification of functions at PSI for standards certification that could be assumed immediately and those that could be assumed in the short to medium term.
  - iii) Capacity Development Plan: A development plan to enable PSI to assume standards functions over Palestinian imports.
2. A presentation of findings to Palestinian stakeholders through a workshop.
3. A policy brief note detailing policy options for the PA.

Note: The report should include as part of the analysis in each of these chapters, a section on GESI groups and how these impediments influencing them, with recommendations for actions to address.

### **Methodology and Data Collection**

- The consulting firm/group of individuals should propose a detailed methodology for accomplishing this assignment taking into account the specific needs of marginalized groups (Women, youth, PWD owners of SME) including those in marginalized areas. Proposed methodology should clarify the different measures that will be taken and the tools that will be used to ensure that the needs and views of the marginalized groups will be identified/ obtained throughout the different stages of the study. The proposed methodology to highlight how the tools to be used will consider the current situation of pandemic and the participants of the study, their best time of availability will be very much considered the best ways to communicate with them, and the privacy required to conduct these discussions wherever needed.

#### Proposed Methodology:

- I- Review previously conducted reports and studies related to the subject,



- 2- Identify in detail the process of standards certification.
- 3- Engage/Consult with Palestinian and Israeli customs clearing agents, as well as relevant stakeholders. Consultation with stakeholders to ensure the representation of marginalized groups of women, youth, PWD with SMEs, wherever applicable.
- 4- Identify the different causes of shipments delays at Israeli ports (standards inspection, sampling, testing, obtaining permits from ministries, customs checks, and security checks).
- 5- Identify and describe the main standards functions that cause delay to imported goods.

#### Data Collection:

The consulting firm/group of individuals will provide detailed data collection plan including sampling and analyses procedure. The data collection plan could include the following:

- Identify all imported items (goods) that are subject to standards by law under 9 HS code from the Tariff book.
- Match each item with the official testing cost schedule approved by Standards Institute of Israel.
- Take an appropriate sample size, according to specific criteria including type of product, cost of testing, value of imports, etc.
- Qualitative tools of data collection during the different consultations

#### **Ethics and Risks**

- Taking all the measures to ensure a safe and respectful environment for all participants of the study, from stakeholders, females and males, by means of a gender sensitive communication, and proper methodological tools. Anonymous treatment of the information that participants provide wherever required.
- Applying the international standards and ethics of research including the application of the human rights based non-bias, non-discriminatory approach.
- take all needed measures to ensure the participation of diverse groups of women and men through ensuring proper meeting place and time.
- Ensuring No Harm

#### **Location of Work**

The consulting firm/group of individuals will undertake the study from its own offices and the field and will be expected to maintain regular contact with the Tasdeer and the OQ and relevant stakeholders, including those representing the small-scale traders of women, youth and PWD, for the duration of its work. The consulting firm/group of individuals will need to arrange visits to West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, and to conduct interviews with relevant authorities and private sector including PSI, SII, Israeli Ministry of Economy, MoNE, Federation of Industries, chambers of commerce, in addition to Palestinian and Israeli customs clearing agents.

The Consulting Firm/group of individuals will coordinate its field work with both Tasdeer and the Office of the Quartet and will ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety instructions, taking into account Palestinian and Israeli movement and personal contact regulations.

#### **Qualifications and Experience**

The consulting firm/group of individuals is expected to propose three consultants for the delivery of this assignment. For Phase I of the assignment, the consulting firm/group of individuals is expected to propose Non-Tariff Barriers (NTB) international consultant (lead) assisted by a Palestinian consultant with access to the relevant Palestinian and Israeli entities/data sources relevant for the study. For phase II of the study, the consulting firm/group of individuals is expected to propose a quality standards Palestinian consultant to work on assessing PSI capacity to assume standards certification for Palestinian imports.

The consultants for Phase I of the assignment should have the following minimum qualifications:

- International experience dealing with trade policy and nontariff barriers.
- Experience in international trade facilitation measures including the trade facilitation agreements of the WTO and gender perspectives in trade facilitation.
- Experience in dealing with Palestinian private sector and/or experience with imports with destination to the Palestinian Territory.
- Good knowledge of the trade arrangements between the Palestinian Authority and Israel.
- Good knowledge of the political contexts in Israel and Palestine.
- Good knowledge and familiarity with The Paris Protocol, 1994.

- Proven competency in statistical analysis, and gender analysis frameworks.
- Demonstrate the knowledge of the political, social and economic context in Palestine, and its impact on the diverse groups of women and men across different locations, including their participation in economic and trade related activities.
- A gender balanced team of qualified researchers, with Arabic speaking members.

The consultant for Phase II of the assignment should have the following minimum qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Engineering
- Excellent experience in standardization, conformity assessment and standards regulatory fields
- Experience in imports regulations and procedures.

### **Application**

Interested applicants are requested to provide a methodology for conducting the assignment along with the proposed experts' CV's as well as a division of time among the three experts.

#### **a. Budget**

Interested applicants should submit daily rates for their proposed experts in £GBP with clear exchange rate considered.

Tasdeer will procure expenses items on behalf of consultants in accordance with project rates and caps. This will be on a request's basis. Any other expenses must be approved in advance. Applicants should submit an expenses budget with their application for review.

### **Reporting Lines and Managerial Responsibilities**

The international Non-Tariff Barriers Consultant will report to WS2 Lead, the national Non-Tariff Barriers and quality standards consultants will report to the international Non-Tariff Barriers Consultant (The Lead)

**Duty Station:** Jerusalem, West Bank, and Gaza

**Type of the Contract:** Short Term Consultancy

**Duration of Contract:** The assignment is expected to start on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, and to be undertaken and accomplished over a maximum period of three months, with up to 90 days Level of Effort (LoE) for all experts.

**ANNEX 2: Evidence of Responsibility Statement**

Evidence of Responsibility Statement

This statement describes the offeror's internal policies and procedures, as well as its ability to comply with the terms and conditions of a potential subcontract resulting from RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-001. The offeror shall complete the information in this statement as part of its proposal.

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Authorized Negotiators**

The offeror's proposal in response to RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-001 may be discussed with any of the following individuals. These individuals are authorized to represent our company in negotiation of this proposal.

Names of authorized negotiator(s): \_\_\_\_\_

These individuals can be reached at the following office:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Adequate Financial Resources**

We hereby certify that the above-named company maintains adequate financial resources to manage any subcontract resulting from this offer.

**3. Ability to Comply**

We certify we are able to comply with the proposed schedule and period of performance, having taken into consideration all existing business commitments, commercial as well as governmental.

**4. Record of Performance, Integrity, and Business Ethics**

Our record of integrity is outstanding. We have no allegations of lack of integrity or of questionable business ethics. Our integrity can be confirmed by our Past Performance References, contained in the Technical Volume.

**5. Organization, Experience, Accounting and Operational Controls, and Technical Skills**

Describe how the subcontract will be managed: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Equipment and Facilities**

We maintain the necessary facilities and equipment to carry out the subcontract.

**7. Eligibility to Receive Award**

We are qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulation. In addition, we have performed similar work – describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Acceptability of Subcontract Terms and Conditions**

We have reviewed the solicitation document and attachments and agree to the terms and conditions set forth therein.

I hereby certify that the above statements are true and accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

By (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX 3: Proposal Cover Letter**

[On Firm's Letterhead]

*The following cover letter must be placed on letterhead and completed/signed/stamped by a representative authorized to sign on behalf of the offeror, as part of the Technical Volume:*

**To: Cowater International – Tasdeer Programme  
Ramallah Office**

**Reference: RFP no. TFCS-RFP-2021-001**

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the undersigned, hereby provide the attached offer to perform all work required to complete the activities and requirements as described in the above-referenced RFP. Please find our offer attached.

We hereby acknowledge and agree to all terms, conditions, special provisions, and instructions included in the above-referenced RFP. We further certify that the below-named firm—as well as the firm's principal officers, and all commodities and services offered in response to this RFP—are eligible to participate in this procurement under the terms of this solicitation.

Furthermore, we hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief:

- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any Cowater or Tasdeer programme staff members.
- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any other offerors submitting proposals in response to the above-referenced RFP; and
- The prices in our offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- All information in our proposal and all supporting documentation is authentic and accurate.
- We understand and agree to Cowater' prohibitions against fraud, bribery, and kickbacks.

We hereby certify that the enclosed representations, certifications, and other statements are accurate, current, and complete.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Signatory: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Telephone and Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Registration or Taxpayer ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the company have an active bank account (Yes/No)? \_\_\_\_\_

Official name associated with bank account (for payment): \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX 4: Price Schedule**

Item No.	Item Name	Description/Specifications	QTY	Unit Price	Total Price
1.	Design and deliver the training program as described in the TOR				
2	Follow up, support and coaching				
3	VAT				
<b>GRAND TOTAL IN</b> Click here to enter text.					
GRAND TOTAL IN GREAT BRITISH POUND GBP					<b>£</b>

**Delivery Period:** Click here to enter text.

*Note: If the cost offer could be provided in GBP, please adjust your cost proposal and mark clearly costs to be in the GBP currency.*



## **ANNEX 6: Proposal Checklist**

Offeror Name:

Have you?

Submitted your proposal to Cowater International / Tasdeer Programme by hand or mail to the as specified in General Instructions above?

Does your proposal include the following?

- Signed Cover Letter (*use template in Attachment 3*)
- Separate Technical and Cost proposals individually emailed and indicated as Volume I and Volume II respectively.
- Proposal of the Product or Service that meets the technical requirements as per Attachment A
- Response to each of the evaluation criteria
- Past Performance (*use template in Attachment*)
- Letter of Commitment to be filled by each consultant. (*Use the letter in Attachment 4*)

**ANNEX 7: Consultant LOC (Letter of Commitment)**  
**Letter of Commitment to be filled by each consultant:**

**Letter of Commitment (to be signed by consultants included in RFP#: TFCS-RFP-2021-001)**

I, the undersigned [insert consultant's name], hereby confirm that I wish to be included on an exclusive basis in the team submitted by [insert lead firm name], which is participating in the Request for Proposal (**TFCS-RFP-2021-001**) titled (Study on the impact of applying Israeli standards on Palestinian imports' transaction costs and trade competitiveness) issued by the Tasdeer Programme. I therefore undertake not to offer my services to another company taking part in the same application process for the RFP.

Consequently, any other company using my name for this registration process is doing so without my consent.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Consultant Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_