

TOR for STE-Assignments / Advisory / Services Contract

Programme: Enhancing Company's Competitiveness through Quality Infrastructure (QUIS - Better Goods and Services).

PN: 23.2227.9-001.00

Activity: National Technical Expert supporting Private Sector on technical regulations and/or conformity requirements

Period: January 20, 2025 – December 5, 2025

1. Context

Georgia is a small developing country with a population of about 3.7 million people and a gross national income (GNI) per capita of USD 5,600 (2022). Over the last decade, Georgia undertook significant social and economic reforms resulting, inter alia, in progress in reforming the state's role vis-à-vis the private sector, reducing corruption, and developing a more favorable environment for business. Georgia continues to further progress in the implementation and enforcement of these legislative and regulatory reforms by the government. While Georgia is ahead of its regional peers in its economic governance and regional connectivity, it lags in terms of its competitiveness and economic inclusion.

Georgia and the EU with a far-reaching Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, maintaining the understanding of the importance and vitality for Georgia to aspire to the EU quality standards for the possibility of potential future trade relations. At the moment, EU is the main trade partner of Georgia (20.6 % of its total trade in 2021). As part of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) implemented with the EU since 2014, Georgia is committed to adopting European standards and promoting free-market competition. The collaboration between metrology, norms, testing, quality management, and conformity assessment plays a vital role in this reform process. Consequently, the BSOs and SMEs interested in export to the EU view QI reform as a priority for their further development.

The new conditions pose challenges for the manufacturing industry in Georgia. Companies must comply with European and national regulations while innovating to compete against imports and succeed in both European and international markets. Particularly, the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is crucial for Georgia's continued economic development. However, higher quality requirements for their products also offer significant potential for SMEs to market their products in both domestic and international competitions by exploring new markets. This requires greater alignment of QI institutions with the specific needs of the private sector.

Therefore, QI institutions need to not only change their processes and adapt offerings but also proactively collaborate with the private sector to promote a quality-focused mindset shift. Points of connection exist in QI institutions and, especially, testing laboratories in growth sectors where metrological traceability, suitability tests, accreditation, and conformity assessment are covered. Quality assurance services are necessary to demonstrate and improve product quality for both the domestic and, even more so, the EU market.

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The domain of quality assurance in the national QI system as well as in companies in Georgia, like many other countries, is insufficiently tailored to the needs of women. This can be well illustrated through the example of standardization. Those participating in standard development usually represent not only sector interests but also bring their gender perspective into the process. In the past, technical standards committees in Georgia were predominantly male-dominated. Consequently, the needs of women and potentially other disadvantaged groups were sometimes not addressed, alongside the demanding technical details and consensus-building.

To address these challenges, the European Union, the Federal Ministry of Economic Development BMZ and the Czech Development Cooperation (CDC) jointly co-financed the multi-donor project “QUIS – Better Goods and Services on “Enhancing Companies Competitiveness through Quality Infrastructure” in Georgia. The three-year Project is implemented by GIZ and CzDA, with the timeline scheduled till January 31st, 2027.

QUIS's Overall objective is to promote inclusive and sustainable growth in Georgia and to support the implementation of the DCFTA and its EU-related commitments.

The specific Objective (outcome) of the project is to improve competitiveness and sustainability of the local private sector in Georgia.

To achieve Objectives, QUIS targets the following outputs:

- **Output 1:** Optimized regulatory and policy framework for quality infrastructure in line with EU and international requirements that promotes competitiveness of the Georgian products (goods and services).
- **Output 2:** Improved compliance with European and international standards of conformity assessment bodies (incl. laboratories).
- **Output 3:** Improved compliance with European and international standards of local producers.
- **Output 4:** Raised awareness for Georgian companies regarding the potential of private standards or state regulation, including the services offered by public and private organizations within the system of notified bodies.
- **Output 5:** Intensified cooperation between quality infrastructure institutions and private sector actors.

The QUIS Project conducted a survey involving over 100 companies across various sectors, including textiles, packaging, toys, furniture, and construction materials. The findings revealed that over 90% of the companies expressed a strong interest in improving the quality of their products. The majority of respondents showed particular interest in obtaining international standard certifications, such as ISO (such as 9001) and EN, as well as in expanding their export potential. Additionally, there was significant demand for business coaching and guidance on local technical regulations, along with ways to enhance product conformity with these standards.

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Other areas of interest included consultations on standard implementation, raising awareness about quality infrastructure (QI), and learning more about the available laboratory services in Georgia, as well as the development of new laboratory services to meet industry needs.

2. Objective of the assignment

Scope of QUIS covers Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) development program, including building capacity of testing and calibration laboratory services, which is capital-intensive activity per se, requiring investment in fixed assets and marginal operational expenses. Thus, the project is determined to support this area of market failure and introduce financial mechanism(s) bundled with technical assistance (TA) to strengthen conformity assessment services and generally quality infrastructure in the country. Consequently, financial support will be granted to testing and calibration laboratories, aiming to meet the demand and contribute to overall quality infrastructure.

For this reason, GIZ will contract an expert to consult regarding conformity of industrial or consumer products. The objective of this action is to have an expert capable to advise private sector on conformity assessment services (driven by regulatory requirements or intrinsically) and provide comprehensive analysis of existing requirements for businesses per sector.

With this ToR, GIZ intends to engage individual technical expert and complement the core assignment described above with technical expertise of conformity assessment services.

3. Scope of work

Therefore, the objective of the assignment for the individual technical expert is expected to be achieved through 6 major outcomes:

Outcome 1:

Provide assistance to the international expert team in Desk Research, Analysis of Selected Sectors/Value Chains, and Development of Action Plans (construction materials (including paints), textiles (including personal protective equipment - PPE), packaging, wood products, and furniture (including toys).

Analysis of Selected Economic Sectors/Value Chains

The contractor with the international team will analyze the existing National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) framework in Georgia and its alignment with EU and international standards. The sectors in focus include construction materials (including paints), textiles (including personal protective equipment - PPE), packaging, wood products, and furniture (including toys). The contractor will:

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- Provide materials to international experts and QUIS team related to sector analysis and QI in Georgia. Provide assistance in identifying quality gaps and the demand for QI services in each sector.

Outcome 2:

Technical Advice to Business Support Organizations (BSO) and Georgian Quality and Standards Excellence Hub (QSEH)

Provide Technical Advice to BSOs

The contractor will support the international team to engage with BSOs to identify quality assurance gaps and provide technical advice to improve their capacity. This will include:

- Conducting meetings with up to 10 business associations across the relevant sectors (e.g., packaging, construction materials, textiles, etc.) to identify quality assurance needs and gaps in their industries. Conduct on-site meetings with selected companies (up to 2 per sector) to see the production process and local capabilities.
- Developing tailored advice for each association on tools and methods for gap analysis in quality assurance and on the identification of measures to improve practices.
- Facilitating follow-up sessions to monitor progress and provide ongoing support.

Outcome 3:

Provide Technical Advice to QI Institutions to enhance National QI

Together with the international experts team the contractor will offer technical advice focused on the development of national QI framework to key QI institutions. Key actions include:

- Reviewing existing services offered by the QI institutions, their mandates, strategies and performance of QI institutions.
- Providing technical advice on enhancing institutional capabilities especially focused on the development of national QI.
- Offering guidance on international best practices to align national QI services especially with EU standards.

Draft Recommendations for the Political Framework of QI

Support the development of targeted recommendations based on comprehensive desk research, stakeholder consultations, and dialogue events.

Outcome 4:

Support and Facilitate Stakeholder Dialogue Events

During the execution of the whole contract, the contractor will support/facilitate stakeholder dialogue events and ensure inclusive participation. These events will:

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- Gather inputs on quality-related requirements from key sectors such as textiles (PPE), packaging, and wood products.
- Facilitate discussions on aligning national quality standards with EU and international best practices.
- Facilitate Public-Private dialogue between various QI actors.

Outcome 5:

Support QUIS team and other Key Actors by providing Consultation hours

- During the execution of the whole contract, the contractor will **Support and Facilitate further engagement of** QUIS team by providing consultation hours and inputs on quality-related requirements as needed.
- During the execution of the whole contract, the contractor will **Support and Facilitate further engagement with** key actors by providing consultation hours and inputs on quality-related requirements as needed.

Outcome 6:

Development of three small, export capacity oriented guide books/brochures

Support Georgian SMEs in Key Sectors of construction materials (4 selected materials)), textiles (including personal protective equipment - PPE), packaging, and toys by developing seven small, export capacity-oriented guide books/brochures.

Support increasing their competitiveness in the local and international market by providing them with information and guidelines for the potential export possibility. The guide books/brochures should include but not be limited to:

- Description of the purpose of the booklet/short preface
- EU requirements
- Sanitary and phytosanitary requirements
- Requirements for packaging and labeling
- Conformity assessment/certification requirements
- Voluntary requirements
- Procedures for exporting
- Origin rules
- Documents to be submitted for customs procedures
- Authorities responsible for issuing export documents in the European Union
- Authorized exporter status and its benefits
- Authorized economic operator status and its benefits

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Phase/Tasks	Deliverables	Due Date	
1. Preparatory work			
1.1. Introduction to the QUIS project 1.2. Kick off meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation incl. the short introduction of the team and int. team • Getting familiar with the scope • Discussing the workplan and setting a timeline 	Jan 30	3 Days
2. Desk Research			
2.1. Desk Research, Analysis of Selected Sectors/Value Chains, and Development of Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance to the international expert team • Provide materials related to sector analysis and QI in Georgia. • Provide assistance in identifying quality gaps and the demand for QI services in each sector. 	Feb 30	10 Days
3. Technical Advice to Business Support Organizations (BSO)			
3.1. Meetings with up with BSOs and on-site visits to selected SMEs to identify quality assurance gaps completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate/assist in on-site visits to selected SMEs to identify quality assurance gaps • Tailored advice on quality assurance gap analysis and improvement measures for business associations submitted 	Ongoing	10 Days
4. Technical Advice to enhance National QI			
4.1. Technical Advice to QI Institutions to enhance National QI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together with the international team, review strategies and practices of QI institutions completed and key areas for improvement identified 	Nov 30	15 Days
5. Support and Facilitate Stakeholder Dialogue Events			

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5.1. Facilitate discussions on aligning national quality standards with EU and international best practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather inputs on quality-related requirements from key sectors. Facilitate Public-Private dialogue between various QI actors. Mediating events 		10 Days
6. Consultation hours			
6.1. Provide consultation hours and inputs on quality-related requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and Facilitate further engagement of QUIS team & other key actors (SMEs, BSOs) by providing consultation hours and inputs on quality-related requirements as needed 	Nov 30	40 Days
7. Development of guide books/brochures			
7.1. Development of Three small, export capacity oriented guide books/brochures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and guidelines for the potential export possibility for Toys, packaging and textile sectors 	May 30	28 days
8. Final Report			
8.1. Final Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the Final report describing the work done during the contracting period, with comprehensive information 		2 days
			Total: 118 Days

3.1. Intellectual Property

GIZ shall be entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights including, but not limited to documents, files, and other materials, which the contractor will develop under the assignment, and which bear direct relation to fulfilment of the assignment. The contractor shall take all necessary steps in transferring intellectual property to GIZ.

4. Coordination and Communication

Close coordination and reporting to the project Advisor and Team Leader, as well as liaison with international expert team and private sector relevant actors.

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5. Visibility

Development of all products under this assignment is funded by the EU, German and Czech Governments and must follow communication and visibility requirements of the donors (i.e. inclusion of logos and disclaimers).

6. Submission Requirements

The bidder shall submit technical and financial proposals to comply with the following requirements:

6.1 The **technical proposal** shall contain proposed concept and work plan to implement the assignment, CV with bidder's relevant experience;

6.2 The financial proposal shall contain all types of costs to be charged to the project for implementation of this assignment, **including income tax and pension.** The financial bid should be calculated in accordance with the attached price schedule.

* Please review the assessment grid attached to this document.

Evaluation criteria

A technical proposal by a bidder shall be evaluated based on the assessment of: (1) proposed concept and work plan, (2) bidder's qualifications and experience.

7.1 Evaluation criteria for a technical proposal

A technical proposal shall be evaluated based on the relevance of the chapters of the concept and work plan to include:

- a) Interpretation of objectives;
- b) Strategy of implementation;
- c) Work schedule and timelines;

7.2 Evaluation criteria for a bidder

7.2.1. Education

Master's degree in economics, finance, business, or a related field.

7.2.2. Knowledge and skills

- a) Strong research, analytical and report writing skills;
- b) Excellent communication, facilitation and moderation skills;
- c) Advanced computer skills including Microsoft Office and web-based applications;
- d) Excellent command of English & Georgian, both written and spoken.

7.2.3. Work experience

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- a) 3 years of experience in economic research, data analysis, and consulting field (preferably in quality management area).
- b) 5 years in professional experience of Quality Infrastructure (QI) Development.
- c) 5 years of professional experience in economic development, quality infrastructure, and value chain promotion, with a focus on developing economies.
- d) 5 years of experience working in quality infrastructure development, local and regional economic development, and value chain analysis across multiple sectors.
- e) 3 years of Development Cooperation (DC) experience, working on development cooperation projects funded by international donors.

8. Conditions and Payment Terms

Additional means of support

Items to be provided for by the Project separately shall include:

- a) Venue(s), facilities, interpretation and refreshments for workshops and events;
- b) Hotel accommodation to implement visits to regions of Georgia, as appropriate;

Payments will be carried out based on the acceptance of deliverables and provision of the invoices according to the following schedule:

8.2.1. Advance payment

Advance payment in up to 20 % of the contract value will be made upon the signature of the contract.

8.2.2. Interim Payment

Interim payment of up to 30 % of the contract value will be made upon the completion of part of the assignments and the acceptance of the contract implementation report.

8.2.3. Final payment

The final payment up to 50 % of the contract value will be made upon the completion of the assignment – Final Reporting – and the acceptance of the contract implementation report.

The final payment will be carried out based on the full implementation of this assignment and the acceptance of all deliverables by GIZ.