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Final Report

Project No. 2016/377499/1

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CA	Contribution Agreement
CESARE	Cooperation for the Enhancement of SADC Regional Economic Integration
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DfID	Department for International Development
EAC	Eastern African Community
EDF	European Development Fund
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FIP	Protocol on Finance and Investment
FSU	Facility Support Unit
FTA	Free Trade Area
GIZ	German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ICPs	International Cooperation Partners
KEs	Key Experts
LF	Logical Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MS	Member State
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NSAs	Non-State-Actors
NTBs	Non-Tariff Barriers
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
PAF	Performance Assessment Frameworks
REC	Regional Economic Community
REIS	Regional Economic Integration Support
RI	Regional Integration
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RISM	Regional Integration Support Mechanism
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
STP	SADC's Trade Protocol
STRIDE	Strengthening Trade for Inclusive Development in Southern Africa

TMSA	Trade Mark Southern Africa
TIFI	Trade Industry Finance and Investment
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRF	Trade Related Facility
USAID	US Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

Background and introduction

SADC's Trade Protocol (STP), signed in 1996 by a number of SADC Member States, is one of the most important legal instruments of SADC. It aims to enhance cross-border trade by liberalising intra-regional trade amongst SADC 15 Member States. The objective is the implementation of a SADC Free Trade Area (FTA). To date, 13 of the 15 SADC Member States have signed the STP. However, the implementation of the obligations that are stipulated in the STP remains far from completed. It also varies considerably among countries, reflecting their different capacities and political willingness to liberalise.

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), development oriented free trade agreements, are at the core of the EU's relations with developing countries, and specifically of the EU-SADC relationship. Six of the SADC Member States (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) signed an EPA with the EU in June 2016, after a long and protracted negotiation process (Angola has an option to join the agreement in future). The Agreement has been ratified by the SADC EPA Member States and entered into provisional application in October 2016. The EU-SADC EPA has the objective of supporting sustainable economic growth, diversification and expansion of the industrial base of the region through regional and global value chains, investment and opportunities.

The Economic Partnership Agreement embraces the objectives of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan of poverty eradication and deeper regional integration.

The conclusion of the SADC-EU EPA this year marks a milestone. The implementation of this agreement will require major efforts and presents significant challenges for the concerned SADC Member States. Technical assistance in this field has scope for major improvements.

The EU is an important trade partner of SADC and is likely to remain so over the coming years. In addition to the implementation of EPA obligations, strengthening the supply capacity of SADC Member States and a broadening and deepening of trade between EU and SADC, notably through negotiations on trade in services, should be high on the agenda.

The EU has supported the regional integration (RI) process in Southern Africa for a long time, through different projects and programmes with and for SADC. The Trade Related Facility (TRF) Programme (October 2014-September 2019), with a value of €31.6m, intends to focus at national initiatives on the implementation of both STP and EPA related programmes. It is complementary to two other EU funded programmes: the Project Preparation Development Facility (PPDF) and the Regional Economic Integration Support (REIS) Programme.

The overall objective of the TRF programme is to improve the participation of SADC Member States in regional and international trade so as to contribute to sustainable development in the region.

The TRF Contribution Agreement makes provision for two external independent mid-term evaluations and one final evaluation. The overall objective of the Evaluation is to increase the visibility, accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the project. This first mid-term

evaluation is to provide the opportunity for the TRF to take into account developments in respect of the implementation of the regional economic integration agenda.

Key findings

The TRF is an important programme with a significant potential to accelerate SADC's integration agenda. Its two windows targeting STP and EPA implementation are highly relevant and timely for the region's integration.

TRF complements other support programmes by the EU and by other International Cooperation Partners (DfiD, GIZ, and USAID). The design of the programme has taken up lessons from other support programmes that provide assistance to Member States in the regional integration programmes in Southern Africa (notably RISM supporting COMESA).

The overall problem analysis, programme intervention logic and risk identification are reasonable. However, there are weaknesses in the design and difficulties in implementation. As TRF is a novel programme approach (i.e. it is new in its type - it cannot replicate previous programmes and/or learn from previous experiences), the design has not been very precise in all areas. It is now at the time to specify, adjust, and in some cases change the programme design. This is further clarified in the section on Relevance.

The roles and tasks of the FSU are very wide and not well understood by all stakeholders. The team is overloaded with reporting duties. In addition, FSU members are required to take part in SADC meetings that are not directly relevant to their work.

At the same time, the substantive roles of the FSU experts are underemphasized, in the support for Member States in the application formulation, in the evaluation process, and in the project implementation and its monitoring. These issues are more substantiated and clarified in the report.

The use of short term expertise has in many cases been questionable (applications, development of communication and M&E plans). The FSU technical advisers are supposed to have the capacity to develop applications, communication and M&E plans.

Governance of the TRF through its Steering Committee has been ineffective because of insufficient and delayed provision of information, lack of separation between management and oversight, and too large membership. The Committee functioned in practice more as an information platform than a decision body. Its mandate was also unclear to some of its members.

The reporting and documentation system was also found too weak. Reports are not properly or uniformly structured, they are not concise, and not always timely submitted. At the same time, the reporting requirements are too high.

Neither an operable monitoring and evaluation system nor a systematic approach to dissemination and visibility exist. Both are under preparation.

However, awareness-raising has been broad and largely successful. Workshops were held in all but one country.

There exists a general respect for the FSU and its work. But for many stakeholders the response times have been too long.

In general, many processes on different levels took too long. Most significant was the delay in approving the Operational Guidelines.

Project effectiveness is defined as the level and quality of services provided by the TRF project to the beneficiaries and the way in which results have been used to develop the trade policy analysis capacity of the Member States and to facilitate the implementation of their projects.

The four main factors which caused the delays were the slow response time of the FSU, the need to provide for and integrate the TRF Programme in the SADC procedures, the long approval process for projects in the various stages, and considering that for quite a number of Member States, particularly, the SADC EPA States it was a learning curve, hence they took longer in processing applications.

If all approved and planned projects will be successfully implemented, they have the potential to contribute significantly to the STP and EPA implementation.

Sustainability of TRF is not guaranteed, unless further funds will be raised. It had been planned to raise additional funds from other International Cooperation Partners, but no initiatives have been taken so far in this regard. The slow implementation does not make this feasible at the present time. A degree of success in TRF implementation on the national level has to be achieved in order to entice further engagement in TRF (including by other International Cooperation Partners).

However, the sustainability of the foreseen outcomes and impacts of TRF as a programme is another matter. TRF contributes to the STP and EPA implementation. These are long-term initiatives, which are unlikely to be aborted. However, the speed of progress will depend crucially on the political will of SADC Member States to the processes of regional integration and opening up. Nevertheless, the success of TRF implementation at the national level will have a positive impact.

Recommendations

A number of measures to improve efficiency, effectiveness and speed of implementation of the TRF are proposed. These concern governance, the operating of the FSU, its relation to TIFI, the logical framework, communication and information flow, the finance and procurement rules, and stakeholder relations.

The role of the Steering Committee as the oversight body of the TRF needs to be strengthened. This is needed to ensure better timeliness and high quality performance of the TRF and its FSU. The proposals concern more frequent meetings (quarterly rather than semi-annual), provision of information and its timeliness (quarterly reports with standard and concise format), voting rights, observing members, separation of management and oversight, and others. The evaluators made the proposal to meet quarterly at Steering Committee level. It seems wiser to have quarterly high-level strategic steering committee meetings than the currently foreseen semi-annual meetings. On the one hand, the FSU needs to have more supervision and control from the Steering Committee (when the Steering Committee is

checking if a requested work has been done, FSU technical advisers usually say that the report is “ongoing”). And on the other hand, the quarterly meetings would reduce the delays concerning the approval of the project proposals.

The FSU should have reduced reporting and attendance requirements at SADC meetings. The FSU experts need to have substantially more time to concentrate on their substantive, technical work (support to applications, participation in evaluation of applications, advice to and monitoring of implementation). Reporting is also in line with regular TIFI reporting requirements (as they are valid for other programmes).

The role of short term experts needs to be critically reviewed and less generously used. Except for special cases (where specific expertise is needed), the support in the application process should be provided by the FSU experts. The M&E system and the communication strategies and plans should be given priority and finalised by the FSU experts into simple and usable instruments.

The relation of FSU and TIFI should be clarified and strengthened. The key link is the Task Manager for TRF. S/he should have authority to lead the FSU, and the FSU Team Leader should report to him/her.

The Logical Framework should be simplified with fewer indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

The information flow and exchange with other programmes, and also to other stakeholders, should be strengthened, notably on the progress of project implementation.

The prescribed use of SADC finance and procurement rules should be revisited. While this may be complicated for TRF, it should be considered at least in future Contribution Agreements. The use of EDF rules on country level should be considered, because they are known by Member States and their use would allow improving the use of 'best practice' (rather than ownership). SADC rules are also currently in the process of change.

Relations to stakeholders need to be strengthened beyond awareness rising.

Introduction

1. Purpose of the evaluation

This is the Draft Final Report of the Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) of the SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF). The overall objective of the Evaluation, as described in the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the MTE (Annex 1), is to increase the visibility, accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the project. This is to be achieved through assessing the results and achievements so far, and analysing the extent and causes of any problems encountered during implementation. The Evaluation will present findings and recommendations designed to improve the implementation modalities of the project in order to make it more responsive and effective in meeting the needs of the beneficiaries. Proposals for modification will focus specifically on the intervention logic, current implementation modalities, and changes in approach to project management, staffing levels.

The assessment criteria to be used in the MTE are clearly specified in the ToRs. They include the quality of project design and its relevance to the needs of the target beneficiaries, the efficiency of implementation to date and the effectiveness of project results in achieving the project purpose of improving the participation of SADC Member States in regional and international trade in order to contribute to sustainable development in the SADC region.

This MTE was carried out by Mr Patrick Fusilier and supported by Mr Dirk Hansohm (the consultants) on behalf of AECOM International Development Europe SL in consortium with SEQUA.

2. Evaluation methodology

The MTE began on 19th September 2016. The first week of the Inception Phase was used to prepare an Inception Report, which was followed by a Desk Study of relevant project documentation and the preparation of an Aide Memoire. During the data collection phase, the consultants met with a number of key project stakeholders in Gaborone, including the SADC Secretariat, the Facility Support Unit (FSU) and the EU Delegation. The analysis and findings of the Desk Study Report have been incorporated into this Draft Final Report. The second phase of the MTE included a series of field visits to relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries. The draft conclusions of the Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) of the SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF) were presented to the SADC Secretariat and the EU Delegation in Gaborone on 3rd November 2016.

As mentioned above, the assessment of TRF programme was carried out in two stages. The first stage was a desk study review of FSU records of commitments and reports as well as interviews at SADC Secretariat and FSU Office. The second phase was based on two field visits to relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries: Zambia and Botswana.

During the field visit period, the stakeholders and beneficiaries of TRF projects and sub - projects were visited in two countries: Botswana and Zambia. Country visits included

meetings with the Ministries of Trade and focal points, regional trade organisation such as COMESA, representatives of the private sector and civil society and EU country Delegations.

A full list of individuals and institutions met during this Mid Term Evaluation of the SADC Trade Related Facility can be found in Annex 4.

The Findings of the Mid Term Evaluation of SADC Trade Related Facility are structured into three Sections that correspond to the assessment criteria specified in the ToRs. Section 1 focuses on the relevance of the original project concept and on the quality of project design. Section 2 presents an assessment of the effectiveness of project results in assisting the beneficiaries. This will be followed in Section 3 by the assessment of the efficiency of project implementation to date including a summary of the project's history from inception to the current time and an analysis of the problems encountered.

Findings

1. Relevance

1.1 Quality of design and logical framework

The quality of the analyses of lessons learnt from past experience, and of sustainability issues.
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The conceptualisation of the TRF is based on a number of lessons from the long-standing assistance by the EU and other International Cooperation Partners (ICP) to regional economic integration in SADC and other RECs. Lessons include SADC's limited capacity to absorb resources of EU support and the lack of linkages between the National and Regional Indicative Programmes (as mentioned in the TRF Action Fiche, p. 2). TRF, which seeks to provide support to the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol and the EPA (as a regional trade agreement), is basically aiming to implement the regional integration aspirations of SADC (countries) at national level – a clear translation of the need to link stronger regional with national levels.

The focus of the TRF on Member State implementation of STP and EPA obligations is important and timely. The TRF programme is consistent with the trade policy and programme frameworks of SADC and the EU within which it is placed. Through its two windows it is supportive of these programmes and policies.

Lessons have been learnt in particular from the Regional Integration Support Mechanism (RISM), a support mechanism for COMESA Member States to implement regional obligations (ongoing since 2007). Pertinent lessons include:

1. A rigid regional framework of regional indicators was applied to each country in its Performance Assessment Framework (PAF). This proved to be inappropriate for the variety of highly national circumstances. While some Member States had for long achieved most or all of the regional indicators, for others an achievement of one or two would be remarkable.
2. National allocations were fixed. This prevented a degree of competition among Member States for funds. The security of funding reduced incentives to submit high-quality proposals.
3. The RISM undertook its own evaluations. This lack of any external evaluation reduced critical scrutiny and is incompatible with principles of good management governance.
4. Approved projects were often found to have little relation to COMESA's regional integration agenda and the national obligations emanating from regional agreements. Rather, projects often reflected entirely priorities at national level.
5. RISM staff had multiple and conflicting roles. In practice they were heavily involved in the preparation of country submissions. At the same time, the same staff evaluated these project proposals.

Each of these experiences and lessons has informed the conceptualisation of TRF:

1. Its indicators are developed at the national level, i.e. at the project level. They emanate from the respective project submissions, rather than being uniform for all countries.
2. Allocations to countries are not fixed, but only indicative, i.e. they can be changed, if not all countries appear likely to make use of some or all of their indicative funds, or if the quality of their submissions is regarded as inadequate.
3. The evaluation of TRF is not done by the programme itself, but externally, through independent consultants contracted by the EU (in the form of two mid-term evaluations, one final).
4. Specific windows that promote regional integration and SADC's agenda (STP and EPA) are set. Within these, fields where proposals are eligible are prescribed. This is to ensure that the activities under TRF indeed promote SADC's agenda of regional economic integration.
5. Short-term experts (STE) are employed to assist Member States in project development, rather than having the FSU staff - although these are still to support project preparation.

However, some of these features of TRF are in practice little different from RISM. For example, Member States proposals of TRF do also not necessarily give much prominence to the aim of regional integration.

The idea to introduce competition among countries as a way to increase quality is questionable. It would be likely to lead to capture of funds by higher capable Member States at the costs of the least capable countries. This would fly in the face of the higher needs for technical assistance by the least capable Member States.

In practice, the principle of competition was not applied in TRF, although it was part of the design. For the above mentioned reasons, and in the current situation in the region, this was a good decision.

On another note, there are other, more positive, lessons for TRF that can be taken from RISM (see below in recommendations).

The quality of the problem analysis and the programme intervention logic and logical framework matrix, appropriateness of the objectively verifiable indicators of achievement.

The logical framework (LF) of the Inception Report is a slightly further developed logical framework of the Contribution Agreement. The framework is reasonable in terms of the relevance of overall and specific objectives and the relation to the expected results. The list of expected outputs, however, is too long and includes issues that can only be exemplary, as they depend on the actual project proposals.

The limited focus of the EPA window on implementation of obligations emanating from a signed agreement and on monitoring restricts the eligibility in two ways. First, it excluded the negotiation stage, which lasted longer than expected (although the delays could have been

anticipated based on past experience). In this way it delayed and restricted formulation of country applications. This also meant that the hoped-for complementarity of TRF and REIS could not materialize as yet. Second, even after the signing of an EPA this year, important areas of negotiations remain (most importantly on trade in services). These will also require technical assistance. In fact, the trade in services is increasingly overtaking that in goods, and support will be vital.

The OVI are discussed below in 1.2

The quality of the identification of key stakeholders and target groups and of institutional capacity issues.

The identification of stakeholders is quite generic, rather than empirical. However, it is rather obvious who the key stakeholders are. TRF targets the correct stakeholders to work with, namely the regulating agencies and the private sector. Furthermore, TRF builds on previous support programmes and experiences targeting and working with the same stakeholders.

However, although the private sector is supposed to be a stakeholder, it does not play a major role as active partners in designing, executing or benefiting from country applications. The lack of a reference point for the private sector in the SADC Secretariat restricts its ability to strengthen the role of the private sector. Recommendations are made to enhance the role of the private sector.

Institutional capacity building features highly in most country applications, though most of the planned actions concentrate on training. However, individual capacity building is not the same as the building of institutional capacities. As long as institutional structures are not developed, individual training is not likely to achieve much in terms of institutional capacity building.

The stakeholder participation in the design and in the management/implementation of the programme, the level of local ownership, absorption and implementation capacity.

The conceptualisation of TRF bases largely on two preparatory studies and communication and collaboration between the SADC Secretariat and the EUD in Gaborone. The Member State stakeholders were only involved in the latest stage of TRF design.

Within the Member States, stakeholders were generally highly involved in the development of country applications, once Member States were informed about the process by FSU. However, the employment of short-term experts limited in some cases the degree of national stakeholder ownership and the scope of capacity building.

The view of interviewed Member State representatives on the role of short-term experts is mixed. While some appreciated their work (saying that without external experts they would not have been able to produce applications), others stated that the work was unsatisfactory in not presenting their interest appropriately. Unavoidably, external consultants come with their own conceptions of needs and requirements of client countries. In countries that formulate their own applications, it is certain that they fully own the developed projects and identify with them. In the case of the TRF, only one country (Zambia) decided to dispense with the

possibility to make use of external expertise. They did so in order to ensure full ownership and to meet national requirements.

The less external experts are familiar with the national circumstances, the higher is the danger that their advice does not meet national requirements. This danger is not eliminated through consultations. Some countries feel that the use of experts will increase their chances to receive funding and are willing to accept possible drawbacks of the assistance given. The fact that the client governments are not involved in the selection of the experts increases the danger of inappropriate advice.

The experience of the RISM in this regard is informative. RISM also provides the option for the use of short term experts for the formulation of applications. The selection of the experts is left to the countries. This appears superior to the practice of TRF that selects the consultants.

Another striking difference is that only one quarter of the RISM beneficiary countries makes use of external expertise. This rate has been declining over the years of RISM implementation. This experience supports the interpretation of some countries that there is a degree of pressure on the applying countries in TRF to use external expertise. However, this is not a general experience: some countries have made good use of the short-term consultants.

Another drawback of the use of external experts has been their predominant use to write the country applications, rather than to empower the countries to write such applications. The purpose of the technical assistance in this context then becomes to replace missing capacities in the Member States rather than building those capacities. In the interviews and country visits no evidence was found that the capacity of beneficiaries to write applications has increased through the process. In light of the limited life-span of TRF (contrasting with RISM) and the kick-in of the D+3, however, the high use of short term experts in TRF may have been unavoidable.

The quality of the analysis of strategic options, of the justification of the recommended implementation strategy, and of management and coordination arrangements.
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Documents do not show that other strategic options have been considered to the chosen demand-driven approach. However, this approach is firmly based on regional and international experience.

In general, the Operational Guidelines are appropriate. Some weaknesses are mentioned under specific headlines below.

Furthermore, awareness raising activities, visibility and capacity building in Member States (e.g. training of focal points) are planned for the first year. This is fine. Awareness raising activities and capacity building, especially of the focal points have been undertaken. However, not an entire year should have been reserved exclusively for these preparatory activities. The first call for applications should have been planned within the second half of the first year (the original date foreseen was even much earlier, but had to be postponed in the absence of a signed addendum on the Operational Guidelines).

The Action Fiche does not define requirements and a timeline for the Inception Report of the TRF, which is appropriate. But that these are not defined either in the service tender has proven to be a weakness. The report was only delivered after 3 and a half months and with draft communication and M&E plans.

The governance structure is provided by the Steering Committee. However, according to the Action Fiche, its role is limited to 'discussing and approving project proposals submitted by Member States and to review progress and the work of the FSU' (p.4). The Operational Guidelines provide it a broader role: It is the 'governance structure at the most senior level to provide oversight and strategic guidance to the operations of the Facility (p.5). It is to review the overall effectiveness of the TRF and ensure transparency of all processes.

This role requires that its members are informed about all issues that go beyond purely day to day management matters. This information should include quarterly reports and the Inception Report. However, practice has been at odds with this function. For example, the Inception Report has not been discussed by and approved by the Steering Committee.

There are two problems with membership of the Steering Committee: First, it consists of 15 members. 9 of them are full members - 3 from trade ministries of the Member States, 3 from non-state actors, and 3 from the SADC Secretariat. This number is too high for an effective oversight committee. It is indeed important to share information with the bodies represented by the members (Member States, non-state actors, other International Cooperation Partners). However, it is not merely the function of a Steering Committee to be informed. Second, the membership of Member States is rotating. This conflicts with the need for members to gain and benefit from memory over time.

It is thus recommended that in a meeting of all Member State focal points the needs and characteristics of an efficient oversight body for the project need to be explained. One of the needs of an effective oversight body is a stable and small (5-7) membership. Only a continuous membership over the lifetime of the programme will ensure the build-up of knowledge and increasing experience that is needed for effective governance. The rotation of Member State representatives in the Steering Committee carries the risk that new members do not have the necessary knowledge to effectively scrutinize the TRF progress. At a meeting of all actual and potential Member State representatives these should agree on two of them to be members in the Steering Committee for the duration of TRF.

Membership could include: two representatives from trade ministries of Member States, two from non-state actors, two from SADC Secretariat (all of them voting except for the manager). This could be the Task Manager, if the above recommendation that this person leads the FSU is accepted. S/he would report, but have no voting rights. Another representative of SADC Secretariat (outside of TIFI) would be a voting member. The EU would continue as an observer. The Rapporteur should be the FSU Team Leader. In the view of -participants of the Steering Committee, the role of ICP in the Steering Committee has not proven as useful, as they reportedly hardly contribute to discussions. Instead, intensifying communication and possibly collaboration can increase the role and usefulness of TRF, and possibly programmes and projects of other ICP. However, that is a different role than steering TRF.

The principle of decision making on the basis of consensus risks building social pressure and undermining critical and independent thinking. However, these are vital for an effective oversight function.

The Chairperson of the Steering Committee is one of its three SADC Secretariat members (Operational Guidelines, p. 6). In practice, this role is taken up by the TIFI Directorate. This is inappropriate - the functions of TRF management (TIFI directorate) and oversight must be clearly separated in systems of good management. Management and execution of the TRF are subject to the oversight of the Steering Committee. The Chairperson of the Committee must emanate from either the Member State or the Non-State Actor representatives.

It should be added to the Operational Guidelines that the Chairperson must not be part of the management of the TRF. Generally, Steering Committee members of the TRF management should not have voting power - as explained above; management should be scrutinized by the Steering Committee.

The indicative calendar of the call for applications (Operational Guidelines, pp. 21/22) provides a time frame with ambitious, very tight deadlines. For example, the Steering Committee will meet within 10 days after its members have received the technical evaluation reports of the evaluation committee. This deadline, like some others, does not seem reasonable. Only deadlines that are realistic, considered as fair by all, and when all concerned parties commit to them, will be effective and useful.

Other issues related to the management and coordination aspects of the programme are discussed under the following evaluation question.

The realism in the choice and quantity of inputs (financial, human and administrative resources).
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The key executive arm of the TRF (the central organ that spearheads all the executive functions of the TRF) is the FSU (Operational Guidelines, p. 4). It has to facilitate the applications of Member States for TRF resources and their successful use. In addition to the tasks of the FSU, its institutional relationship is critical.

The TRF is to assist the TIFI Directorate. While it is institutionally embedded in TIFI, it is not part of it in terms of line management, but has a separate management. At the same time, it depends on its approvals for its technical work. This is a potential source of administrative delays. To maximise its efficiency more autonomy in its technical decision-making would be necessary, so that it can operate without needing to revert continuously back to the TIFI Director for guidance. A degree of managerial autonomy does not have to go at the cost of ownership. The latter can be ensured through full and rapid information and close interaction. Close cooperation and interaction between the TRF FSU and TIFI and other relevant staff is not fostered through the present bureaucratic process that has delayed the progress of TRF.

The direct link to TIFI is a Task Manager (TM). S/he should have easy access to the TIFI's Director and a high decision making power on technical issues. The employment of the Task Manager on a project basis, and the lack of well-defined terms of reference limit this possibility. Ideally, the Task Manager would be a line staff of TIFI. The Task Manager could, in the enlarged role, also be leading the REIS project as it is closely related and complementary to TRF. The position should be free of other responsibilities.

In the description of its functions in the Action Fiche, the FSU's substantive work (advice, support, evaluation) is underemphasized, while administrative tasks are overemphasized (in the presence of a lack of decision competence). In particular, the Operational Guidelines excludes the FSU member who has assisted the Member States in preparation of its submission. This reflects a misunderstood lesson from RISM. While the practice of RISM to have the same staff develop and then evaluate country submissions is inappropriate, it is entirely different for the respective staff to be part of an evaluation committee.

As full part of a committee, the FSU expert will share information, provide advice and also participate in decision making. The Operational Guidelines provide concrete criteria for decision making and thus objectivise the process and minimise the danger of undue influence.

The evaluation process should be seen as a professional process based on objective criteria. Members should be selected according to the professional expertise needed for specific proposals. Quality reporting and transparency will help to minimize the risk of undue processes.

The design of the FSU contains three long term experts. The ToRs of the key experts and of short term expertise contain their performance objectives, education and training, general professional experience and skills, and specific professional experience.

In the ToRs of the Team Leader (TL)/Project Manager the following concerns arise:

- The TL is expected to work closely with the Task Manager, on a daily basis. This assumes availability of the Task Manager and physical closeness.
- No specific background and expertise on international trade and specifically on regional trade integration is required. However, it is a key function of the FSU to provide technical support. This should clearly include both support on managerial and substantive matters. Notably, substantive knowledge is required for a quality evaluation of country applications.

In the ToRs of Expert 2 (STP expert) it is significant that:

- The substantive experience requirements are higher than those of the TL. This carries the risk of conflict within the team. Appropriately, this position requires substantive knowledge of the STP.

In the ToRs of Expert 3 (EPA expert) it is significant that:

- No comparable substantive knowledge to Expert 2 is required. The EPA expert does not need to have any knowledge or experience with EPA (although it would be an advantage). It is not clear how this can ensure the substantive functions of this position. This includes advice on the preparation of applications, participation in the evaluation, assistance and advice during implementation (where required), and monitoring of implementation. These activities cannot be carried out effectively without specific knowledge on EPA modalities, going beyond trade knowledge.

Two recommendations follow from these findings: First, the countries should participate in the selection of STE. Second, STE should only be used where a specific substantial knowledge is required for the formulation of applications that is not available in the countries and that the FSU experts do not possess. The FSU experts have to play the crucial role to advise the Member States Focal Points on their applications. They are in the best position for this task. If there are needs for special technical knowledge that both the Member States and the FSU technical advisers do not have, then the Member States, with the assistance of FSU technical advisers, should prepare written motivations for the employment of STE and submit for the decision of the TRF Task Manager, who consults with the expertise in SADC Secretariat.

The appropriateness of the recommended monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

It is a vital function of TRF, and particularly its FSU, to monitor and evaluate its work. Accordingly this is part of the ToRs for its staff. However, only a rudimentary M&E system is provided in the Inception Report. According to the Action Fiche, this would be part of the work in the TRF's first year. Nevertheless, the Results Framework and M&E System are still in a draft form. The latest draft, a short-term expert input, is overambitious in its monitoring aims. It provides very generic indicators and exemplary indicators instead of advising on the existing country applications. This reflects little understanding of the concrete project and its progress.

The M&E of TRF must be distinguished from the M&E of country programmes. These country programmes each have their own specific Performance Assessment Frameworks (PAF) that measure their specific activities and outputs and that include measurable indicators.

The TRF monitoring, however, must limit itself to indicators on the country programmes that measure generally their activities. Two indicators are available: the progress of spending (% of allocated funds spent) and progress of work (i.e. % of activities carried out, % of PAF indicators met). Evaluation studies that look deeper at the impacts of TRF programmes to STP and EPA implementation could be carried out once the implementation of TRF programmes has progressed and their outputs are foreseeable. They would be separate from the regular monitoring process and complement it.

The M&E system of the TRF must be seen in the overall context. It should contribute to the overall M&E approach of SADC. The organisation has a respective policy, the 'SADC Policy for Strategy Development, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation' (SPME) that was approved by its Council of Ministers in 2012. However, an overall integrated M&E system that tracks the progress in regional integration in terms of the agreed agenda of SADC is still in its infancy.

Presently, the highest level of M&E is the monitoring of the implementation of some of its protocols. A baseline study for the STP was done in 2015 with an update in 2016. The results of the STP can and should contribute to future updates. However, the TRF and the country programmes it supports should at this stage limit themselves to the monitoring of activities and outputs. It should refrain from attempting to monitor indirect and longer term outcomes and impacts. These can normally not be directly attributed to TRF interventions. At a later stage of TRF implementation, when country project activities and outputs have progressed, an evaluation of the projects could aim to illuminate also their longer term results. The content

and quality of applications to TRF varies among countries. In future evaluations of applications the findings of the STP baseline study could be taken into account.

1.2 Appropriateness of the objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs)

The extent to which stated objectives in the TRF programme correctly address the identified problems and social needs, clarity and internal consistency of the stated objectives.

Many of the OVIs in the Logical Framework of the Inception Report cannot be attributed directly to the activities and outputs of TRF. Examples are 'level of compliance in the implementation of STP commitments by SADC Member States' and 'level of intro-SADC trade'. They are outcome and impact indicators. They will be affected positively by TRF implementation, but also by a number of other factors. Indicators should be limited to those that are directly and solely affected by TRF implementation. They will be mainly activity and output indicators.

Other indicators are (wrongly) anticipating concrete project activities. Such indicators are, for instance, 'number of countries with automated customs clearance systems' and 'number of one-stop border post projects developed and implemented'.

Some indicators are in the result column, rather than the indicator column (p.2 of logical framework).

In sum, many indicators are not SMART, i.e. they are not **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound. For example, the indicator 'status of institutions, policies and regulatory frameworks in Member States to implement SADC-EU EPA commitments' is neither specific, nor measurable, nor relevant. Any indicator should meet each of these requirements of being smart in terms of the 5 criteria discussed above. Only such indicators have the high quality that is required to monitor the TRF.

Overall, the Logical Framework has too many indicators. Instead, they should be few and of high quality, i.e. smart (as defined by its five characteristics).

1.3 Analysis of assumptions and risks at design stage

The extent to which stated objectives in the TRF programme correctly address the identified problems and social needs, clarity and internal consistency of the stated objectives.

Stated objectives address identified problems. The STP window focuses on implementation of STP obligations, which will remain a key topic beyond the project lifetime. Liberalising regional trade is certainly the core of regional economic integration and promises a boost to economic activities, incomes and wealth throughout the region.

Indisputably, industrial development is vital for structural economic change and deepening economic development and longer term economic growth. However, it is not best promoted on the regional level. Rather, it is primarily a concern of national economic policy.

Instead, it should be a concern of regional policy and possibly intervention to alleviate and counter potential negative side effects of STP implementation triggered by unequal development in the region (polarisation). The fear of such concerns is a major factor slowing down STP implementation. It will also slow down EPA implementation. Measures in this field should be considered for eligibility under the two windows.

While the Member States level support for implementing STP and EPA is appropriate, country applications will not automatically also promote regional integration. This concern is not given attention in the project documentation.

Risks have largely been taken into account in the Action Fiche and the Inception Report. The AF also provides for potential measures of risk mitigation. However, a sub-risk of the risk pertaining to the SADC Secretariat's capacity to manage the project has not been given enough attention, in particular the risk that SADC's organisational structures and procedures may slow down considerably the pace of implementation.

Two of the assumptions have been unduly optimistic: First, that EPA negotiation would be finalised in due time - experience rather informed that delays were likely. Second, that commitment of Member States towards SADC regional integration would remain strong. However, as elsewhere, inward-looking trade strategies were already foreseeable if not gaining ground at the time of project conceptualisation. Risk mitigating and countering measures could have been planned, as discussed above.

The extent to which the nature of the problems originally identified has changed.

There were no high degree changes in relevant international trade since project conceptualisation which would have required changes in project focus. Rather, processes relevant for STP and in particular EPA implementation have been delayed.

The delay in EPA negotiations, as mentioned above, could have been anticipated.

The degree of flexibility and adaptability to facilitate rapid responses to changes in circumstances.

In view of most Member States focal points, flexibility and adaptability concerning country preferences have worked reasonably well. However, there are concerns about the slow progress of the programme and little communication about the reasons for delays. In the view of many, not sufficient steps have been taken to speed up project progress. Furthermore, not enough information has been provided to stakeholders, and only irregularly.

An intranet (website with limited access) for key stakeholders (country focal points, FSU experts, involved SADC staff) should be established that provides live updates of the status of each country programme. This would both ease and simplify communication and provide information that is constantly available.

It remains to be seen how adaptability and flexibility of FSU will turn out in implementation phase.

1.4 Coherence with current or on-going initiatives

The TRF programme coherence with current/on-going initiatives.

The EU (mainly with its SADC-REIS and COMESA-RISM programmes), the British Department for international Development (DfiD), the German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the United States' Agency for International Development (USAID) are major International Development Partners in the area of trade and regional integration. Their recent, current and planned programmes are complementary to those of TRF.

The Regional Economic Integration Support (REIS) programme is designed to assist SADC to increase regional integration in the economic and trade sectors through enhanced cooperation between Member States. Among its focus areas are the STP implementation and negotiation and implementation of EPA. Thus, REIS' objectives are at least partly the same of those of TRF. By operating on the regional level, REIS complements TRF, which operates at the Member State level.

The RISM is to support Member Countries of COMESA to participate more fully in the COMESA, EAC and Tripartite Free Trade Areas and COMESA and EAC Customs Unions and Common Market with minimum disruption to public expenditure commitments as well as enabling them to implement economic reform programmes in the context of regional integration.

DfiD supported the Trade Mark Southern Africa (TMSA) programme (2009-14) that promoted regional trade and integration in Southern and Eastern Africa, working with COMESA, the East African Community (EAC) and SADC, as well as business and civil society organisations. The programme provided technical assistance, project preparation, and capacity building.

Currently DfiD prepares the programme 'Strengthening Trade for Inclusive Development in Southern Africa (STRIDE)'. It has two purposes: to reduce the time and costs of trade for both formal and informal traders in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, and to make more evidence available to policy makers across Southern Africa on the poverty and growth impacts of trade development.

GIZ implements its programme "Cooperation for the Enhancement of SADC Regional Economic Integration" (CESARE) that supports national and regional actors to strengthen regional economic integration in Southern Africa on the basis of regional protocols and policy decisions. These include the STP and the protocols on finance and investment and on trade in services.

USAID prepares to resume its "Southern Africa Trade Hub", aiming to increase international competitiveness, intra-regional trade and food security in Southern Africa. In particular, the programme is complementary to REIS that also supports STP and EPA, but on a regional level. Although this programme, REIS, is scheduled to end, it may be extended. Further support to regional economic integration in the next EDF is also expected. The other International Cooperation Partners mentioned above are also planning to continue their

engagement in the sector well beyond their current projects and programmes (USAID does not have an ongoing activity, but prepares one).

There is a great potential of mutual fertilization through cooperation, proper sequencing, peer-learning. For this to materialise, there needs to be an increased sharing of information and planning, possibly more systematic and regular meetings. Currently, possibilities of cooperation are not fully utilised.

Such cooperation needs to grow organically and depends on the genuine interest of those managing the various programmes and projects - it cannot be imposed. The load of reporting and other management requirements will certainly be a limiting factor. The evaluators noted that the knowledge about TRF is quite limited among managers of other programmes and projects. So the first step to stimulate possible interaction would be a more liberal sharing of information on the TRF programme activities in the planned country programmes.

When this is reciprocated by other international cooperation partners, common areas of activities (country, sector) can be identified. As a next step, lessons could be shared. A first step will be e-mail communication, possibly followed by bilateral skype calls. The FSU team leader could start this process. If some momentum can be built, a skype conference could be held, as an effective alternative to inviting to meetings. As reported, the participation of representatives of other programmes in the region in the Steering Committee meetings has not been efficient. The TIFI Thematic Group can be used as a possible alternative platform to identify those synergies between ICP support programmes.

2. Effectiveness

2.1 Progress towards achievement of planned resources

The design and implementation of the TRF Programme poses some critical challenges in terms of measuring the progress made in achieving expected results or planned benefits. To start with, the programme design did not set out appropriate indicators against which progress in achieving results could be measured. Secondly, the progress made towards achieving the expected results of the programme are mainly to be measured through assessing the implementation rate and quality of the planned activities under each expected result.

However, the planned activities of the programme identify only the type of activities and do not contain specific numbers of technical supports to be provided, since due to the demand driven approach, the number and focus of technical support to be provided under the TRF programme are to be determined by the number and nature of the requests to be submitted by beneficiaries. This precluded the setting of specific quantitative and qualitative targets in relation to the technical and capacity building support to be provided under each expected result, which in turn, made it difficult to compare between actual and planned results and benefits. Nevertheless, it is too early to determine the actual impact of the TRF Programme because the implementation of the projects has not yet started.

In this context, the evaluation of effectiveness has to focus on the status of submitted project requests and on proxy indicators of progress, especially fund utilization as a measure of performance within the planned expenditure. But the disbursements are only foreseen by January 2017.

According to interviews with SADC Secretariat staff, the FSU does not have sufficient staff; FSU needs a dedicated finance officer and a dedicated procurement officer. Both of them would work at SADC Secretariat on TRF during the implementation of the projects in the Member States. It is not clear if both officers would work exclusively on TRF issues. The two officers are not justified because their workload will not be sufficient working only for TRF, while their salaries would be fully supported by the TRF Programme. The SADC Secretariat can fulfil these two functions.

The level of the workload for the FSU technical advisers shows that the FSU has enough staff to perform properly. The delays that occurred mainly during the first year of the FSU are due to two reasons: the first one is the limited technical capacity of FSU technical advisers in terms of management skills and trade issues skills and the second one is the lack of response of TIFI Department for the approval of FSU reports. It is unfortunate that, as mentioned in the Operational Guidelines, the Member States have the possibility to require specific technical expertise to work on the applications developed at Member States level. This technical expertise should have been provided by the FSU technical advisers as to avoid conflict of interests being the judge and the jury. It is difficult to assess the capacity of FSU technical advisers to write applications because they never did it and it is not planned in the Operational Guidelines.

The FSU technical advisers write reports such as inception report, progress reports, and annual report (even if the first- and only - annual report was of poor quality). The FSU technical advisors produce too many reports such as monthly reports; however, technical reports are not produced by the FSU technical advisers but by short-term experts. The FSU technical advisers did not have the capacity to work on the procurement guidelines or the procurement capacity assessment guidelines for each Member State. The FSU technical advisers should also be more involved in the project applications, providing strong assistance to identify projects and guidance to people in the Member States, to train them to write their own project proposals.¹

The monitoring provided by the FSU technical advisers during the implementation of the projects in Member States can be organized by phone or emails.

It is important to point out that, according to the minutes of the Steering Committee and comments from its members, the Steering Committee is not active enough and does not fully control the work of the FSU

In terms of the current status of project activities, most of the reports for the adoption of the projects in Member States have been endorsed or will be endorsed during the next Steering Committee². It is important to take into consideration that there is no implementation of projects in Member States at the end of this Mid Term Evaluation of SADC Trade Related Facility.

¹ Conflicting opinions in the TIFI Directorate and the FSU because it is included in the operational guidelines which was a mistake, the FSU technical advisers have to be more involved in the project proposals.

² The Steering Committee took place on 7-8 November 2016 and indeed recommended that the proposals of all but 1 countries, as submitted, would be adopted in a financing agreement by the SADC Secretariat. As such, the FSU is working towards finalization and signature of the first financing agreements between SADC and the relevant Member States by beginning of 2017 for implementation to start in February/March 2017.

2.2 Assessment of delivery of support and beneficiaries satisfaction

Whether intended beneficiaries participated in the intervention

During the field visit in Botswana, beneficiaries interviewed mentioned that even if the Operational Guidelines indicate that the provision of STE for proposal development is a demand driven process, the FSU technical advisers strongly recommended to the technical people who had identified projects that it was more convenient for them if a short-term expert develops their project proposal. More convenient in a sense that the work will be done faster and would have better chances to be accepted. When interviewed, the technical people informed that they could write the project proposal because they have the technical knowledge, but that probably they would have spent more time in developing their project proposal.³

The technical people in Botswana did not play any role in the supervision of the short-term experts. They met the short-term expert once during two or three hours to brief him on the project, after which the short-term expert left to write the project proposal without working together with the technical people. At the end of the short-term assignment, the short-term expert presented his work to the technical people for comments but this was not enough to really improve the quality of the outputs. Botswana officers should have taken on their own initiative to work on their own assignment.

In conclusion, the technical people did not have the benefit of capacity building and they lost the ownership of their project.

In Zambia, there was no short-term expert because the Ministry of Trade evaluated the use of short-term experts and came to the conclusion that it was better for them to do it in order to ensure that their needs and priorities were fully respected in their application. They decided this, in spite of their own staff shortages. However it should be taken into account that RISM has been implemented since 2006 and in the process reviewed, where Zambia Ministry staff were learning, could have utilised STEs in the process and probably were lagging behind just to submit their application.

Whether the planned benefits have been delivered and received, as perceived by stakeholders in Member States

The delay in appointing the FSU from October 2014 to January 2015 and in approving their Operational Guidelines at the end of December 2015 had a negative impact on the implementation of the projects in Member States.

The FSU can be made more responsive to the needs of the Member States beneficiaries by improving the timeliness of responses.

The delays have brought a number of problems, one being that the TRF programme did not disburse any funds to Member States – in the absence of signed project agreements with the Member States - to implement their projects after almost two years of when the FSU started.

³ Conflicting opinions in the TIFI Directorate and the FSU, the TRF Programme is based on demand driven from the Member States. TIFI/FSU point to the existence of written requests from the Member States that STE would be required to support writing of project proposals.

An addendum N°2 to the Contribution Agreement – Change of cut-off dates for call for Applications under Trade Related Facility had to be signed on 30th May 2016 to rationalise the deadlines and allow for an increased number of deadlines in order to respect the varying speed with which countries were preparing project proposals.

In our view the delays are due to a combination of four main factors:

- The slow response time of the FSU in responding to applications caused by a number of factors already discussed previously in the report.
- The complexity and inflexibility of SADC procedures.
- The approval process of projects and sub-projects by the Technical Evaluation Committee and the Steering Committee leading to decisions being delayed.
- Inefficiencies in Member States in processing applications.

SADC seems to prefer regional experts to perform long-term or short-term missions. It is the case for FSU long-term technical advisers: one from Zimbabwe, one from Namibia and one from Swaziland, and probably the technical adviser who will replace the EPA adviser from Swaziland would be from Zimbabwe.⁴ The evaluation team found that the CVs of the FSU technical advisers do not fully correspond to the experience and qualifications required in the FSU ToR. The CVs do not meet the limited requirements that are mentioned in the ToR and the technical advisers are not qualified enough for the FSU positions.

The recruitment of the short-term experts seems to correspond more on competence criteria. The geographical origin of the short-term experts is more diversified. Nevertheless, during the presentation of the draft final report a SADC officer mentioned that it is more efficient to have a short-term expert coming from the same Member State where the project is; the country given as an example was Lesotho. The main problem associated to that use of local expert is that the local short-term expert can get some pressure from the authorities requiring more than what is necessary for the project.

3. Efficiency

The quality of day-to-day management

3.1 Management arrangements

The FSU has worked closely with the consultants during the MTE and has provided their reports. The MTE recommends that the FSU adopts a specific format for planning, monitoring and controlling project activities and spending for future reporting and management information.

⁴ Conflicting opinions in the TIFI Directorate and the FSU: LTE and STE are recruited based on experience and qualifications not on the basis of nationality. The STE used under TRF included experts from the region, as well as experts from the continent and Europe.

The consultants reviewed available FSU reports. A large number of FSU reports were collected. The Team Leader is spending too much time writing requested reports; which can become a big issue when the implementation of projects starts on the ground.

The most important reports to be prepared by the Team Leader are:

- The Monthly Reports, the Quarterly Reports and the Annual Report which have to be presented to the TIFI Director and the Steering Committee for comments and approval.
- The Annual Work Plan which needs to be updated according to the performance of the FSU and also presented to the TIFI Director and the Steering Committee for comments and approval.

The monthly reports contain detailed analysis of performance to date, by component and reporting period, as well as projected activities but the information can be included in the progress reports. These reports are not needed on a monthly basis.

The evaluation team found that the FSU technical advisers are participating in too many TIFI meetings. It remains unclear how this is directly related to TRF's work. On several instances during the evaluation mission, the evaluators were informed that one or more of the FSU technical advisers were not available in the FSU offices as they were attending TIFI meetings.⁵

The FSU programme has to provide more assistance and guidance to Member States concerning:

- Design and identification of the projects.
- Preparation of an operational monitoring system for the implementation of the projects discussed with the Member States

3.2 Quality of operational management

FSU must operate as a PMU, which means that the technical experts have to be more involved in the design and guidance in the Member States to identify projects.

In a way, in Botswana, the FSU technical advisers strongly influenced the demand-driven approach and recommended to the country to have short-term experts to speed up the process in the approval of the projects.

However, some Member States like Mauritius took their own decision to have a short-term expert in order to save time and taking into account that they have only few people to develop a project proposal. Zambia decided to dispense with a short-term expert, the FSU technical

⁵ Conflicting opinions in the TIFI Directorate and the FSU : TIFI/FSU are of the opinion that is crucial for the FSU advisors to be embedded in TIFI and have a good overview of SADC's policies and progress in economic integration to be able to serve the interests of TRF and the Member States. TIFI/FSU refute the assumption that FSU technical advisors are involved in TIFI management and/or work outside the scope of TRF.

adviser providing backstopping advice

The consultants understand the present situation but the right way for FSU to operate as any PMU was to provide direct support to Member States in the design and the identification of the project, and prepare them to write their own proposals. In most similar projects or programmes on trade, the technical advisers operate that way.

In any PMU working on a project similar to the SADC TRF, PMU technical advisers are identifying projects with the technical people in the countries, providing guidance and follow-up to help them to write project proposals. FSU technical advisers are working in a different way, sending short-term experts to write the project proposals. The FSU operates more like a consulting firm providing short-term experts and airlines tickets. If the FSU technical advisers were providing assistance and guidance to Member States to train people to write their own project proposals, there would not be any conflict of interest because they would not have to evaluate the project proposals written by STEs. In that case they could be members of the Technical Evaluation Committee and evaluate the project proposals prepared and presented by the technical people in the Member States.

By October 2016, the FSU had received ten projects from seven Member States; some of the projects have several sub-projects. The project in Zimbabwe is still at ToR's stage, four projects in Mozambique are still at a draft stage level and the three projects in Tanzania need to be reviewed. Only two projects have been endorsed by the Steering Committee, one in Lesotho and the other one in Zambia and none of them have already been implemented. The Steering Committee held on 7th November discussed eight projects for approval.

No funds have been disbursed to Member States taking into consideration that no project has already started its implementation. This raises the question if the project will have the time to disburse the remaining funds before the end of the project in 2019, assessing what is being done in the meantime to prepare the disbursement of the funds does not seem to be effective on FSU side and SADC side. According to several comments from SADC Secretariat Officers, they are not yet structured for the monitoring and the disbursement of the funds. The required documents which have to be prepared by the FSU technical advisers for the implementation of the projects in each Member State will take some time and at the time of the Mid-Term review no document was ready taking into consideration that the first implementations of projects were supposed to start the first months of 2017.

The effective implementation of the FSU started on 5th January 2015 with the establishment of the FSU. The TRF programme includes the recruitment of short-term experts, the proposals for the projects prepared by the short term experts, the design and coordination of annual work plans and reports, the meetings organised by TIFI, the FSU administration and, when the implementation of the projects will start, the monitoring of the technical execution of the projects (in the Member States)

The ToRs did not make it explicit how the assessment of the number of staff required to complete the task was made. The issue of what is the most appropriate staffing level of the FSU has been contested by the SADC Secretariat. According to the comments received during the interviews, SADC Secretariat would like FSU to recruit a procurement expert or a finance expert, even both. They believe FSU to be understaffed. Based on comparison of the FSU with others elsewhere, we do not agree with this and consider that the FSU has the right number of technical advisers to perform well.

It is also evident that a degree of flexibility is required amongst the FSU staff members, with a small team of only three technical advisers. The previous EPA technical adviser has to be replaced by a technical adviser who has strong experience in similar programmes on trade with implementation of projects in different countries, PMU management and experience in EPA. This technical adviser would have the objective to strengthen the FSU team in terms of management and capacity building due to lack of capacity in the current FSU management.

Technical trade capacities and capacities in design and project management are required to provide capacity building to the Member States, particularly taking into consideration that the level of capacity building required is different from one Member State to another one.

The current core staff of the FSU stipulated in the service contract comprises three experts (plus an administrative assistant). Given the current level of endorsed projects and those that will be endorsed in the next Steering Committee meeting, the FSU needs to be strengthened. The profile of the new technical adviser replacing the EPA technical adviser with the required experience (described above), will fill in the limited capabilities in the FSU for capacity building on project management. The FSU technical advisers have to be involved in technical monitoring during the implementation of the projects at national level.

3.3 The Role of the Steering Committee

The main responsibility of the Steering Committee is to supervise overall TRF project implementation, to provide periodic guidance on the overall direction of the TRF programme

Evidence given by key stakeholders and beneficiaries suggests that the role played by the Steering Committee in the approval of projects and sub-projects has contributed to the delays in implementation. The first delay takes place at the level of the Technical Evaluation Committee; since once the proposals are received and administratively accepted, the dates for the technical evaluation are set over a period of time and documents distributed.

The second delay concerns the date planned for the Steering Committee; when again the technical people in the Member States have to wait for the final approval of the project by the Steering Committee. It can take at least two or three months between the finalisation of the project proposals and the final approval of those proposals.

According to two Steering Committee members, they have the feeling that the FSU technical advisers do not provide all information needed to monitor properly the FSU.

3.4 Programme monitoring

Quality of monitoring and awareness
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The FSU, in coordination with TIFI and the EUD, have also developed Operational Guidelines in 2015. These Guidelines describe the main objectives of the programme, the type of assistance available under the project, guidance on how to formulate a proposal and an application form.

Although the website is a useful tool, evidence drawn from the field visits suggests that it is not a vital link in the communication chain between Member States and the FSU.

Awareness of the project's services is more likely to be initiated through the network of regional trade related meetings and also from direct contact between the FSU and Ministries of Trade in Member States or regional trade organisation such as SADC Secretariat.

Despite the establishment of procedures and systems, there is clear evidence drawn from the files and the field visits that the processing time of projects and sub-projects has been, and still is, unacceptably slow. The Member States have been contacted mid last year to identify projects and prepare a concept note. The FSU proposed the assistance of short-term experts to write their reports one year later; they did not receive any news from the FSU during that time.

The time taken by the SADC Secretariat to recruit experts has to be reduced (between two and three months) as to improve the performance of the FSU in managing the TRF Programme.

4. Impact

Whether the activities of the TRF programme may contribute to larger results at the outcome and impact level, if possible supported with qualitative and quantitative data.

Impacts are long-term effects of interventions, in this case of the TRF interventions contributing to STP and EPA implementation, and in the wider sense to regional integration of the SADC Member States. Impact indicators measure the degree of integration reached vis-à-vis its different dimensions or objectives. Unlike activities and outputs that can be directly attributed to TRF interventions, these merely contribute to the above mentioned impacts. Such contributions can at best be estimated.

In the case of TRF, possible impacts of its interventions can only be very generally commented on, as no project has begun and not even all are planned. As far as the projects will eventually be implemented and indeed support STP and EPA implementation, they can have substantial contributions to outcomes and impacts in increased trade and thus also higher incomes and welfare.

5. Sustainability

Ownership of objectives and achievements. How far all stakeholders were consulted on the objectives from the outset?

The stakeholders have not been consulted on the objectives from the outset.

The matter of sustainability is difficult and complex. The success of the project would also depend on Member States giving the TRF process a high political priority and allocating sufficient human resources to implement the projects.

Strengthening regional economic communities in the monitoring on procurement and finance can also be identified as being pivotal to the success of the implementation of projects in Member States and to developing intra-regional trade in Member States.

Extensive coordination between the EU, SADC and Member States is also seen as an important assumption affecting the efficacy of the project.

Adequacy of the TRF programme budget for its purpose particularly phasing out prospects.

TRF programme as it is designed is by definition not sustainable; the initiatives and activities will only last as long as EU/SADC will provide financial resources. The Facility Support Unit (FSU) will close its doors in 2019. The issue is how to transfer the experience and knowledge accumulated towards appropriate and permanent bodies.

This means that the regional and national organisations, both public and private, should have the financial resources for implementing more projects and sustain the projects implemented funded by EU/SADC. The Member States as they benefit, they would have to start planning for future continuation of implementation of the projects in line with their National Development Programmes and as such ensure sustainability and also opportunities coming along with EPA implementation under EDF 11 and other programmes.

All public and private stakeholders need to own themselves the human and financial resources to deliver adequate trade policy work and this will not happen soon unless special financial support is provided by whatever agency.

The projects financed under TRF will have a sustainable impact on the implementation of EPA and STP if the projects are implemented as planned. We have to take into consideration the performance of the Member States.

As no project agreements are signed at present, it is premature to make a judgement on the sustainability of those activities as they cannot be assessed without knowledge of the factual implementation arrangements on the ground.

6. Visibility

The consultants will make an assessment of the programme strategy and activities in the field of visibility, information and communication, the results obtained and the impact achieved with these actions in Member States.

The Inception Report includes a visibility and communication plan. A more detailed communication and visibility strategy with its implementation plan is still under development. According to the Action Fiche, such a strategy should have been finalised in the first year of operation (2015). The above mentioned plan is very ambitious and presents a wide range of tools, including a website, events (awareness raising workshops and conferences), printed

material, and project identity products. The range looks over-ambitious and hard to deliver. A better alternative would be a smaller amount of high quality products.

Until now, the FSU has delivered awareness raising workshops, articles for the 'Inside SADC' newsletter and other media, flyers and banners have been produced. The awareness raising workshops were done successfully. They were planned in the Inception Report, as was the website and project identity products.

The website exists but its information is as yet limited. In addition to an introductory statement the website includes a notification note on commencement of the FSU, a template for submitting expressions of interest, and application form, and one briefing paper (on implementation issues of TRF).

Although visibility is planned to increase substantially once the country projects have started, more could have been done. The tight management regulations by SADC, while understandable in the sensitive environment of a multi-state organisation as SADC, appear to have prevented more transparency on TRF's activities. The visibility strategy should be rapidly finalised by the FSU Team Leader. It should be simplified, more modest and include measurable outputs and timelines. Although talks were held with the SADC public relation section, the TRF is not given enough prominence on its website.

7. Coherence and added value

7.1 Coherence of the TRF with the relevant EU strategies for Southern African Development Community and the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The TRF programme is consistent with the trade policy and programme frameworks of SADC and the EU within which it is placed. Through its two windows it is supportive of these programmes and policies.

Cross-cutting issues include environmental impacts and gender impacts according to the Action Fiche. However, these are not mentioned in the TRF technical assistance Inception Report. But some country applications for TRF refer to cross-cutting concerns of their trade or industry policies. For instance, Botswana's trade policy focuses on poverty reduction, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and youth integration. The other countries that mention attention to cross-cutting issues in their policy set-up are Namibia and Zambia. None of the provided country applications, however, address explicitly any of the cross-cutting issues mentioned in the Action Fiche.

There is the need to take into consideration these emerging issues as the projects are being implemented, to ensure alignment and coherence with international best practices

7.2 EU added value of the TRF both regarding its design and implementation

The linkages in project application and complementary to the country and regional development plans will actively complement individual Member States' own strategies in the region. At the design level, the project identification and formulation documents do not

elaborate particular mechanisms dedicated to such coordination. They do not indicate that meetings were held with EU delegations in the Member States.

It is a priority to plan and encourage appropriate reporting and visibility and emphasise more collaborative and sensitization activities to ensure achievement of suitable reporting, in anticipation of final evaluation.

Overall assessment

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), development oriented free trade agreements, are at the core of the EU's relations with developing countries, and specifically of the EU-SADC relationship. Six of the SADC Member States (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) signed an EPA with the EU in June 2016, after a long and protracted negotiation process (Angola has an option to join the agreement in future). The Agreement has been ratified by the SADC EPA Member States and entered into provisional application in October 2016. The EU-SADC EPA has the objective of supporting sustainable economic growth, diversification and expansion of the industrial base of the region through regional and global value chains, investment and opportunities.

TRF is an important programme with a high potential to accelerate the regional economic integration agenda of SADC. TRF addresses vital needs and constraints at the Member State level.

The design of the programme has taken up lessons from other programmes with similar objectives (support to Member States to implement obligations arising from agreements on SADC regional economic integration).

There are weaknesses in the design and difficulties in implementation, which have led to a less than satisfactory level of performance; these have been elaborated as part of the main findings.

The roles and tasks of the FSU are very wide and not well or differently understood by key stakeholders (including TIFI). In addition, FSU members are required to take part in SADC meetings that are not directly relevant to their work.

FSU technical advisers do not play key roles in supporting the Member States with their applications (all but one country made use of short term experts) and are not involved fully in the substantive evaluation. Their future role in implementation is unclear. In the view of most of the interviewed and visited Member States, the work of the short term experts has not been to full satisfaction.

Weakness of governance has been a major causing factor for delays in programme implementation and notably differences between often ambitious plans and the actual output.

The TRF has a clear duration. Thus, sustainability is not guaranteed. The capacities at the SADC Secretariat and the Member States to continue the support to STP and EPA implementation will remain limited.

Recommendations

Governance:

- As developed in the report, the role and function of the Steering Committee needs to be strengthened, so as to become a body that steers by its decisions, rather than mainly being informed. Such a Committee will be better able to ensure timeliness and high quality performance of the TRF and its FSU.
- The Steering Committee needs to be more comprehensively, timely and systematically informed. It needs to receive quarterly reports (technical and financial) on TRF performance and on its plans. However, it should not be involved in the TRF day to day management. The quarterly meetings, on the basis of quarterly report (including financial report), should concentrate on substantive discussions and decisions, rather than information sharing.
- The reports need to have a standard format and be concise.
- The SC membership should be reduced to be effective. Except for the EUD, the rapporteur and the supervised body (TIFI management), it should not have observing members. Rapporteur should be the FSU Team Leader.
- TIFI Directorate, the implementing body, should report, not have a voting membership in the Steering Committee.
- Decisions of the Steering Committee should be shared within the TRF network.
- The EUD in Botswana should continue to play an active role. The EU Delegations in the Member States where submissions are prepared and projects implemented should be invited to give their assessments to the Steering Committee. Although not having a formal role in TRF management, these assessments could also be shared with the management and the applicants.
- All relevant documentation, i.e. the quarterly reports and supporting documents, should be provided to Steering Committee members latest one week ahead of meetings.
- There should be no requirement for consensus in decisions (as prescribed in the Operational Guidelines, p. 7). The reasoning of decisions should be well documented and should be made according to majority. If there are dissenting minority views, they could be attached to the decision if requested.
- The meeting minutes should be result oriented. They should include the agenda, participants, and on each pending matter decisions, time lines and responsibilities.
- The timeframes of the Call for Applications in the Operational Guidelines (pp. 21-22) should be revisited: They need to be realistic, achievable, and all concerned stakeholders should commit themselves.

FSU:

- The reporting requirements for FSU should be reduced (currently it takes major time):
 - One page monthly report - on intranet.
 - Quarterly standard report (to TIFI and Steering Committee), ahead of the quarterly meetings.
 - Annual report.
 - These reports should be concise and according to a prescribed structure. They may be supported by documentation.
- The functions of the FSU should emphasize its substantive technical role, rather than an administrative function. The substantive functions should include support to Member States in preparation of applications, participation in their evaluation, advice on implementation of the projects where necessary and required, and monitoring implementation. The involvement of short term experts should not be necessary.
- The open EPA expert post should be filled with an expert with substantive EPA experience. Beyond support to possible additional applications to the EPA window, the implementation of respective projects and their monitoring will require expertise that is not available within the Secretariat.
- The FSU experts should participate in the two evaluation steps in cases where they have subject and/or country expertise. Decisions at both evaluation steps should be well documented in concise reports. A second factor to ensure (or at least reduce the risk of undue processes) is the decision making by groups and also with the EU as observer. Apart from that, it is not clear which conflict of interest of the FSU experts should arise. There are no monetary benefits for them from either positive or negative decisions.
- FSU is not directly accountable to the Steering Committee (as Operational Guidelines says on p. 4) - the latter is an oversight body. According to the Operational Guidelines (p. 4) the FSU is both accountable to the TIFI Directorate and to the SC. This is not sound in terms of managerial governance. Instead, the FSU should only be accountable to TIFI. The entire TRF programme, in turn is accountable to the SC, the oversight body.
- Less use should be made of short-term experts. Support to Member States should be made by FSU staff. The M&E framework and communication policy should be done in-house.
- The documentation system should be strengthened. Key documents (project document, Inception Report, quarterly reports) should be made available on an intranet.

Relation to TIFI:

- The TRF Task Manager needs to have terms of reference and a clear role known to all stakeholders. S/he should have authority to lead FSU. The Team Leader of the FSU should have a managing role and report to the Task Manager.

- Possibilities to relocate the FSU either to the Secretariat or to the sub-office where the REIS programme is located. This would improve the information flow and stimulate better coordination.
- TRF should be treated as an autonomous body and be measured and managed according to its own results. Its members should generally not be required to attend TIFI meetings. Rather, they should receive their minutes where relevant.
- Relocation of TRF to the Secretariat may run the risk of making use of its time resources for extra tasks. However, this risk exists also in the present location. One page monthly reports are under preparation by SADC Secretariat that include activities. These should be adopted immediately by TRF and should indicate if there are tasks executed that go beyond TRF.
- TRF should be integrated into SADC website based communication system (as REIS is).

Logical Framework:

- It should be reformulated to reduce and limit performance indicators. These should monitor TRF activities and outputs, rather than attempting to measure the wider integration process (see attached proposal for revised logical framework in Annex 7).

Communication and visibility, information flow:

- The information flow and exchange with other programmes, notably REIS, should be strengthened.
- Information provision to stakeholders should be strengthened, notably on the progress of country programme implementation and their progress.
- An intranet with limited access for those involved in project implementation should be established with core information on projects.
- Peer-learning among Member States in programme implementation should be encouraged. Lessons from application preparation, implementation and monitoring should be exchanged.
- The communication and visibility plan should be revisited. Planned outputs should be reduced. The work should concentrate on the website. Interest can be built up through regular updates.

Prescribed use of SADC finance and procurement rules:

According to comments from some Member States, the use of EDF rules on country level should be considered because of the large number of EDF projects implemented in Member States. These rules are known by Member States. In the RISM programme (using EDF rules) the experience has been that while countries had initial problems to apply these rules and

procedures, they eventually learned them and the National Authorizing Officers have been able to assist and advise.

Nevertheless, other Member States mentioned that at first they will face difficulties, but they will learn and eventually using SADC procedures will strengthen regional integration and ownership.

Stakeholder relations:

Relations to the stakeholders need to be strengthened, beyond awareness rising. In particular, relations and interaction with the private sector should be strengthened, among others through regular updates. This engagement could have several pillars. First, more provision on the aims and particularly on the progress of the TRF should be provided (on country programmes).

Second, the involvement of the private sector representative organisations (chambers of commerce, sector associations where appropriate) at the different stages of the project preparation and implementation should be discussed with the National Focal Points. Even when projects focus exclusively on activities and capacity building of public agencies, these would gain from feedback of the private sector. After all, in almost all cases the private sector is involved in international trade.

Third, although most regional umbrella bodies of the private sector are weak, the project should interact with them both by providing information and requesting advice.

The important question now is to ensure that the current portfolio of endorsed and soon endorsed projects is implemented efficiently and that the processing time of new pipeline of requests is reduced:

- The Steering Committee should play a more advisory and strategic guidance role. The Steering Committee should also meet with a smaller number of members in attendance.
- The FSU should improve its standard of reporting and implementation planning by showing the implementation of activities by component over time, including estimates to the end of the project.

The important issue now is to ensure that the effectiveness of the project in assisting the beneficiaries is increased by addressing these issues:

- The FSU is not a unit within TIFI but only supervised by TIFI. TIFI has to limit the presence of FSU technical advisers to TRF meetings or meetings where TRF is involved. In the context of the FSU, the technical advisers are not supposed to attend most of the meetings organized by TIFI.
- The SADC Secretariat needs to consider ways to reduce the complexities and rigidities of its procedures; particularly in terms of tendering, contracting, monitoring and the processing of disbursing funds.
- Consideration needs to be given to improving and monitoring the quality of reports prepared by short-term experts.

- Some consideration should be given to the revision of short-term experts' ToRs to tailor them more to specific cases.

The TRF programme ends in 2019. Based on the major findings and conclusions of this review, the following recommendations are proposed for the remaining period of the existing programme as well as for a possible follow-up programme.

Follow up programme

The objectives of the TRF programme have been highly relevant to the priorities of most Member States. The problems that necessitate the programme continue to exist. Thus, there is a need for a continued support and a follow-up programme along the lines of the objectives of the existing programme in the near future. Therefore, it is recommended to the SADC Secretariat to consider such a programme.

Demand-driven approach

The demand-driven concept or approach is important and valid in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme through addressing actually felt needs of beneficiaries and enhancing their ownership of the programme. Therefore, it is recommended to maintain the demand-driven approach for the existing and/or for a follow-up programme. However, it is also recommended to complement this approach by proactive supply-driven approach that would assist beneficiaries in identifying their needs.

The demand driven concept is sound itself but requires attention, because not all potential beneficiaries have the ability to formulate a request that keeps up with the requirements of the FSU. The FSU technical advisers can play a role in assistance for demand formulation.

Request handling

There are some areas that need improvement with regard to the efficiency of request handling. One is the need to address the significant delay in processing requests from Member States. The provision of timely and appropriate feedback to beneficiaries who submitted requests should also be given due emphasis.

Programme monitoring and follow up

The monitoring activities and outputs under the TRF programme so far have focused mainly on the status of requests. When the implementation of the projects will start, the FSU technical advisers will have to focus on collecting and synthesising information on the qualitative results and achievements of supported projects. In particular, the monitoring system does not include mechanisms to follow up the results and impacts of completed projects. Therefore, it is recommended to put in place a monitoring system that captures adequately the progress and achievements in terms of meeting programme results and objectives. If the monitoring and evaluation system needs to be focused on spending and percentage of activities implemented, this monitoring and evaluation system has also to concentrate on content as the national level proposals are so diversified. This monitoring and evaluation system will be based at the national level only in the Member States.

SADC Secretariat should increase its engagement and monitoring efforts

FSU should be integrated within TIFI. The only condition is that FSU technical advisers will only have to work on the TRF and not on other TFI issues. The relocation to SADC is recommended to strengthen coordination. TRF work plans and reporting are understood to be integrated into TIFI plans and reporting.

It is recommended that SADC Secretariat gets more actively engaged in supervision and follow-up of the TRF programme, without necessarily interfering with project management. This would potentially enhance effectiveness and efficiency, in addition to the overall transparency and accountability of the FSU. This may include SADC Secretariat:

- Insisting on a clear results-based framework with realistic/measurable indicators.
- Organising during Steering Committees consultations on project progress and implementation, including close on-going monitoring and follow-up of project reports.
- Demanding very strict audit procedures of implementing organisations and establishing strict measures that can be used if they are not followed;
- Engaging with other existing and potential donors in the same area of support.

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference

SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE
Mid Term Evaluation of the SADC Trade Related Facility
(TRF)
FWC BENEf 2013 - LOT 10: Trade, Standards and Private Sector
EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/multi - Request for Services 2016/377499/1

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1. BACKGROUND

Region	SADC
Sector (as defined in CSP/NIP)	Regional Economic Integration
Project reference	FED/2013/23240 SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF)
Contract reference	FED/2014/346-288 SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF)

These Terms of Reference concern a Mid Term Evaluation of the SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF) programme – to be contracted through EU Framework contract for 2 experts.

Within the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) of the 10th EDF, 2 focal areas were identified for cooperation within the SADC region: (1) Regional Economic Integration and (2) Regional Political Cooperation. The general objective of the 1st focal area is to provide broad-based support to deepen SADC economic integration and trade policies, including investment promotion, regional infrastructure and food security.

The TRF Contribution Agreement (value of €31.6m) was signed on 28th July 2014 and formal implementation started on 01st October 2014; however, actual implementation of activities under the Contribution Agreement began with the arrival of the technical assistance team on 05th January 2015 and will continue until 30th September 2019.

The TRF Programme intends to focus on the implementation of regional programmes and EPA related commitments at the national level. As such, TRF is a Member States driven and focused programme, where a critical role is foreseen for the SADC structures at the national level, such as the SADC National Committees and Focal Points. TRF aims to boost intra-regional and inter-regional trade through stronger implementation and domestication of the SADC Trade Protocol (STP). Simultaneously, the TRF wants to provide opportunities to the SADC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) countries to take full advantage of this trade agreement and will thus provide support to address EPA related challenges and support its implementation. As such, the main beneficiaries of TRF are the Directorate for Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) and the SADC Member States.

The TRF programme is one of a complementary package of programmes supporting the regional economic integration agenda. The other programmes in the package are the Project Preparation Development Facility (PPDF) and the Regional Economic Integration Support (REIS) programme. The PPDF is funding the preparation of financing proposals for sizeable economic infrastructure investment projects within the SADC region. Thus, the PPDF aims to address the infrastructure aspect of the constraints to higher levels of economic growth and deeper regional integration. The REIS has a regional focus and looks

to enhance institutional capacities in the SADC Secretariat in trade and investment related areas through addressing implementation and domestication of the SADC Trade Protocol and the SADC Finance and Investment Protocol; REIS is also providing support to the negotiations and implementation of the SADC-EU EPA.

Intervention Logic of the Programme

The TRF programme has the following objectives, results and key activities:

The **Overall Objective of the Programme** is to improve the participation of SADC Member States in regional and international trade in order to contribute to sustainable development in the SADC region.

The **Specific Objective of the Programme** is to enhance the implementation of the STP and the SADC EPA to increase intra-regional and inter-regional trade flows of the concerned SADC Member States.

The Contribution Agreement introduces **2 Key Result Areas** (KRAs) for the TRF programme:

- **Key Result Area 1:** STP window – higher level of compliance and implementation of the STP's commitments by the SADC Member States is achieved;
- **Key Result Area 2:** EPA window – SADC EPA Member States are better prepared to effectively implement and monitor the EPA and benefit from it, particularly in terms of improved market access.

The **activities** (in brief) under each KRA as envisaged in the Contribution Agreement are described as follows:

KRA 1: STP window – higher level of compliance and implementation of the STP's commitments by the SADC Member States is achieved.

This window will focus on removal of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTB) for all goods (including agricultural) and services, including: (1) enhanced customs cooperation; (2) TBT/SPS; (3) Rules of Origin; (4) Trade Facilitation; (5) Industrial Development; (6) Trade Promotion and Development; and (7) Trade in Services.

KRA 2: EPA window – SADC EPA Member States are better prepared to effectively implement and monitor the EPA and benefit from it, particularly in terms of improved market access.

This window may support activities similar to those carried out under the STP window, such as NTBs, Rules of Origin, Trade Facilitation, SPS/TBT and Trade in Services. But it will also support additional (and exclusive) activities, including: (1) Trade Defence Instruments; (2) Tariffs; (3) Trade Related Adjustment; and (4) Competition Policy.

TRF has two main components of support: financial support to SADC Member States and technical assistance. The financial support (EUR 20 million) intends to fund directly programmes and projects at the national level in the eligible Member States with the objective to strengthen implementation of regional trade commitments by those countries. Therefore, the TRF will issue a Call for Applications under which eligible Member States can submit project proposals for evaluation by the SADC Secretariat (and subsequent approval

by the TRF Steering Committee) within the thematic areas identified above under the 2 key result areas.

The technical assistance (TA) part of TRF provides a team of three long-term Key Experts (KEs) – a dedicated Team Leader, as well as a key expert on the SADC Trade Protocol and a key expert on the Economic Partnership Agreement – supporting the TIFI Department within the SADC Secretariat as well as the SADC Member States to implement fully and benefit from the TRF. The experts are housed within the Facility Support Unit (FSU), an external PMU contracted through the SADC Secretariat on the basis of a service contract, implemented by GFA Consulting. A Task Manager (TM) coordinates the work of TRF within the TIFI Directorate in addition to usual responsibilities of being SPO; As of mid-2016, a dedicated Senior Programme Officer had been recruited to take up the tasks of the Task Manager for the EU-funded regional economic integration programmes, managed by the TIFI Directorate. This position is fully financed through the Trade Related Facility (TRF).

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Evaluation mandate

Systematic and timely evaluation of its programmes and activities is an established priority¹ of the European Commission². The focus of evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the quality and the results of interventions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on result-oriented approaches³. Evaluations should provide an understanding of the cause and effects links between activities and results. Evaluations should serve decision making, learning and management purposes.

Mid-Term evaluations aim to provide an external perspective on the performance of a given project/programme to contribute to qualitative monitoring of results. Based on the final outcomes of an MTE, a project/programme can be adjusted in terms of expected results, scope or other elements where the project design has proven to be too ambitious when tested against initial implementation phases; similarly, an MTE can reveal shortcomings in the design and early implementation stages and timely adjustment of those shortcomings can improve the quality of the final impact of the overall programme.

The TRF contribution agreement makes provision for two external independent Mid-Term and one external independent Final Evaluation. The 1st Mid Term Evaluation was planned to take place after 5 applications for support were approved by the Steering Committee or 18 months after the start-up of the FSU. With some delays incurred in the initial stages of the programme, it was jointly decided by the SADC Secretariat and the EU Delegation to push the initial MTR backwards slightly to allow for at least the first call for applications to have been launched and the evaluations of initial proposals to have completed. As such, the 1st

¹ EU Financial regulation (art 27); REGULATION (EC) No 1905/2006; REGULATION (EC) No 1889/2006; REGULATION (EC) No 1638/2006; REGULATION (EC) No 1717/2006; COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 215/2008

² SEC(2007)213 "Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation"

³ COM (2011) 637 final "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change"

MTR is now tabled, to coincide with the finalization of evaluation of proposals received in June 2016. A 2nd MTR is foreseen to take place one year after the conclusion of the 1st evaluation exercise and will focus more on issues related to sustainability of the TRF as well as advise key stakeholders on whether a follow-up phase for the programme is desirable.

As per the Contribution Agreement, the 1st MTR will provide the opportunity for the TRF to take into account developments in respect of the implementation of the regional integration agenda, the EPA process and the regional and national contexts. The 1st MTR may also lead to amendments to areas of intervention, eligibility criteria and operational features of the TRF, if deemed necessary. Moreover, possible reallocations between and/or within the 2 windows can be recommended by the MTR team and submitted to the Steering Committee for approval afterwards.

Global Objective(s)

The main objective of the Evaluation is to provide the EU Delegation and the SADC Secretariat with:

- an overall independent assessment of the performance of the TRF Programme, paying particular attention to the results/activities of the programme against its objectives.

Specific Objective(s)

More specifically the Evaluation will provide:

- an assessment of progress to date measured against the performance indicators established in the log frame; this assessment will include an analysis as to what progress is directly attributable to the TRF interventions;
- an assessment of likely achievements to be made in relation to the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade and the SADC-EU EPA;
- an appreciation of unexpected results and achievements made under the TRF programme;
- an assessment on the sustainability of the intervention's benefits and what (if any) actions are recommended to ensure consolidation and sustainability of the results achieved under TRF;
- an assessment of the major constraints faced in the implementation of the programme; the evaluation will draw up lessons learned and develop recommendations on how constraints faced and experiences gained can be translated into future programmes; and
- an appreciation of TRF's results, effects and achievements in the context of cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability and inclusion of underprivileged groups.

Requested Services & Required Outputs

Scope of the evaluation

This assignment is to evaluate all components of the TRF Programme, from the start of actual implementation to the present date. The evaluation will pay particular attention to:

1. the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities and interventions implemented under TRF towards meeting the stated objectives and expected results;
2. how far TRF's outcomes and results are considered sustainable and how consolidation of these achievements is ensured or can be addressed through future programmes;
3. assess impact of the TRF interventions on key stakeholders in the region at both national and regional level; and
4. assess the impact of the TRF programme on cross-cutting areas such as inclusive and gender-sensitive economic growth as well as consideration of climate change and environmental concerns.

Throughout the evaluation process, the team is invited to:

1. Make an objective assessment of the relevance and quality of the programme design and to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed activities and interventions towards meeting the stated objectives and expected results;
2. Comment on the appropriateness of the balance between programme components and the overall expected results as well as on the implementation modalities envisaged in the programme; and
3. Recommend adjustments to the programme design and make detailed proposals on priority activities for the remainder of the programme period as well as related resource requirements;
4. Comment in particular on possible strategies to overcome delays incurred to date in the implementation of the programme and how to expedite implementation in the coming phases;
5. Assess the appropriateness of existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms within the programme and advise on adjustments to improve monitoring and evaluation at national and regional levels.

Issues to be studied & Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will assess the programme using the standard 5 Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Specific attention is to be paid to relevance, effectiveness and efficiency as these criteria may still be adjusted at this early stage of implementation and as such can contribute to a successful implementation and meeting the agreed-upon expected results. The criteria of sustainability and impact should also be assessed and form the basis of recommendations for future programming requirements, bearing in mind envisaged support to the area of regional economic integration under the 11th EDF. In addition, and based on the above assessment, the team should recommend adjustments to the programme design and make detailed proposals on priority activities for the remainder of the programme, as well as the associated resource requirements.

In addition, the evaluation will assess two EU specific evaluation criteria:

- the EU added value of the programme, both regarding its design and implementation; and

- the coherence of the programme itself with the relevant EU strategies for (1) Southern African Development Community and (2) the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The evaluation team should also consider whether the following cross-cutting issues, namely gender equality, good governance, inclusion of under-privileged groups, democracy and environmental sustainability, were sufficiently taken into account throughout the implementation of the programme and recommend how these cross-cutting issues may be better taken into consideration during future programmes in the same intervention area.

The evaluation criteria are translated into specific evaluation questions. These questions are indicative and they may be discussed with the experts during the Inception Phase. However, once agreed the evaluation questions are contractually binding.

INDICATIVE EVALUATION QUESTIONS	
EQ 1	Effectiveness and Efficiency
1.1	To what extent has the TRF programme addressed the needs of the SADC region and been consistent with and supportive of the policy objectives and priorities of the SADC Secretariat?
1.2	More specifically, to what extent has the TRF programme contributed or is likely to contribute to the SADC regional integration programme in respect of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation and Domestication of the SADC Protocol on Trade. ○ Implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement.
1.3	To what extent have the various activities of TRF transformed the available resources into the expected and intended results, in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness?
1.4	How realistic has been the choice and quantity of inputs (financial, human and administrative resources) and how has this helped/hindered the effectiveness and efficiency of TRF?
1.5	To what extent has the visibility programme complied with the requirements of the Contribution Agreement and how could it have been strengthened?
1.6	To what extent have cross cutting issues been addressed by the TRF?
1.7	What has helped or hindered effectiveness of the TRF Programme in respect of cross cutting issues?
1.8	Are any unexpected results or outcomes identified and how do these fit within the overall intervention logic of TRF?
EQ2	Gap analysis
2.1	What gaps remain in the implementation and domestication of the Protocol on Trade where future support may be required?
2.2	What gaps can be identified in the implementation of the EPA that should be supported in future programmes?
2.3	To what extent have the objectives (intended outcomes) been or are likely to be achieved?
2.4	What are the major factors influencing achievement or non-achievement of objectives?

EQ 3	Stakeholder engagement
3.1	To what extent have stakeholders participated in the design, management and implementation of the programme?
3.2	What is the level of ownership in the SADC Secretariat and the region?
3.3	To what extent can issues related to absorption and implementation capacities be identified and how have they helped/hampered implementation?
EQ 4	Programme Management
4.1	How flexible has TRF proven to be in response to changes in circumstances and/or identified needs?
4.2	How efficient and flexible has the quality of day-to-day management been (e.g. operational work planning and implementation, cost and budget control, (human) resources management etc.)?
4.3	To what extent have the proposed day-to-day management arrangements contributed to or negatively affected adequate resource mobilisation and/or achievement of results?
EQ 5	Challenges and solutions
5.1	What challenges have been experienced in the implementation of the programme and what strategies have been employed to solve these challenges?
EQ 6	Sustainability
6.1	To what extent can the achievements of the TRF programme be considered sustainable?
EQ 7	Lessons learnt informing future interventions
7.1	What lessons can be drawn from the implementation of the TRF programme to inform the design and establishment of future programmes (especially under the 11 th EDF) in support of SADC's regional economic integration?
7.2	In particular what lessons can be drawn in respect of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design • institutional set-up • implementation arrangements • engagement of stakeholders • coordination with other programmes/international cooperation partners • consideration of cross-cutting issues.

Methodology

The methodology to be used is based on the DEVCO Evaluation methodology for projects/programmes as set out on the website: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/71165>.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation process will be carried out in three phases: an Inception Phase, a Data Collection Phase and finally a Synthesis Phase. Deliverables in the form of reports and/or slide presentations should be submitted at the end of the corresponding stages.

<i>Phases of the evaluation:</i>	<i>Methodological Stages:</i>	<i>Main Deliverables</i>
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<i>Phases of the evaluation:</i>	<i>Methodological Stages:</i>	<i>Main Deliverables</i>
1. <u>Inception Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring the evaluation 	➤ <i>Inception report</i>
2. <u>Data Collection Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection Analysis Verification of hypothesis/preliminary findings 	➤ <i>Aide Memoire</i>
3. <u>Synthesis phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis and conclusions Drafting and finalisation of the report 	➤ <i>Final report</i>

Language of the Specific Contract

The contract, related correspondence and all required outputs/reports will be English.

3. EXPERTS

Number of requested experts per category

Expertise/result area		
Key Expert 1	Category I	29 working days
Key Expert 2	Category I	26 working days

Profile of experts

Two experts, Category I, are required for the assignment, one of whom must be identified as the Team Leader.

Each expert must:

- have a Master's Degree in the field of economics, trade, development studies, finance and investment, trade law or business management OR relevant work experience of at least 10 years which must be above the professional experience duration fixed in points b), d) and e) below;
- at least 12 years of experience in the sector of Trade and/or Regional Economic Integration and/or any other relevant field;
- demonstrable experience in monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes;
- have previous experience of at least 5 years as a team member implementing a development project;
- specific work experience of at least 5 years, in relevant technical areas, in regional contexts (preferably in the SADC region);
- be competent in the use of word processing, spread-sheet and presentation software; and

- g) be fluent in written and spoken English (competence in French and/or Portuguese would be an advantage).

The Team Leader must have:

- a) previous experience as a team leader in carrying out an evaluation assignment (preferably in a regional context) in the past 10 years.

Together the experts should as far as possible have the following:

- b) demonstrable knowledge or experience of issues related to customs cooperation;
- c) demonstrable knowledge or experience in working on trade in services issues;
- d) demonstrable knowledge or experience in working on issues related to Rules of Origin;
- e) demonstrable knowledge or experience of work in the area of Trade Facilitation;
- f) demonstrable knowledge or experience in the fields of standardisation, quality assurance, accreditation, metrology and conformity assessment and/or addressing SPS/TBT issues;
- g) demonstrable knowledge or experience in industrial development;
- h) demonstrable knowledge or experience in issues related to trade promotion and trade development;
- i) demonstrable knowledge or experience in work related to trade defence instruments;
- j) demonstrable knowledge or experience in work related to tariffs;
- k) demonstrable knowledge or experience in issues around trade related adjustment;
- l) demonstrable knowledge or experience in working with competition policy;
- m) demonstrable knowledge or experience of working with Non State Actors as well as government structures; and
- n) demonstrable affinity in promoting gender equality and inclusive development.

Management team member presence

Presence of the management team is not required for briefing or debriefing purposes.

4. LOCATION AND DURATION

Starting period

Provisional start of the assignment: September 2016.

Foreseen duration

Maximum duration of the assignment: 75 calendar days (including time for finalizing the final report). It is assumed that the consultants will work on a basis of a five day week.

Planning of the assignment

Inception Phase

The process will start with a dedicated briefing session (half day presence of both experts is required) attended by both the EU Delegation and the SADC Secretariat/programme counterparts in Gaborone, Botswana. During the briefing session, the experts and Gaborone-

based counterparts will discuss and agree on the exact scope of the assignment, the understanding of the Terms of Reference and the schedule for deliverables as well as agree on a tentative list of key stakeholders to be approached throughout the assignment.

During the Inception Phase (7 days presence for both experts) the consultants will be expected to familiarise themselves with the TRF programme and hold initial discussions with key stakeholders.

The Inception Phase will conclude with an inception report (maximum 15 pages), drawn up on the basis of information collected in this phase. The draft Inception report should:

- comment/provide observations on the terms of reference (if any) – for discussion and agreement in the Inception Meeting;
- comment/provide observations on the evaluation questions proposed or, where relevant, propose an alternative or complementary set of evaluation questions justifying their relevance – for discussion and agreement during the Inception Meeting;
- check the consistency and validity of the evaluation questions, propose judgement criteria and identify provisional indicators and their means of verification;
- present an indicative methodology for the overall assessment of the programme;
- describe the approach for answering each evaluation question and propose follow up questions as appropriate;
- propose the work plan as well as the tools/methodology proposed for the Data Collection Phase (this includes time schedules, data collection tools and list of key stakeholders for interviews);
- confirm the final schedule for the evaluation exercise; and
- outline the allocation of responsibilities between the evaluation team members.

A draft version of the Inception report will be shared with the EU Delegation and the SADC Secretariat electronically at least 2 days before the Inception Meeting; and the draft inception report will be presented to and discussed at a joint meeting of the EU Delegation and the SADC Secretariat. Comments presented at the meeting – as well as written comments where appropriate – will be taken into consideration by the Consultants and consolidated in a finalised Inception Report which is to be shared with concerned stakeholders within 1 working day of the Inception Meeting. The final Inception Report as well as minutes of the Inception Meeting will be annexed to the Draft Final Report.

Data Collection Phase

The Data Collection Phase (16 working days presence for both team members) starts after consolidation and approval of the Inception Phase report.

The data collection phase will include – at least – structured interviews with relevant TIFI officers, main counterparts in the SADC Member States (as identified in the Inception Phase), programme team members for the different components of the TRF programme, as well as selected representatives of other donor agencies/countries and possibly other stakeholders to be identified in the Inception Phase. Interviews may be organized in person or by telephone, depending on the availability of interviewees. The team may propose

alternative means of obtaining information, such as online surveys or questionnaires, to increase the outreach to TRF stakeholders and beneficiaries.

A maximum of 6 working days field mission may be undertaken to SADC Member States – provided such field mission(s) is duly justified in the Inception Report and accepted by concerned stakeholders to validate progress on particular programme components. Please note that it is foreseen to undertake limited field visits for this assignment given the nature of the interventions at national level; however, as the programme targets 10 SADC Member States, it should be anticipated that additional contacts with representatives of Member States are arranged either by telephone, skype or other appropriate communication means. During the data collection phase, the evaluation team shall ensure adequate contact and consultation with the different stakeholders; and work closely with the relevant regional authorities and agencies; using the most reliable and appropriate sources of information.

Half way through the data collection phase (approximately 8 working days), the evaluation team shall summarise its work in an aide memoire that will be submitted electronically to the SADC Secretariat and the EU Delegation at least 2 days before the formal presentation in a joint meeting. Comments on the aide memoire/presentation will be made during the discussion meeting – and in writing if appropriate – and will be included in the Draft Final Report to be prepared by the Consultants; and the aide memoire and minutes of the joint meeting will be annexed to the Draft Final Report.

Synthesis phase

This phase is mainly devoted to the consolidation of information gathered during the data collection phase and preparation of the draft final report. The evaluation team will present in a single document their findings, conclusions and recommendations in accordance with the agreed structure (8.2 Annex II).

The evaluation team will make sure that their assessments are objective and balanced; statements are accurate and verifiable; and recommendations are realistic.

The draft version of the Final Report will be submitted electronically to the EU Delegation and the SADC Secretariat 2 days before the presentation of the Draft Final Report in a joint meeting to be organized in Gaborone, Botswana. Comments provided at the meeting as well as written comments will be taken into consideration by the consultants. While potential quality issues, factual errors or methodological problems should be corrected, comments linked to divergent views may be either accepted or rejected. The evaluation team is expected to address comments received in writing by establishing a specific matrix of comments and responses as an annex to the Draft Final Report. The SADC Secretariat and the EU Delegation will submit written comments within maximum 5 days after the joint presentation; and following receipt of comments, the evaluation team is to review and submit a revised Draft Final Report for acceptance within 5 working days (requires availability of team leader only – at home base). Upon acceptance of the Draft Final Report, the Contractor will finalize the report and submit an electronic version and 5 hard copies to the EU Delegation; and the Delegation will ensure transmission of the Final Report to the SADC Secretariat in due course.

Work Plan

Activity	Location	Indicative Duration in working days		Indicative Dates
		KE1	KE2	
Inception phase		7 days	7 days	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick-off meeting: SADC Secretariat/EU DEL 	Gaborone	0.5 day	0.5 day	19/09/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial discussions with key stakeholders; preparation and submission of draft Inception Report 	Gaborone	5.5 days	5.5 days	19/09/2016-23/09/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation workshop on draft Inception Report 	Gaborone	1 day	1 day	27/09/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of final Inception Report 				28/09/2016
Data Collection Phase		16 days	16 days	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations with stakeholders and data collection 	Botswana	15 days	15 days	28/09/2016-19/10/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of Aide Memoire 	Gaborone	1 day	1 day	10/10/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit draft Final Report 				20/10/2016
Synthesis Phase		6 days	3 days	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of draft final report 	Gaborone	1 day	1 day	24/10/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of written comments 				24/10/2016-31/10/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalisation of the report 	Home based	5 days	2 days	01/11/2016-07/11/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of the final report 				08/11/2016
TOTAL (maximum)		29 days	26 days	

Location(s) of assignment

The assignment will take place in Gaborone, Republic of Botswana. The SADC Secretariat as well as the programme management unit are located in Gaborone, Botswana and also the EU Delegation in charge of cooperation with SADC is located in Gaborone.

If deemed essential to answer the specific Evaluation Questions and supplement the findings of the desk review and structured interviews included in the Inception and Data Collection Phases, a maximum of 2 field visits to different SADC Member States, one of which should be an SADC EPA member, may be included in the assignment. Field visit locations will be determined in the Inception Phase in consultation with the EU Delegation and the programme management (SADC Secretariat) – field visits are not expected to take more than 6 working days, if deemed necessary.

Facilities to be provided by SADC Secretariat

The SADC Secretariat will make available office space for the consultants as well as access to internet/email services. A telephone connection will be available for official calls. All other services/supplies are the responsibility of the consultants

5. REPORTING

Content

The reports must match quality standards. The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables.

The evaluation team will submit the following reports:

	Max. Number of Pages (excluding annexes)	Main Content	Timing for submission (please refer to section 4.3 for a timetable)
Inception report	15 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Comments on TORs➤ Intervention logic (if necessary)➤ Evaluation questions, Judgement criteria and Indicators➤ Encountered and anticipated difficulties➤ Detailed evaluation approach and work plan	End of Inception Phase
Data Collection Phase Aide Memoire	15 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Summary of findings and conclusions/recommendations based on data collection and analysis – to include responses to the evaluation questions and proposals/recommendations for the way forward.	Half way through Data Collection Phase

Draft report	Final	40 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cf. detailed structure in Annex 2 ➤ Response to issues raised in section 2.4.3 - Issues to be studied & Evaluation Questions ➤ Synthesis of all findings, conclusions and recommendations into an overall assessment 	End of Data collection Phase
Final report		40 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same specifications as above, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report that have been accepted (see section 4.3.3) 	End of Synthesis Phase

Language

All reports will be in English using Font Arial or Times New Roman minimum 11 and 12 respectively, single spacing. Each report will be submitted in electronic version (using MS Office) as a draft to the Evaluation Manager at the EU Delegation.

Submission/comments timing

	Date to submit draft	Date to present	Date to receive comments from DEU/SADC	Date to submit final version
Inception Report	23/09/2016	27/09/2016	27/09/2016	28/09/2016
Aide Memoire	07/10/2016	10/10/2016	10/10/2016	N/A
Final Report	20/10/2016	24/10/2016	31/10/2016	08/11/2016

Number of report(s) copies

The Inception Report and the Data Collection Phase Aide Memoire shall be submitted only in electronic format to the EU Delegation (who will ensure dissemination to the SADC Secretariat).

The Draft Final Report will be submitted only in electronic format. The Final Report (final version) will be provided in 5 hard copies and in electronic format (including all annexes) to the EU Delegation. EU Delegation will ensure dissemination of the report to the SADC Secretariat.

6. INCIDENTAL EXPENDITURE

- 1 return Economy Class tickets for each of the experts (international flight home country to Gaborone).
- Per Diem for those days spent in Botswana to complete the assignment and other SADC Member States to complete the assignment (max. 36 calendar days per expert – of which max. 6 working days can be spent in a SADC MS outside Botswana provided this is agreed in the Inception Phase – an average of per diem rates can be used to establish budgets).

- A provision of €1,000 is to be included as a reserve for organization of consultation meetings around the Inception Report, Aide Memoire and Draft Final Report (meetings organized in a separate location may improve attendance of stakeholders). This will cover venue hire/conference package/refreshments only, if required.
- A provision of €2,000 may be included as a reserve for regional travel during the mission to assess state of implementation at the level of selected SADC Member States; the Member States to be visited will be determined in close coordination with the SADC Secretariat and the EU Delegation – visits will be facilitated through the SADC Secretariat and the TRF Facility Support Unit.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Definition of indicators

Besides the provisions of the article 8.6 of the Global Terms of Reference (i.e. the general performance assessment of the FWC), the quality of the final report will be assessed by the evaluation manager using a quality assessment grid (see annex III).

Management of the evaluation process

The evaluation is managed by the EU Delegation to the Republic of Botswana and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), in particular the section concerned with EU cooperation with SADC. The Delegation will consult throughout the evaluation process with concerned stakeholders within the SADC Secretariat, in particular the Directorate of Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment, as the implementing organization for this particular Contribution Agreement. As such, the Delegation will ensure presence of representatives of the Implementing Organization at all briefing/debriefing sessions and consolidate comments on the reports to be transmitted to the Consultants.

ANNEX I: Information that will be provided to the evaluation team

- Legal texts and political commitments pertaining to the programme
- SADC sector policy documents (including the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, the Protocol on Trade, the Protocol on Finance and Investment and the Protocol on Trade in Services); available on the dedicated website of SADC, www.sadc.int.
- Contribution Agreement between the EU and SADC and all addenda to the Contribution Agreement.
- Final report, March 2012, Formulation of a Trade Related Facility Programme for the Southern African Development Community (ECORYS).

Note: The evaluation team is required to identify and obtain any other documentation necessary for analysing, through interviews with people who are or have been involved in the design, management and supervision of the programme. Resource persons to collect information and data are to be sought in the EC services, implementing body, execution body and / or Member State as relevant.

ANNEX II: structure of the Executive Summary & Final Report

The final report should not be longer than the number of pages indicated. Additional information on overall context, programme or aspects of methodology and analysis should be confined to annexes.

The cover page of the report shall carry the following text:

"This evaluation is supported and guided by the European Commission and the SADC Secretariat and presented by [name of consulting firm]. The report does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the European Commission or the SADC Secretariat".

The main sections of the evaluation report are as follows:

Executive Summary

A tightly-drafted, to-the-point and free-standing Executive Summary is an essential component. It should be short, no more than two pages. It should focus on the key purpose or issues of the evaluation, outline the main analytical points, and clearly indicate the main conclusions, lessons to be learned and specific recommendations.

1. Introduction

A description of the programme and the evaluation, providing the reader with sufficient methodological explanations to gauge the credibility of the conclusions and to acknowledge limitations or weaknesses, where relevant.

2. Answered questions/ Findings

A chapter presenting the evaluation questions and conclusive answers, together with evidence and reasoning.

3. Overall assessment

A chapter synthesising all answers to evaluation questions into an overall assessment of the programme. The detailed structure of the overall assessment should be refined during the evaluation process. The relevant chapter has to articulate all the findings, conclusions and lessons in a way that reflects their importance and facilitates the reading. The structure should not follow the evaluation questions, the logical framework or the five DAC evaluation criteria.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

This chapter introduces the conclusions of the evaluation. The conclusions should be organised in clusters in the chapter in order to provide an overview of the assessed subject.

A paragraph or sub-chapter should pick up the 3 or 4 major conclusions organised by order of importance, while avoiding being repetitive. This practice allows better communicating the evaluation messages that are addressed to the Commission.

If possible, the evaluation report identifies one or more transferable lessons, which are highlighted in the executive summary and can be presented in appropriate seminars.

4.2 Recommendations

They are intended to improve or reform the programme in the framework of the cycle under way, or to prepare the design of a new intervention for the next cycle.

Recommendations must be clustered and prioritised, carefully targeted to the appropriate audiences at all levels, especially within the Commission structure.

5. Annexes of the report

The report should include the following annexes:

- The Terms of Reference of the evaluation.
- The names of the evaluators and their companies (CVs should be shown, but summarised and limited to one page per person).
- Detailed evaluation method including: options taken, difficulties encountered and limitations. Detail of tools and analyses.
- Intervention logic / Logical Framework matrices (original and improved/updated).
- Map of project area.
- List of persons/organisations consulted.
- Literature and documentation consulted.
- Other technical annexes (e.g. statistical analyses, tables of contents and figures).
- Detailed answers to the Evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators (evaluation matrix).

ANNEX III: Quality assessment grid

The quality of the final report will be assessed by the EU Delegation using the following quality assessment grid where the rates have the following meaning:

To be filled in by the EU Delegation	Grade	Comments
1. Meeting needs: Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body? Does the evaluation deal with and respond to all ToR requests? If not, are justifications given?	1 - <i>Poor</i> 2 - <i>Acceptable</i> 3 - <i>Good</i> 4 - <i>Very Good</i> 5 - <i>Excellent</i>	
2. Relevant scope: Does the evaluation fully examine the programme rationale, cause-effect relationships, impacts, policy context, stakeholders' interests, etc.?		
3. Defensible design: Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings is made accessible to answer the main evaluation questions? Does the report point out the limitations, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method?		
4. Reliable data: To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?		
5. Sound analysis: Is the analysis appropriate and systematic so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way? Are inputs from most important stakeholders used in a balanced way?		
6. Credible findings: Are the findings derived from the data and analyses? Are interpretations and extrapolations justified and supported by sound arguments?		
7. Useful recommendations: Are the recommendations consistent with the conclusions? Are recommendations operational, realistic and sufficiently explicit to provide guidelines for taking action? Are the recommendations drafted for the different target stakeholders of the evaluation? Have the recommendations a true added value?		
8. Clear report: Is the executive summary relevant and concise? Is the report well written, well-structured and understandable by the different programme's stakeholders?		

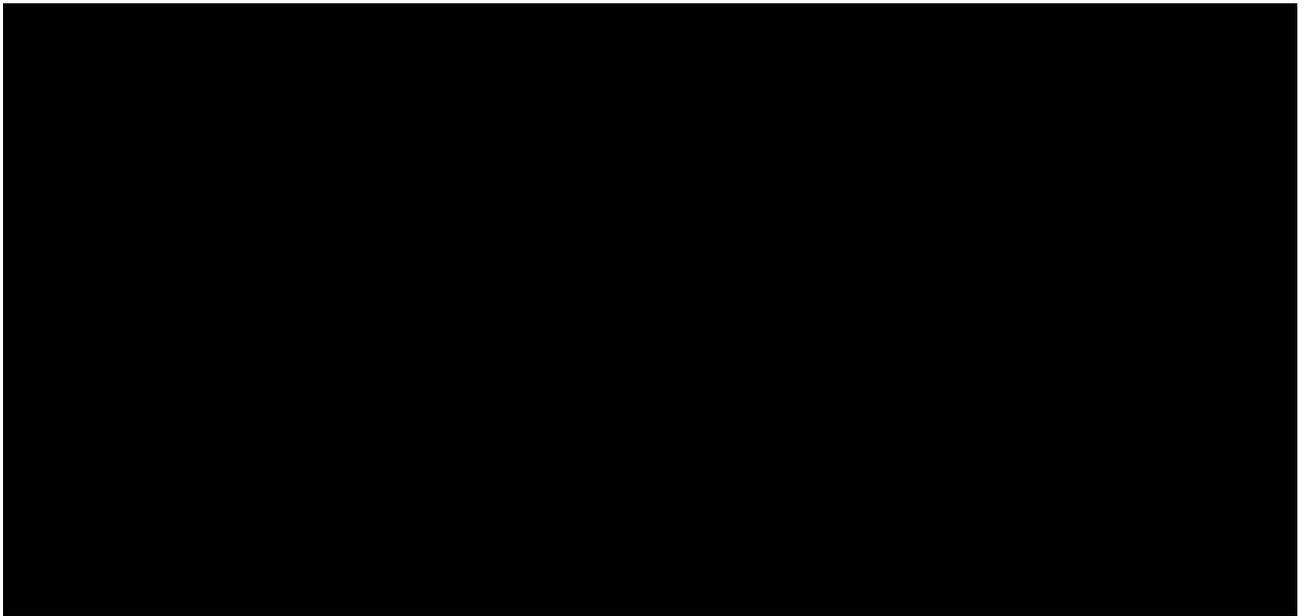
Annex V: Evaluation grid for experts to be contracted

Team leader	Max score
Master's Degree in the field of economics, trade, development studies, finance investment, trade law or business management OR relevant work experience of at least 10 years which must be above the professional experience duration fixed in points b), d) and e) below;	Y/N
At least 12 years of experience in the sector of Trade and/or Regional Economic Integration and/or any other relevant field	Y/N
Demonstrable experience in monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes	10
Previous experience of at least 5 years as a team member implementing a development project/programme	7
Specific work experience of at least 5 years, in relevant technical areas, in regional contexts (preferably the SADC region)	7
Fluent in English (French and/or Portuguese would be an advantage)	Y/N
Competent in the use of word processing, spread-sheet and presentation software.	Y/N
Previous experience as a team leader in carrying out an evaluation assignment (preferably in a regional context) in the last 10 years	10
Sub-TOTAL Team Leader	34
Expert 2	Max score
Master's Degree in the field of economics, trade, development studies, finance investment, trade law or business management OR relevant work experience of at least 10 years which must be above the professional experience duration fixed in points b), d) and e) below;	Y/N
At least 12 years of experience in the sector of Trade and/or Regional Economic Integration and/or any other relevant field	Y/N
Demonstrable experience in monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes	8
Previous experience of at least 5 years as a team member implementing a development project/programme	8
Specific work experience of at least 5 years, in relevant technical areas, in regional contexts (preferably the SADC region)	8
Fluent in English (French and/or Portuguese would be an advantage)	Y/N
Competent in the use of word processing, spread-sheet and presentation software.	Y/N
Sub-TOTAL Expert 2	24
Team	Max score
Demonstrable knowledge or experience working on issues related to customs cooperation	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in working on trade in services issues	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in working on issues related to Rules of Origin	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience of work in the area of Trade Facilitation	3

Demonstrable knowledge or experience in the fields of standardisation, quality assurance, accreditation, metrology and conformity assessments and/or addressing SPS/TBT issues	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in industrial development	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in issues related to trade promotion and trade development	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in work related to trade defence instruments	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in work related to tariffs	2
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in issues around trade related adjustment	2
Demonstrable knowledge or experience in working with competition policy	3
Demonstrable knowledge or experience working with Non State Actors as well as government structures	2
Demonstrable affinity in promoting gender equality and inclusive development	2
Sub-TOTAL Team	35
Methodology & Backstopping team	Max score
Methodology for the assignment	4
Technical capacities and ability of backstopping team	3
Sub-TOTAL Methodology & Backstopping team	7
Total Technical Points	100

Only offers receiving a minimum technical score of 80 points will be admitted to the financial evaluation stage. The final score for each proposal will be based on the technically compliant most economically advantageous offer (ratio technical: financial scores is 80:20).

Annex 2: Short Summary of Evaluators



Annex 3: Map of SADC region



Annex 4: SADC TRF MTE people met

Name	Position	Institution	Telephone	E-mail	Date
People met					
	Attaché Regional Integration	EU Delegation to Botswana and SADC			19/09/16
	First Secretary, Regional Integration	EU Delegation to Botswana and SADC			19/09/16
	Senior Programme Officer - EU Regional Economic Integration Support (TRF Task Manager)	SADC Secretariat			19/09/16
	Team leader	TRF FSU			22/09/16
	EPA expert	TRF FSU			22/09/16
	STP expert	TRF FSU			22/09/16
	Senior Finance Officer	SADC Secretariat			22/09/16
	TRF Finance Officer	SADC Secretariat			22/09/16
	Director, International Trade Department	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Swaziland			22/09/16
	Principal Trade Officer (Trade in Services)	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Tanzania			22/09/16
	Chief Policy Analyst	Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, Namibia			22/09/16
	Trade Policy Analyst,	Ministry of Foreign			23/09/16

	International Trade Division	Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Mauritius		
	Director, TIFI	SADC Secretariat		23/09/16
	Former Administrative Support to the FSU Currently working in TIFI on a GFA-implemented trade programme	SADC Secretariat		06/10/16
	Senior Officer TBT/SPS	SADC Secretariat		06/10/16
	Procurement Unit	SADC Secretariat		06/10/16
	Advisor, Procurement (ICDP)	SADC Secretariat		06/10/16
	Senior Officer Industrialisation	SADC Secretariat		07/10/16
	EPA CTA	SADC Secretariat		07/10/16
	Programme Officer, Industrial Policy	SADC Secretariat		07/10/16
	EU Support to Procurement Process Institutional Capacity Development Programme (ICDP)	SADC Secretariat		07/10/16
	Programme Manager, Cooperation for the Enhancement of SADC Regional Economic Integration (CESARE)	GIZ		10/10/16
	Senior Officer Macro-	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16

	economic Convergence/Tax Administration			
	Programme Officer, Macro-Economic Convergence	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Senior Programme Officer	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Project Officer, Customs Department of Policies,	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Programmes and Resource Mobilisation	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Senior Officer Trade	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Senior Programme Officer, FIP	SADC Secretariat		11/10/16
	Botswana Focal Point Principal Trade Officer	Ministry of Trade & Industry Department of International Trade		11/10/16
	Team Leader REIS	SADC Secretariat		12/10/16
	EPA Expert REIS	SADC Secretariat		12/10/16
	TBT/SPS Expert REIS	SADC Secretariat		12/10/16
	Attaché Regional Integration	EU Delegation to Botswana and SADC		13/10/16
	Director of Industrial Affairs Former Director of International Trade, Member of Steering Committee	Ministry of Trade and Industry Botswana		13/10/16
	Senior Technical Advisor to Executive Secretary	SADC Secretariat		14/10/16
	Trade Officer I	Ministry of Trade and		17/10/16

		Industry Botswana		
	Manager –Compulsory Standards	Botswana Bureau of Standards		17/10/16
	Principal Engineer - Compulsory	Botswana Bureau of Standards		17/10/16
	Programme Manager RISM & regional integration programs	EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA		17/10/16
	Assistant Project Manager	RISM Programme COMESA		17/10/16
	Programme Manager Regional Economic Integration	SADC Council of Non-Governmental Organisations		18/10/16
	Director Export Development	Botswana Investment & Trade Centre		18/10/16
	Business Analyst Export Development	Botswana Investment & Trade Centre		18/10/16
	Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Principal Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Principal Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Senior Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16
	Senior Agricultural Economist	DABP Ministry of Agriculture		18/10/16

	Director Corporate Services	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	Director Trade Remedies	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	Director Tariff Investigations & Research	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	Chief Executive Officer	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	HR Business Partner	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	Board Secretary/Legal Services Manager	Botswana Trade Commission		19/10/16
	Senior Economist TRF Focal Point	Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry		19/10/16
	Chief Economist, Department of Foreign Trade	Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry		19/10/16
	Trade and Investment Specialist Regional Economic Growth Office	USAID		19/10/16
	Programme Officer Planning, Monitoring &Evaluation	SADC Secretariat		20/10/16
	Customs Manager External Relations & Trade Facilitation	Botswana Unified Revenue Service		20/10/16
	Principal Customs Officer	Botswana Unified Revenue Service		20/10/16

Annex 5: Literature and documentation consulted

SADC:

- SADC Trade Protocol (STP), August 1996
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade, Approved by the SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade on 12 July 2008, Lusaka, Zambia

TRF:

- Action Fiche for Southern African Development Community (SADC), SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF), 15 pp.
- SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF), Operational guidelines
- European Union Contribution Agreement with SADC, with 5 annexes, 2014
- SADC Secretariat, 2016, The Trade Related Facility (TRF) Programme - First Year Report, October 2014 - March 2016, 11. August
- SADC TRF, Rolling call for applications under the SADC TRF, Jan. 2016
- EU acceptance letter for TRF annual report, 19.8.2016
- TRF Projects: Output Based Work Plan and Budget Template (excel file)
- TRF 5 Year Implementation Plan 2015/19
- TRF, Application form
- TRF Workplans and budget templates
- Concept notes from Botswana, Swaziland
- EU/SADC/Transtec, 2012, Final report. Conceptual design features of the SADC TRF, 127 pp.
- TRF monthly reports May - July 2016
- Records of TRF operational meetings
- TRF, Record of TRF meetings
- Records of TIFI-FSU meeting
- Record of TIFI-TRF-REIS meeting 271115
- Report of first meeting of TRF steering committee 280315
- Report of TRF scoping missions Namibia, Swaziland
- TRF results chain
- CVs of key experts
- Selection records for short term experts (STE)
- Mission reports by STE
- GFA, TA to SADC TRF, Results framework and M&E system, final report, June 2016
- SADC TRF programme, Results - activities and indicators, STP window
- TRF, Draft communication and visibility plan

Country submissions:

- Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS), 2015, Enhancement of the implementation of Standards Import Inspection Regulations (SIIR), Concept notes for financial assistance under the SADC trade related facility
- Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana, 2016, Project Proposal for Strengthening Botswana's International Trade Administration, Competition and Customs Enforcement, application form
- Ministry of Trade and Industry, Lesotho, 2016, Capacity Development for National Trade Policy Formulation, Competition Policy, Standards and Quality Infrastructure, and Trade and Tariff Administration Project Proposal, Submitted to SADC Secretariat, 69 pp., with application form and annexes
- Ministry of Trade and Industry, Malawi, 2016, Development of a Project Proposal on the Effective Implementation of the Rules of Origin in Malawi, application form, with accompanying documents
- Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, Namibia, 2016, Namibia's Trade Related Programme, Application form, with annexes
- Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Zambia, 2016, SADC Trade Related Facility, Application form

Background:

- International Economics Consulting Ltd., 2014, Evaluation of the Regional Integration Support Mechanism (RISM), 61 pp.
- SADC, EQUINOCCIO, IBF, 2016, Analysis of the EU-SADC EPA: Harnessing opportunities presented by the Agreement for Market Access and Trade Facilitation, 179 pp., with extra National Briefs on Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland.

Annex 6: Status of TRF Projects (Source: FSU October 2016)

Country	Project title	Date AO signed	Status of project as at 10.10.16
Botswana	Strengthening International Trade Administration, Competition and Customs Enforcement	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
	Strengthening Capacity for SPS management and control and the management of the Standards Import Inspection Regulations	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
Lesotho	Capacity Development for National Trade Policy Formulation, Competition Policy, Standards and Quality Infrastructure, and Trade and Tariff Administration	17.3.16	Approved by Steering Committee on 11.8.16
Namibia	Namibia Trade Related Programme	18.3.16 redone on 28.7.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
Malawi	Upgrading & Modernisation of the Oilseeds Product Cluster in Malawi and Effective Implementation of the Rules of Origin	4.3.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
Mauritius	Trade Facilitation	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
	Trade Promotion and Development	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
Mozambique	Enhancing Cotton and Timber Value Chain Development	28.7.16	Draft stage
	Quality and Standards (TBT/SPS)	13.8.16	Draft stage
	Capacity Building in Safeguard Measures and Trade Remedies	12.8.16	Draft stage
	Capacity Building in Customs and Trade Facilitation	7.9.16	Draft stage
Tanzania	review of the policy and regulatory framework for Industrial Policy and Trade in Services and development of a value chain	19.5.16	Assessed as adequate by Evaluation Committee but to be combined with

	analysis for the sunflower oil sector		other projects for resubmission
	Technical Assistance to Tanzania Eliminate Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs)	19.5.16	Not recommended for approval by Evaluation Committee. To be reviewed and merged with other projects
	Strengthening of the TBT/SPS Systems to support production of selected Agricultural and Fisheries products	19.5.16	Draft ready and not submitted to SADC. To be reviewed and merged with other projects
Swaziland	Strengthening of National Quality Infrastructure in Swaziland	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
	Trade Facilitation, Trade Promotion and Development	19.5.16	Recommended for approval by Technical Evaluation Committee of 22-23 September
Zambia	Industrial Development, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Trade Facilitation	N/A	Approved by Steering Committee on 11.8.16
Zimbabwe	Strengthening Quality Infrastructure for SPS and TBT	TOR's stage	

Annex 7: Logical Framework of the Trade Related Facility

Project Description	Verifiable Indicators	Sources and Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
<p>Overall Objective: To improve the participation of SADC member states in regional and international trade in order to contribute to sustainable development in the SADC region</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable political and economic relations between SADC MS and the EU are maintained. Commitments towards SADC regional integration remain strong.
<p>Specific Objective (purpose): To enhance the implementation of the commitments made in the SADC Trade Protocol and the EPA to increase intra-regional and inter-regional trade flows of the concerned Member States.</p>	<p>Level of compliance in the implementation of STP commitments by SADC Member States</p> <p>Status of Institutions, policies and regulatory frameworks in Member States to implement SADC- EU EPA commitments</p>	<p>Annual reports on the state of implementation of the Protocol/EPA</p> <p>EU Market Access Database Joint SADC-EU Trade Council Reports</p> <p>TRF progress reports</p> <p>Member State reports Surveys of business associations</p>	<p>SADC MS remain committed to the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol in goods and services.</p> <p>SADC EPA Members States and the EU remain on track for the conclusion of a comprehensive SADC-EU EPA and its implementation schedule.</p>
Expected results			
Key result 1			
<p>Higher level of compliance and implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol's commitments by the SADC MS is achieved.</p>	<p>Immediate outcome indicators: Level of implementation of the commitments taken in the STP by end of the TRF.</p>	<p>TRF reports</p> <p>MS Government reports to the TRF</p>	<p>Risks MS may not have enough interest and motivation to apply for the TRF facility.</p>

<p>Outputs (depends on specific country programmes and should be monitored in their PAFs)</p>	<p>The number of annual reported NTBs compared to the base line year by end of the TRF. Share of manufacturing value added in GDP by the end of the TRF).</p> <p>% spending of country application funds % of activities or outputs of country programmes achieved</p>	<p>Steering committee meeting reports Minutes of SADC Technical Committees (Services, TBT SPS and Customs) Evaluation reports (mid-term and final) REIS reports</p>	<p>Political interference at the level of the Steering committee may influence the decisions on funding.</p> <p>SADC Member States may not have sufficient accountability and control systems in place to ensure funds are utilized according to their objectives.</p> <p>Member States may not have the resources, capacity or discipline to report to the FSU according to the requirements in the TRF guidelines and Financial Agreements.</p> <p>Assumptions Stable political and economic situation in SADC MS is maintained. SADC MS remain committed to the implementation the SADC Trade Protocol. Tripartite process complements and does not supersede the SADC Trade Protocol. Contribution Agreement modalities and procedures effectively implemented by SADC and FSU.</p>
<p>Key result 2</p>			
<p>SADC EPA MS are better prepared to effectively implement and monitor concluded elements of the EPA.</p>	<p>Immediate outcome indicators: Level of implementation of commitments under EPA and necessary capacities for such implementation</p>	<p>TRF reports MS Government reports to the TRF Steering committee meeting reports</p>	<p>Risks MS may not have enough interest and motivation to apply for the TRF Facility. Communication between the TRF and MS may not be effective.</p> <p>Political interference at the level of the</p>

<p>Outputs (depends on specific country programmes and should be monitored in their PAFs)</p>	<p>Time to export to the EU market compared to baseline period</p> <p>Documentation required to export to EU market compared to baseline period)</p> <p>% spending of country application funds</p> <p>% of activities or outputs of country programmes achieved</p>	<p>Minutes of the EPA implementation structures (Joint Council, SADC EPA Technical and Ministerial meetings)</p> <p>Evaluation reports (mid-term and final)</p> <p>REIS reports</p>	<p>Steering committee may influence the decisions on funding.</p> <p>SADC Member States may not have sufficient accountability and control systems in place to ensure funds are utilized according to their objectives. Member States may not have the resources, capacity or discipline to report to the FSU according to the requirements in the TRF guidelines and Financial Agreements Assumptions</p> <p>Stable political and economic situation in SADC MS and the EU is maintained.</p> <p>SADC EPA Member States and the EU remain on track for the conclusion of a comprehensive SADC-EU EPA and committed to its implementation.</p> <p>Contribution Agreement modalities and procedures effectively implemented by SADC and FSU.</p>
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Annex 8 Comments from Evaluators

Number/Page	Comment Received	Reply
U1	Elaborate further on the statement “there are weaknesses in the design and difficulties in implementation” ...	<p>Comment addressed and changes accepted by the EUD</p> <p>The following sentence (Lessons include SADC's limited capacity to absorb resources of EU support and the lack of linkages between the National and Regional Indicative Programmes (as mentioned in the TRF Action Fiche, p. 2) presents two lessons. Others are taken up under specific headings. Where lessons are not taken up or are taken up incorrectly, this is pointed out in the appropriate sections of the report. For this reason, no further substantiation is provided at this point of the report.</p> <p>In particular, details are given below in this section on the specific lessons taken from the implementation of the RISM programme, what implications have been drawn and how successful the applications have been and what further lessons can be taken.</p> <p>Most importantly, the consultants are of the view that in general, shortcomings of TRF are not mainly due to the quality of lessons taken, but in the implementation.</p>
U2	Clarify de statement “ <i>As TRF is a novel programme approach, the design has not been very precise in all areas. It is now at the time to specify, adjust, and in some cases change the programme design</i> ”	<p>Comment addressed.</p> <p>Meaning of 'novel' is clarified and its implications are explained: “<i>As TRF is a novel programme approach (i.e. it is new in its type - it cannot replicate previous programmes and/or learn from previous experiences)</i>”.</p>
HM3	Substantiate the paragraph: “ <i>The roles and tasks of the FSU are very wide and not well understood by all stakeholders. The team is overloaded with reporting duties. In addition, FSU members are required to take part in SADC meetings that are not directly relevant</i> ”	<p>Comment addressed.</p> <p>Details are given in section 'relevance' (sub-section 'realism in the choice and quantity of inputs')</p>

	<p><i>to their work”</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, the substantive roles of the FSU experts are underemphasized, in the support for Member States in the application formulation, in the evaluation process, and in the project implementation and its monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>The use of short term expertise has in many cases been questionable (applications, development of communication and M&E plans)”.</i></p>	
HM4	<p>On the statement “<i>The role of the Steering Committee as the oversight body of the TRF needs to be strengthened. This is needed to ensure better timeliness and high quality performance of the TRF and its FSU. The proposals concern provision of information provided and its timeliness (quarterly reports with standard and concise format), voting rights, observing members, separation of management and oversight, and others.</i>”, the Task Manager asks if this is linked to a proposal to meet quarterly at SC level and if there is a rationale to have quarterly high-level strategic steering committee meetings rather than the currently foreseen semi-annual (+ad-hoc) meetings?</p>	<p>Comments addressed and change accepted by EU. Yes, quarterly meetings are proposed. Detailed recommendations for reform of the steering committee are provided in section 'relevance' (sub-section 'quality of the analysis of strategic options, of the justification of the recommended implementation strategy, and of management and coordination arrangements')</p>
HM5	<p>On the statement that “<i>The FSU should have reduced reporting and attendance requirements at SADC meetings</i>” the questions how heavy the reporting burdens for FSU really are since there are surely in line with regular TIFI reporting requirements (as they are valid for other programmes). In her view there is no high reporting burden on TRF</p>	<p>Comment addressed and change accepted by EU. Paragraph is reformulated as suggested.</p>

HM6	The paragraph “ <i>Relocation of the FSU to the SADC Secretariat or to REIS should be considered in order to improve information flow and to stimulate cooperation. Institutionally, TRF should be treated as an autonomous body and be measured accordingly</i> ” contradicts itself. Also, how does the promoted autonomy of TRF relate to the fact that TRF is understood to be a TIFI programme, embedded in the SADC structures. TRF work plans and reporting are understood to be integrated into TIFI plans and reporting – how can you measure autonomously and would that not go against principles of aid effectiveness and harmonization?	Addressed and change accepted by EU. This recommendation has been deleted.
HM7	There still is no link clarified between the lessons identified in the action fiche or preparatory studies for TRF and the actual programme design – on capacity gaps the strong focus on TA in the contribution agreement responds to these gaps. However, the MTR fails to make the link between other identified lessons and project design. In the absence of such links, the MTR would have done good to point out that TRF design fell short from the beginning in addressing those identified lessons.	Comment addressed. The sentence following the commented statement provides two lessons. Other lessons are taken up under specific headings. Where lessons are taken up incorrectly, this is pointed out. Most importantly, the consultants are of the view that in general shortcomings of TRF are not primarily due to the quality of lessons taken, but to the implementation.
HM8	The report's statement: <i>'The TRF design to focus on the national level of SADC regional integration is meant to alleviate thereby the bottleneck of resource absorption at the regional (SADC) level.'</i> is incorrect.	Comment addressed: The statement is deleted as suggested.
HM9	The sentence “ <i>This focus also helps to integrate the linkages between the national and regional programmes</i> ” is unclear and should be rephrased taking into account that: TRF which aims at supporting implementation of the SADC Trade	Addressed as suggested. The quoted sentence is replaced with: 'TRF that aims at supporting implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol and the EPA (as a regional trade agreement) is basically aiming to implement the regional integration aspirations of SADC

	Protocol and the EPA (as a regional trade agreement) is basically aiming to implement the regional integration aspirations of SADC (countries) at national level – a clear translation of the need to link stronger regional with national levels	(countries) at national level - a clear translation of the need to link stronger regional with national levels.'
HM10	It is unclear how these paragraphs are linked to the quality of analysis of lessons learned from past experiences and sustainability issues. The paragraphs highlighted provide an analysis on the level of implementation of the STP, but fail to make the link with either the design or the state of implementation of the TRF. It is questioned what is the value added of these paragraphs under this heading. As TRF main purpose is to support Member States in the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol – it is obviously responding to this perceived lack of implementation at national level of the STP – does that then not indicate a well-conceptualised design for TRF?	Comment addressed and change accepted by the EUD Additional sentence below explains relevance and link of paragraphs above.
U11	Add the sentence “ <i>The TRF programme is consistent with the trade policy and programme frameworks of SADC and the EU within which it is placed. Through its two windows it is supportive of these programmes and policies</i> ” (copied from 7.1 pg 25 on Coherence) in order to bring consistency to the flow of thought Suggestion to delete the paras above (as per HM10) as they are conflicting and bring confusion on the thought process	Addressed: The two sentences suggested by EU are added to the text.
H12	On the reasoning about the country allocations, the EUD does not see the link between the quality and the re-allocation.	This paragraph is now deleted

H13	<p>On the paragraph “<i>the idea to introduce competition among countries as a way to increase quality the Task Manager finds this questionable. It would be likely to lead to capture of funds by higher capable Member States at the costs of the least capable countries. This would fly in the face of the higher needs for technical assistance by the least capable Member States</i>”, the comment is taken, but the team is asked if it assessed how the competitiveness element was dealt with under TRF as it seems that it was not at all in play during the implementation. While that may be a positive development, it does present a significant deviation from the original project design in the implementation stage. The team is also asked if it paid attention to that in the evaluation process and if it could share any views on why/how this has materialised and what is (positive or negative) spill-overs were</p>	<p>Comment is addressed: Added sentence: '<i>In practice the principle of competition was not applied in TRF, although it was part of the design. For the above mentioned reasons, in the current situation in the region, this was a good decision.</i>'</p>
HM14	<p>Statements on private sector seen as contradictory</p>	<p>Comment addressed and explanation accepted by EU The team does not see the contradiction since what they intend to express in the report says is that the private sector <i>is supposed</i> to play a role, but <i>in practice</i> this role is limited.</p>
U15	<p>To the paragraph “<i>However, although the private sector is supposed to be a stakeholder, it does not play a major role as active partners in designing, executing or benefiting from country applications. The lack of a reference point for the private sector in the SADC Secretariat restricts its ability to strengthen the role of the private sector</i>” SADC commented: recognition of this as a constraint and the efforts of SADC in addressing the limitation, including the work ongoing of dialoguing with the</p>	<p>Comment addressed and accepted by the EUD The Consultant team recommends to re-establish a reference point for the private sector at the SADC Secretariat.</p>

	private sector etc and further a recommendation can be made to address the limitation for emphasis	
HM16	The sentence <i>'This experience supports the interpretation of some countries that there is a degree of pressure on the applying countries in TRF to use external expertise.'</i> needs qualification.	Comment addressed: Sentence is clarified. The sentence has been changed to: <i>'This experience supports the interpretation of some countries that there is a degree of pressure on the applying countries in TRF to use external expertise. However, this is not a general experience: Some countries have made good use of the short term consultants.'</i> Moreover, the sentiment that there is a pressure does not imply any assumed link between TRF and RISM.
U17	On the paragraph: <i>"Another drawback of the use of external experts has been their predominant use to write the country applications, rather than to empower the countries to write such applications. The purpose of the technical assistance in this context then becomes to replace missing capacities in the Member States rather than building those capacities. In the interviews and country visits no evidence was found that the capacity of beneficiaries to write applications has increased through the process"</i> , SADC considers that the analysis is good and objective and really compares RISM and TRF but fails to appreciate the life-long of RISM, where over the years the programme has been reviewed and improved and adequate capacity in the process built. Another limiting factor for TRF is its lifespan, from the start, the need to put in place necessary processes and the kick in of the D+3	Comment addressed and accepted. Paragraph is clarified by adding sentence: <i>'In light of the limited life-span of TRF (contrasting with RISM) and the kick-in of the D+3, however, the high use of short term experts in TRF may have been unavoidable.'</i>

U18	Delete paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 under “ <i>The quality of the analysis of strategic options, of the justification of the recommended implementation strategy, and of management and coordination arrangements.</i> ”, and provide criticism where necessary and as appropriate	Comment addressed and accepted. The paragraphs are deleted and replaced by: <i>'In general, the Operational Guidelines are appropriate. Some weaknesses are mentioned under specific headlines below.'</i>
HM19	The elaborate outline of the delays on the operational guidelines does no links with the heading of this section. The importance of the delay in adoption of operational guidelines in the overall delay in implementation of the TRF is acknowledged, there is no analysis in the end on whether the Operational Guidelines are appropriate as an implementation mechanism for the TRF or whether alternative options could/should have been looked at.	Comment addressed and accepted: the paragraph was deleted
HM20	On the statement that “ <i>The first call for applications should have been planned within the second half of the first year</i> ”, the Task Manager points out that the original date foreseen to launch the call for applications was much earlier, but had to be postponed in the absence of a signed addendum on the operational guidelines	Comment addressed and accepted. The statement is replaced by: <i>'The first call for applications should have been planned within the second half of the first year (the original date foreseen was even much earlier, but had to be postponed in the absence of a signed addendum on the Operational Guidelines).'</i>
HM21	Elaborate why it is a weakness that the requirements and a timeline for the Inception Report of the TRF are not defined in the service tender , and how has this perceived weakness further impacted on the implementation (and related delays)	Comment addressed and accepted. A sentence explaining the statement is added: <i>'The report was only delivered after 3 and a half months and with draft communication and M&E plans.'</i>
U22	On the statement that “ <i>The Action Fiche does not define requirements and a timeline for the Inception Report of the TRF</i> ” SADC considers that there is no need to dwell on Action Fiche, but the team should move on to assess effective implementation /strategic management of the project	Consultants regard it as their task, as part of the design evaluation, to also comment on the Action Fiche. Effective implementation and strategic management are dealt with in Section 2. The consultants retain their privilege to include the comments on the AF, even is it not required.

HM23 (see comments to final version, MH6)	The Task manager asks the team to qualify the statement “ <i>The role of ICP in the Steering Committee has not proven as useful.</i> ” She also asks if the participation of ICP in the TRF Steering Committee is not allowing for the SC to have a more strategic role in defining possibly synergies and ensuring avoidance of overlap in the use of ICP resources by the beneficiary	Comment addressed. The sentence is replaced by: “ <i>In the view of participants of the Steering Committee, the role of ICP in the Steering Committee has not proven as useful, as they reportedly hardly contribute to discussions. Instead, intensifying communication and possibly collaboration can increase the role and usefulness of TRF, and possibly programmes and projects of other ICP. However, that is a different role than steering TRF.</i> ”
HM24	<i>'In addition to its tasks, the institutional relationship and the tasks of the FSU are critical.</i> ‘Sentence is not very clear.	Comment addressed and accepted. The sentence replaced is by: <i>'In addition to the tasks of the FSU, its institutional relationship is critical.'</i>
HM25	Qualify the statement that FSU is not part of TIFI?	Comment addressed and accepted. The statement reads now: <i>'The TRF is to assist the TIFI Directorate. While it is institutionally embedded in TIFI, it is not part of it in terms of line management, but has a separate management.'</i>
HM26	On the statement “ <i>To maximise its efficiency more autonomy in its technical decision making would be necessary, so that it can operate without needing to revert continuously back to the TIFI Director for guidance</i> ”, clarify how does that relate to the need to have ownership by SADC, through TIFI.	Comment addressed and accepted. The following sentence is added: <i>'A degree of managerial autonomy does not have to go at the cost of ownership. The latter can be ensured through full and rapid information and close interaction.'</i>
U27	The Task Manager could also be leading the REIS project as it is closely related and complementary to TRF ': It is pointed out by SADC that this is already the case.	Comment addressed and accepted: In the assessment of the consultants, this may be correct in formal terms (there appears to be no Terms of Reference for the Task Manager), but in reality there is direct management by the TIFI director.
MH28	The Task Manager could also be leading the REIS project as it is closely related and complementary to TRF ': In the opinion of EU, assumption is unclear. Are we applauding or criticizing the duplication of roles in the TRF task manager also being responsible	Comment addressed: The team refers to the enhanced role of the Task Manager that we propose above and here we suggest that s/he could also properly manage both TRF and REIS - but should not do more. We reformulated the sentence to: <i>'The Task Manager could, in the enlarged role also be leading the REIS</i>

	for REIS. Can the evaluation express an opinion on whether the current arrangements (where the task manger is responsible for both TRF and REIS) is more appropriate.	<i>project as it is closely related and complementary to TRF'.</i>
U29	Concerning the statement <i>“In the description of its functions in the Action Fiche, the FSU’s substantive work (advice, support, evaluation) is underemphasized, while administrative tasks are overemphasized (in the presence of a lack of decision competence)”</i> SADC advises not to dwell much on the AF, but concentrate on effective implementation.	The team takes note of this comment, but the consultant team see it as part of their task to evaluate as well the programme design.
U30	No specific background and expertise on international trade and specifically on regional trade integration is required. However, it is a key function of the FSU to provide technical support.' It is asked if these means that consultant team finds FSU team leader as lacking.	No, this statement does not imply any evaluation of the team leader. This section is about the design. The effectiveness and efficiency of the TRF, including its FSU, is discussed in sections 2 and 3
U31	SADCs asked for the deletion of the following paragraphs on the grounds of lack of added value and repetition: <i>The Action Fiche and the preparatory studies mention the possibility of employing short-term experts to support Member States in the formulation of their applications. However, no details are provided. In practice, the use of short-term experts may be problematic. It can easily undermine ownership and capacity strengthening through learning effects. It also carries the risk that country priorities are misrepresented. Context knowledge of an outside expert is often inferior to that of the beneficiary. In practice, the performance of the STE was mixed in view of the countries that made use of them. Some Focal Points report that despite best efforts the STE</i>	Comment addressed and accepted: The suggestion was accepted and the paragraphs deleted.

	<p><i>reports did not sufficiently represent the country preferences (in some instances new STE were employed for this reason). Zambia decided against making use of STE because of concerns of ownership. Some countries felt that there was an expectation or even pressure to make use of STE and/or that the chances to receive funds was higher when STE were used to prepare applications. Some countries perceive it as a disadvantage that they were not consulted in the selection of STE. Related to this, lack of knowledge of the national context was regarded as a disadvantage by some countries.</i></p>	
MH32	<p>The Task Manager considers that the following sentence is unclear: <i>“The FSU experts have to play the crucial role to advise the Member State Focal Points on their applications. If there are needs for special technical knowledge that they do not have, they should prepare written motivations for the employment of STE and submit for the decision of the TRF Task Manager, who consults with the expertise in SADC Secretariat”</i>, and that it does not address the points mentioned above where the FSU should advise unless they miss the technical expertise (as it assesses only the needs at MS level) nor the involvement of the MS in the selection of experts</p>	<p>Comment addressed and accepted. Sentences are replaced by: <i>'The FSU experts have to play the crucial role to advise the Member States Focal Points on their applications. They are in the best position for this task. If there are needs for special technical knowledge that both the Member States and the FSU technical advisers do not have, then the Member States, with the assistance of FSU technical advisers, should prepare written motivations for the employment of STE and submit for the decision of the TRF Task Manager, who consults with the expertise in SADC Secretariat.'</i></p>
U33	<p>SADC considers the following two paragraphs contradictory and asks for a clarification: <i>“It provides very generic indicators and exemplary indicators instead of advising on the existing country applications. This reflects little understanding of the concrete project and its progress.</i></p>	<p>Comment addressed and accepted. The second paragraph is replaced by: <i>'The M&E of TRF must be distinguished from the M&E of country programmes. These country programmes each have their own specific Performance Assessment Frameworks (PAF) that measure their specific activities and outputs and that include measurable indicators.'</i></p>

	<i>The M&E of TRF must be distinguished from the M&E of country programmes. The latter have their Performance Assessment Frameworks (PAF) that include measurable indicators. This is the correct instrument for their monitoring”</i>	
U34	SADC finds the following statement very appropriate: <i>“However, (industrial development) is not best promoted on the regional level. Rather, it is primarily a concern of national economic policy. Instead, it should be a concern of regional policy and possibly intervention to alleviate and counter potential negative side effects of STP implementation “</i>	No action needed
U35	SADC considers the following paragraph very appropriate and requests that it is used to replace the earlier requested deletion in the first part of the report: <i>“Two of the assumptions have been unduly optimistic: First, that EPA negotiation would be finalised in due time - experience rather informed that delays were likely. Second, that commitment of Member States towards SADC regional integration would remain strong. However, as elsewhere, inward-looking trade strategies were already foreseeable if not gaining ground at the time of project conceptualisation. Risk mitigating and countering measures could have been planned, as discussed above”</i>	Comment addressed and accepted. Deletions and revisions of previous paragraphs done according to various previous comments above.
U36	On the sentence: <i>“The delay in EPA negotiations, as mentioned above, could have been anticipated”</i> SADC is of the opinion that it is a valid point, but that a lot has been learned including the focus on industrialisation as a means of attracting investment, opportunities around EPAs also aims to benefit Member States and improve the lives of the people	No action needed

U37	SADC considers the following sentence a good observation: <i>“It remains to be seen how adaptability and flexibility of FSU will turn out in implementation phase.”</i>	No action needed
MH38	The Task Manager asks to what programme does this sentence refer <i>“Although this programme is scheduled to end, it may be extended”</i> (REIS, USAID, TradeHub?)	Comment addressed: the text was modified to clarify 'this' refers to REIS.
U39	Concerning the sentence <i>“Further support to regional economic integration in the next EDF is also expected.”</i> SADC considers that it could be linked to the issue of sustainability as a mitigating factor and a window of opportunity for a form of future TRF, including guidance for SADC and Member States as they implement to ensure cross fertilisation of ideas and sustainability of projects at national level, calls for recommendation for emphasis	No action needed
U40	SADC considers that the sentence <i>“Currently, possibilities of cooperation are not fully utilised”</i> is a good observation and should replace other negative comments earlier on about synergies and cooperation.	Comment addressed and accepted: the text preceding this summarizing evaluation statement was reviewed to make sure there are no undue negative statements on
U41	SADC agrees and develops some views about the statement <i>“Such cooperation needs to grow organically and depends on the genuine interest of those managing the various programmes and projects - it cannot be imposed”</i>	No action needed
U42	SADC asked if concerning the evaluation team took into consideration the TIFI Thematic Group as a possible alternative platform to identify those synergies between ICP support programmes in relation to the sentence <i>“As reported, the participation of representatives of other programmes</i>	Comment addressed and accepted: the question is taken up by adding the sentence: <i>'The TIFI Thematic Group can be used as a possible alternative platform to identify those synergies between ICP support programmes.'</i>

	<i>in the region in the Steering Committee meetings has not been very useful. The feasibility and promise of such meetings have to (and can be) assessed in advance of such meetings.”</i>	
U43	SADC considers this is a good statement that should be included in the Summary: <i>“Project effectiveness is defined as the level and quality of services provided by the TRF project to the beneficiaries and the way in which results have been used to develop the trade policy analysis capacity of the Member States and to facilitate the implementation “</i>	Comment addressed and accepted: the Statement was moved to the Summary
U44	SADC considers that it should be reflected that it was too early to determine the actual impact at this stage of implementation as it is still at infancy stage, as already alluded to in the report	Comment addressed and accepted: the following sentence was added: <i>Nevertheless, it is too early to determine the actual impact of the TRF Programme because the implementation of the projects has not yet started.</i>
U45	Concerning fund utilization as a measure of performance within the planned expenditure for the purpose of effectiveness, SADC states that if it relates to country project implementation, it is still preliminary as the disbursements are only foreseen by January 2017	Comment addressed and accepted, The following sentence was added: <i>. But the disbursements are only foreseen by January 2017.</i>
U46	SADC considers that the following statement is repetitive and overemphasized over the report: <i>“In terms of application and implementation procedures there is general respect for the work of the FSU, though it was felt that it took too much time to establish the FSU and that the response times for the different stages of the project cycle have been too long”</i>	Comment addressed and accepted and paragraph deleted

MH47	On the statement “ <i>Only few member states are capable to take up these two functions themselves</i> ”, the Task Manager asks what this means for the staffing at MS level in respect of finance and procurement officers and if the team has sufficient information from the evaluation process to make a judgement on that, and if that is not the case to remove this reference.	Comment addressed and accepted : Reference deleted and paragraph changed
MH48	The Task Manager points out that the sentence “ <i>The Inception Report specifies the workload for the FSU technical advisers and the FSU has enough staff to perform properly</i> ” is in contradiction with an earlier section that stated there was no requirement for an Inception Report.	Comment accepted by the EUD, and reference to Inception report deleted and paragraph changed
MH49	The Task Manager asks again for clarifications about the statements on the “ <i>limited technical capacity of the FSU advisers</i> ” (is on trade issues? analytical skills? management skills?)	Comment addressed: paragraph changed to <i>The FSU technical advisers write reports such as inception report, progress reports, and annual report (even if the first- and only - annual report was of poor quality). The FSU technical advisers produce too many reports such as monthly reports; however, technical reports are not produced by the FSU technical advisers but by short-term experts. The FSU technical advisers did not have the capacity to work on the procurement guidelines or the procurement capacity assessment guidelines for each Member State. The FSU technical advisers should also be more involved in the project applications, providing strong assistance to identify projects and guidance to people in the Member States, to train them to write their own project proposals.</i> Footnote added.
U50	On the statement on the “ <i>limited technical capacity of the FSU advisers</i> ” SADC requests that the team gets clarity from Operational Guidelines to guide on the mandate and the need to avoid conflict of interests, to be the judge and jury here	Comment addressed and accepted by EUD and Paragraph changed. Moreover, the team confirms that it took into consideration the Operational Guidelines as a reference for the explanation

MH51	It is not entirely clear what reports this statement refers to: <i>“The limited capacity of FSU technical advisers is supported by the fact that they needed to call on STE to write reports on any technical issue. Clarify if it the team is intending the applications developed at MS or is referring to more generic issues, e.g. visibility, M&</i>	Comment addressed by changing the paragraph accordingly. : changed and Paragraph changed
MH52	On the statement <i>“however, technical reports are not produced by the FSU technical advisers but by short-term experts. This includes procurement guidelines or procurement capacity assessment guidelines for each Member State”</i> the Task Manager points out that procurement issues require a very specific type of expertise that is not existent in the FSU trade experts o they should be justified to use STE for that purpose	Comment addressed and accepted. Usually in projects the team of experts has the capacity to write Procurement Guidelines. It is standard documents and the team of experts have to adapt them to the project..
U53	On the statement <i>“The monitoring provided by the FSU technical advisers during the implementation of the projects in Member States can be organized by phone, skype or emails”</i> SADC takes note of the suggestions but points out that sometimes, the level of development will not necessarily support	No action needed
U54	On the statement <i>“In terms of the current status of project activities, most of the reports for the adoption of the projects in Member States have been endorsed or will be endorsed during the next Steering Committee . It is important to take into consideration that there is no implementation of projects in Member States at the end of this Mid Term Evaluation of SADC Trade Related Facility”</i> the Task Manager wonders how much the update can be made to reflect outcome of the Steering committee given that the Mid Term Report is finalised way past the date of SC	The team clarifies that this is only a statement of fact

MH55	Agreement of Task Manager with comment U54, and addition of a footnote clarifying the current state of implementation.	Comment addressed and footnote added
U56	SADC requests that the team avoids reporting on the report and states the facts	No action needed
MH57	On the comparison between Botswana and Zambia in terms of usage of short-term experts, the Task Manager considers that it is not accurate and comparisons should not be made for the sake of comparison	Comment addressed and accepted by EUD . The paragraph was changed n taken into consideration the suggestion.: <i>In Zambia, there was no short-term expert because the Ministry of Trade evaluated the use of short-term experts and came to the conclusion that it was better for them to do it in order to ensure that their needs and priorities were fully respected in their application. They decided this, in spite of their own staff shortages. However it should be taken into account that RISM has been implemented since 2006 and in the process reviewed, where Zambia Ministry staff were learning, could have utilised STEs in the process and probably were lagging behind just to submit their application.</i>
MH58	The Task Manager does not see the link between the delays in implementation and use of SADC procedures, so far as the SADC procedures will be used for implementation at the national level once financing agreements are signed and are not being used before that	Comment addressed: paragraph deleted
MH59	The Task Manager asks the team to elaborate on whether the CVs of the experts do not correspond to the requirements in the sense that they are higher qualified or do they not meet even the limited requirements that are mentioned in the TOR	Comment addressed: the paragraph was changed providing further explanations. The evaluation team found that the CVs of the FSU technical advisers did not fully correspond to the experience and qualifications required in the FSU ToR. The CVs do not meet the limited requirements that are mentioned in the ToR and the technical advisers are therefore not fully qualified for the FSU positions.

MH60	On the remark that” <i>the Team Leader is spending too much time writing reports</i> ” the Task Manager considers that is in fact the Team Leader’s responsibility and wonders why this is considered so much particularly since there is no implementation ongoing on the ground.	This statement was explained by the FSU Team Leader himself complaining that he had to spend too much time on monthly reports and reports requested by TIFI. The consultants checked the Team Leader workload and the different reports he had to produce and we confirmed this statement. One more sentence was added to this paragraph to address the comment received.
MH61	The Task Manager asks for consistency on the opinions of reporting since in this section it is stated that “The Quarterly Reports and the Annual Report which have to be presented to the TIFI Director and the Steering Committee for comments and approval” while in others the team refers to the FSU preparing monthly reports.	The team clarifies that this is only a statement of fact
U63 and MH64	On the statement that “ <i>The FSU is facing constraints in spending too much time in TIFI meetings, getting the approval of their reports after several weeks and the recruitment of the short-term experts is taking two or three months. It is difficult to overcome these constraints because FSU is acting like a unit fully integrated in TIFI</i> ” SADC is of the opinion that this is overemphasised and the Task Manager points out that they maintain the opinion that FSU should be integrated within TIFI and if the team has any recommendations to make on this, perhaps it should look at improving the decision-making structures within TRF?	Comment addressed: FSU is acting like a Unit but nevertheless it is a Programme which does not fully participate to all TIFI meetings.

U65	On the doubts of the team on whether at <i>“the current rate of disbursement the project will be able to disburse the remaining funds before the end of the project in 2019”</i> , SADC asks if the team is assessing what is being done in the meantime to prepare such an event and what is being proposed	Addressed and paragraph changed “
U66	SADC considers that the following paragraph is enough and that repetition should be avoided: <i>“Given the late start-up of operations and the real need for capacity building support to Member States, there is currently a heavy burden on FSU staff. The critical issue is whether the FSU has sufficient staff and the capacity to be involved in the implementation of the current number of projects in Member States that need to be contracted and planned”</i>	Comment accepted and paragraph deleted
MH67	The Task Manager considers that this statement is factually incorrect: <i>“technical people have to wait for the organization of the Technical Evaluation Committee. for their project proposals to be presented”</i> . In fact, once the proposals are received and administratively accepted, the dates for the technical evaluation are set and documents distributed. There is nothing prohibiting evaluators from reading the proposals ahead of the meetings (which would in the end be more time-efficient than reading them during the meeting)	Comment accepted and paragraph changed
MH68	<i>“ It can take two or three months between the finalisation of the project proposals and the final approval of those proposals”</i> – the Task Manager	The consultants think that it is not a reasonable delay , opinion which is shared by some members of the Steering Committee

	considers that this is not a delay but a reasonable deadline for this sort of activity.-	
U69	<i>“The consultants do not view this as a particularly surprising or problematic statistic, since the number of global organisations able to take advantage of the specialised services provided by the FSU is limited and it is not clear that websites are the main source of information for Ministries of Trade and regional institutions when they are seeking development assistance”</i> – SADC comment is recast to state the fact not a report on the basis of which guidance and recommendation can be made / given	Comment addressed and accepted: the paragraph was deleted
U70	On the statement <i>“This means that the regional and national organisations, both public and private, should have the financial resources for implementing more projects and sustain the projects implemented funded by EU/SADC. This is the key problem of sustainability.”</i> SADC is of the opinion that however an assumption can be made that Member States as they benefit, they would start planning for future continuation of implementation of the projects in line with their National Development Programmes and as such ensure sustainability and also opportunities coming along with EPA implementation under EDF11 and other programmes	No action needed
U71	SADC requests that the sequencing of this paragraph and the previous one is changed in order to enhance positive aspects.	Comment accepted and paragraph changed accordingly
U72	SADC takes note of the following statement: <i>“As no project agreements are signed at present, it is thus premature to make a judgement on the sustainability</i>	No action needed

	<i>of those activities as they cannot be assessed without knowledge of the factual implementation arrangements on the ground.”</i>	
U73	SADC considers that the following statement does not have a basis and can have a negative impact on SADC Secretariat: <i>“Apparently the tight management regulations by SADC have prevented more transparency on activities of TRF”</i> .	Comment addressed and accepted. Sentence revised to: <i>'The tight management regulations by SADC, while understandable in the sensitive environment of a multi-state organisation as SADC, appear to have prevented more transparency on TRF's activities.'</i>
U74 and MH75	SADC requests deletion of the following paragraphs: <i>“Regional trade integration lies at the core of SADC's regional integration agenda. The STP, signed in 1996 by a number of SADC Member States is one of the most important legal instruments of SADC. It aims at enhancing cross-border investment by liberalising intra-regional trade. The objective is the implementation of a SADC free trade area (FTA). The Protocol contains all the obligations that Member States need to observe in order for the regional arrangement to be compatible with WTO rules.</i> <i>At the same time, although STP is in force since 2000, large parts of its national obligations remain yet to be implemented. Even though SADC has broadened its scope, notably in the revised RISDP, the implementation of STP will remain of core importance for years to come.”</i> The Task Manager points out that this has more with background for TRF than coherence with relevant EU strategies	Comment addressed and accepted. Paragraphs are deleted as requested.
U76	SADC requests that the following paragraphs are moved to the Executive Summary: <i>Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs),</i>	Comment addressed and accepted by the EUD: the paragraphs have been moved to the Executive Summary

development oriented free trade agreements, are at the core of the EU's relations with developing countries, and specifically of the EU-SADC relationship. Six of the SADC Member States (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) signed an EPA with the EU in June 2016, after a long and protracted negotiation process (Angola has an option to join the agreement in future). The Agreement has been ratified by the SADC EPA Member States and entered into provisional application in October 2016. The EU-SADC EPA has the objective of supporting sustainable economic growth, diversification and expansion of the industrial base of the region through regional and global value chains, investment and opportunities.

The Economic Partnership Agreement embraces the objectives of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan of poverty eradication and deeper regional integration.

The conclusion of the SADC-EU EPA this year marks a milestone. The implementation of this agreement will require major efforts and presents significant challenges for the concerned SADC Member States. Technical assistance in this field has scope for major improvements.

The EU is an important trade partner of SADC and is likely to remain so over the coming years. In addition to the implementation of EPA obligations,

	<i>strengthening the supply capacity of SADC Member States and a broadening and deepening of trade between EU and SADC, notably through negotiations on trade in services, should be high on the agenda</i>	
U77	SADC takes note of the recommendation to take into consideration these cross-cutting issues as the projects are being implemented, to ensure alignment and coherence with international best practices	No action needed
U78	SADC comments the linkages in project application and complementarity to the country and regional development plans etc in relation to statement <i>“There is small evidence of how the TRF will actively complement individual Member States’ own strategies in the region”</i>	No action needed
U79	In relation to statement <i>“At the design level, the project identification and formulation documents do not elaborate particular mechanisms dedicated to such coordination”</i> SADC sees an opportunity to encourage appropriate reporting and as visibility is being planned need to emphasise more collaborative and sensitization activities to ensure achievement of the same, in anticipation of final evaluation	No action needed
U80	SADC requests that the paragraphs on overall assessment are elevated to the Executive Summary	Comment addressed and approved by EUD: some paragraphs were moved to the Executive Summary while the rest of the paragraphs were summarized in the Overall Assessment.
U81	SADC asks for clarification of the sentence <i>“The increase of their capacities will not have increased enough “</i>	Comment addressed: this sentence has been deleted when the Overall Assessment was summarized
MH82	The Task Manager asks on what basis EDF rules would be understood to be more 'best practice' than SADC rules since SADC has passed pillar assessment and is thus considered in line with international best	Comment addressed: paragraph added: <i>“Nevertheless, other Member States mentioned that at first they will face difficulties, but they will learn and eventually using SADC procedures will strengthen regional integration and</i>

	practice. Moreover using SADC procedures will strengthen regional integration and ownership	<i>ownership</i> ” -
Comments received to latest version of the report	<p>MH1 - In relation to earlier comment MH8 We had asked to clarify this point – TRF's purpose is to strengthen national level implementation of regional commitments; so far we agree. Where we disagree is that TRF's purpose is to respond to absorption challenges at regional level – this is not the purpose of TRF...</p> <p>If you look at the structure of TRF, funds are channelled from the EU to SADC and SADC can only transfer funds to the national level based on implementation, results achieved (and in first instance contracts signed) – this is not responding to absorption challenges at the regional level by channelling funds directly to the national level...</p> <p>I ask you again to substantiate this statement or alter this wrong information.</p>	Comment addressed: The statement is deleted as suggested.
	<p>MH2 - In relation to earlier comment MH12 I believe there is still discrepancy here: first of all, the start of the sentence is wrong as the allocations under TRF are indicative.</p> <p>The report continues to make the link between re-allocation and quality of proposals and fails to explain this link. The re-allocation of resources had to do with the uptake of resources – the reason for full uptake by countries is a pro-active approach by FSU/SADC that will ensure all funds are absorbed through</p>	This paragraph is now deleted

	<p>identification of additional proposals (countries are actively approached to identify additional projects for remaining resources under initial tentative allocations). The absence of a competition element comes into play as well, as the tentative allocations then become more 'entitlements' given that countries are not asked to 'compete' for funds. I fail to see however what point the evaluation team is trying to make here ... it remains overall an unclear point.</p> <p>To me, what should be stated here is that re-allocation of resources has not been an issue in the TRF due to the active uptake of resources by countries and with active support of FSU/SADC – thus, the theoretical possibility of re-allocation of tentative country allocations has become redundant.</p> <p>Please clarify what point is trying to be made or delete this paragraph.</p>	
	<p>MH3 in relation to earlier comment MH12 Not sure what is implied here??? Do you imply that project approvals are a political process rather than a technical one? The quality of proposals is certainly different, but there is a quality evaluation framework in place that accepts or rejects proposals... kindly substantiate the assumptions here?</p>	<p>This paragraph is now deleted</p>

	<p>MH5 in relation to earlier comment MH16 You are not responding to my comment that there is no direct link between capacity being build under RISM to develop proposals and the need of STE under TRF... only 50% of TRF beneficiary countries are also eligible to RISM. I still fail to see how this results in 'pressure to use STE' under TRF</p>	<p>In response to the earlier comment, the paragraph had been changed to : <i>'This experience supports the interpretation of some countries that there is a degree of pressure on the applying countries in TRF to use external expertise. However, this is not a general experience: Some countries have made good use of the short term consultants.'</i> The consultant clarifies that the sentiment that there is a pressure does not imply any assumed link between TRF and RISM.</p>
	<p>MH6 in relation to earlier comment MH23 The question posed earlier was to qualify the statements as to why the role of ICP in the SC is considered not useful. You have not answered the question by referring to an unidentified 'stakeholder'... please clarify what is intended here??</p>	<p>Comment addressed. The sentence is replaced by: “In the view of participants of the Steering Committee, the role of ICP in the Steering Committee has not proven as useful, as they reportedly hardly contribute to discussions. Instead, intensifying communication and possibly collaboration can increase the role and usefulness of TRF, and possibly programmes and projects of other ICP. However, that is a different role than steering TRF.”</p>
	<p>MH7 The below highlighted part seems to have been moved from another section to here – there was a lot of comments on this earlier section in its original location and I don't see those comments addressed. Moreover, its position in this position (on progress towards achievements of objectives) seems questionable as the paragraphs do not really speak of progress towards achievement of planned resources... I would recommend to completely remove from the report at this stage.</p>	<p>Comment accepted and paragraphs deleted</p>

	<p>MH8 iIn relation to earlier comment MH59 I don't think earlier comments were addressed... if you state that FSU experts are not 'qualified enough' you have to substantiate that with either pointing out where they do not meet the requirements of the TOR or pointing out where the TOR are at fault for demanding too low qualifications. You seem to state earlier in the same report that the requirements of the TOR are not adequate for the job as no specific expertise is required – then it is not the fault of the FSU experts, but of the TOR under which they were recruited. Please clarify what exactly you are trying to say here rather than making assumptions and broad statements that can provide an unsubstantiated negative opinion on colleagues.</p>	<p>If one compares the requirements of the TOR in terms of recruitment of experts and the CVs of the FSU technical advisers recruited, they do not fully match.</p> <p>The evaluation team does not have a negative opinion of FSU experts, but we think the FSU technical advisers do not have the same professional profile and experience in their CVs that in the profile and experience requested in the TOR.</p>
	<p>MH9 in relation to earlier comment MH60 I still don't think earlier remarks here have been addressed appropriately – the TRF team leader reporting burden is similar to that of any other team leader working with TIFI and thus not out of the ordinary... it's the fundamental task of the team leader to report on progress... why would this be an issue once implementation in MS is ongoing? They will do their own reporting to the FSU, which can be consolidated into TRF reporting... please clarify what is intended here?</p>	<p>The consultants agree with the first part of the comment but the FSU team leader also has to work on documents for TIFI which is not what other team leaders will have to when managing a programme or a project.</p> <p>The team does not fully understand why the FSU has to spend so much time on the monthly reports, which are supposed to have a standard form, and taking into account he does not get any feedback from TIFI (Source: FSU Team Leader)</p>

	<p>MH10 in relation to earlier comment MH65 What exactly does this mean? The earlier comment asked you to assess what was being done by the FSU/SADC to ensure that the programme would remain on track and all financial resources would be absorbed by end 2019.</p>	<p>Comment accepted and paragraph changed: <i>“(...) assessing what is being done in the meantime to prepare the disbursement of the funds does not seem to be effective on FSU side and SADC side According to several comments from SADC Secretariat Officers, they are not yet structured for the monitoring and the disbursement of the funds. The required documents which have to be prepared by the FSU technical advisers for the implementation of the projects in each Member State will take some time and at the time of the Mid-Term review no document was ready taking into consideration that the first implementations of projects were supposed to start the first months of 2017.</i></p>
	<p>MH11 in relation to earlier comment MH82 Thank you for adding this – but does it not contradicts now the above statement that the use of SADC rules should be changed? Perhaps you could consider reworking and making this a recommendation rather than a stated fact? Or remove altogether the reference to the use of SADC rules or EDF rules...</p>	<p>Comment accepted and paragraph deleted. - Moreover, by way of clarification, the team considers that the use of SADC rules should not be changed, but acknowledges that the Member States are more used to working with EDF rules</p>