

Terms of Reference

National or International consultants: International Consultant

Description of the assignment (Title of consultancy): Logistics Facilitation Expert

Project Title: Strengthening Arab Economic Integration for Sustainable Development (AEISD)

Period of assignment/services: 66 working days over a period of 6 months.

1. Background

The regional project Strengthening Arab Economic Integration for Sustainable Development (AEISD), within the UNDP, has an objective to provide technical assistance to the League of Arab States (LAS), specifically the Economic Sector and relevant organs, and member states of Pan Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA) in working towards a deepened integration, including preparations for the Arab Customs Union.

Being conscious that trade has significant potential to fight poverty in Arab countries through generating more income and access to markets. Its second important component relates to strengthening the Arab connectivity among economies in the region. Expectedly, these efforts would be translated into contribution of economic integration for better livelihoods, more employment opportunities and participation by the private sector.

To support improvement of Arab connectivity among countries, project activities, priority is exercised in activities aimed at facilitation of trade, transport, investment and trade-related areas (i.e. trade/transport corridors, promotion of quality infrastructure, competition). Among these, an important initiative related to the promotion of application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digitalization to facilitate trade, investment and economic development for various countries. UNDP cooperates with Governments of Arab countries and regional/sub-regional organizations such as Agadir Technical Unit to promote activation of trade facilitation measures such as the dematerialization and the digitalized information processing platforms such as National Single Windows, specified by Article 10:4 of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Its third component focuses on the promotion of inclusiveness and transparency as part of the development agenda, particularly on the economic empowerment of women for regional economic integration.

Built on the progress achieved in supporting the implementation of the Executive Program of the agreement on Facilitating and Developing Trade among Arab Countries (PAFTA), the current project focuses on specific aspects of making trade an engine of inclusive and sustainable growth guided by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In continuation, the project will also focus on helping countries and the main sub-regional and regional integration entities to accelerate the pace of trade reforms and regional economic integration to strengthen the employment effects of those reforms, with a particular focus on women and youth, and to mobilize additional resources for this purpose.

The project also aims to address specific challenges and complexities that Arab countries and League of Arab States face to enhance regional economic integration, more specifically in the transition from an FTA- based framework towards making the customs union a reality.

The following present major areas of focus:

1. Provide a structured and targeted technical support to LAS Secretariat and Arab negotiators on trade policy formulation and reform under PAFTA.
2. Provide assistance to the LAS Secretariat with a view of strengthening its organizational capacity in the pursuit of further facilitation of the regional economic integration agenda as well as promotion of trade liberalization.
3. Assist target Arab countries in collaborating with national policy makers in trade and economic fields in efforts to modernize and reform trade policy by taking into consideration new developments.
4. Facilitation of transport and trade activities which constitutes one of the key areas to support national programs of enhancement, national competitiveness, better market access, and more integration of the value chain.
5. Promoting gender equality and women empowerment as well as generating business and job opportunities for youth is also a key target under the project activities. Moreover, good governance constitution which is a pre-requisite in deepening Arab economic integration to a higher level of commitment with inclusiveness and sustainability.
6. Promoting contribution of trade to be one of the pillars to achieve the SDGs at national and regional level.

Within the scope of cooperation with member countries of Agadir, UNDP presented a proposal of Agadir Single Window in 2018, which was welcomed by Customs Directors-General at their 5th Joint Committee Meeting in December 2019. Morocco sought support from UNDP to conduct a review of the operations of PortNet towards developing a more integrated and comprehensive platform. The aim is improve economic competitiveness of international trade and investment and move to a paperless environment.

The official request, dated on January 19th 2019, by H.E Dr. Nabil Lakhdar, Director-General of Customs was communicated to the Chief Technical Advisor of UNDP, in which he requested UNDP to support in conducting a technical functional review to the Portnet System including recommendations for improvements and action plan/roadmap of the related implementations.

Up to present, the PortNet platform operates independently from the customs automated system for clearance of shipments and is operated by the Directorate-General of Customs and Excises. These two systems exchange data and other relevant information for the issuance of any permit or license in accordance with the adopted working protocols. According to the information received by UNDP, similar modalities of submission of data and information for clearance requests are used by concerned agencies such as the Ministry of Investment, Trade Green and Digital Economy.

The Moroccan authority PortNet has contributed to the dematerialization of around 70 percent of the processes for exports as well as the port calls or stop-overs of ships. The PortNet was born in 2009 as a joint project between the Ministry of Transport and the National Moroccan Port Agency. Initial focus was on the

expeditious processing of required procedures for the entry and exit of vessels and goods at ports of Casablanca and Agadir. The developer of this platform addressed the stopover management, dangerous goods, manifests, cargo collection and delivery notes as well as clearance of goods procedures.

Subsequently, the PortNet entered into function by PORTNET S.A in 2012 (a joint venture between the National Authority of Ports and the private sector) and it has contributed substantially in improving the clearance of shipments, goods and commodities, and particularly port services. In effect, PortNet has become the Single Window with focus on port services and several related services (dealt with the validation of trade licenses and permits by regulatory authorities in the country).

Nowadays, the Port Net provides linkages between traders, businesses and industries with a number of governmental agencies (in charge of enforcing regulations) at 13 Moroccan Ports in accordance with information provided by the National Port Authority in October 2019. Port services are mainly automated in order to achieve higher level of efficiency and convenience to around 40,000 importers, exporters, and customers in 2019.

According to Doing Business 2020 by the World bank, Morocco introduced e-Payment of port fees, streamlining paperless customs clearance and extended port hours of operations. This progress will be sustainable and inclusive with more progressive development and adoption of new management techniques and information & communication technology. In this regard, capitalization of the potential of international trade within the supply chain is strongly recommended.

2. Scope of work, responsibilities and description of the proposed analytical work

The assignment aims to conduct and prepare a technical review for the functions and operational features of the PortNet and related processing systems of concerned governmental agencies for the clearance and release of shipments.¹ This leads the Maroc Export Plus by optimizing trade costs and time in bringing Moroccan exports into new destination markets and more diversification of Moroccan products there. These factors are imperative for enhanced competitiveness for the Moroccan economy.

In adopting the evidence-based analysis for the design and execution of policy measures, this assignment aims to provide factual assessment of achievements and positive results brought about by the application of PortNet. The study might lead to identify new potentials for its function and managerial upgrading in the first stage in order to formulate corresponding policies and measures towards a paperless platform with streamlined business processes and friendly practices in control. It will also look into technical solutions as well as required governance models for partnerships between the Government and the private sector. New technologies of information in processing and those widely adopted in the world for international trade Single Window (Trade SW) would be explored in order to capitalize and optimize processing costs and time required.

Functionally, it is expected that the new platform contributes to a friendlier administration of cross-border trade and investment while promoting better and more efficient control.

Main Activities

The purpose of this activity is to develop a set of key performance indicators and baseline to assess technical functions and operational features of the PortNet. The latter is currently operational at 13 maritime ports of

¹ Directorate-General of Customs and Excise of Morocco in collaboration with related ministries of Morocco will assign the participating agencies in the exercise.

Morocco and could be further expanded within the partnership framework with the Government. Expectedly, results of the survey will help to identify the practical and realistic directions for the comprehensive upgrade of the PortNet to become a logistic platform, beyond a mere port-services platform.

Taking into account that the use of the regional single window will eventually support an equitable and predictable administration of border regulations with less costs and more convenience for end-users. The study targets to review technical and operational features of current services of the PortNet towards a more synchronized environment of digitalized services for efficient logistics to promote more exportations and economic diversification. Furthermore, the so called “2nd generation” of the PortNet should bring about optimal processing of data and information in making the release and clearance at entry points in Morocco friendlier and streamlined. As such, it becomes a national platform for better management of international trade and investment to position Morocco as the entry and connecting hub in North Africa and Arab countries.

A trade facilitation and logistics expert will be hired to identify a set of quantifiable key performance indicators taking into account the requirements of the private sectors, the demand to optimize costs and time. It should serve to promote participation of Small and Medium Enterprises and getting more participation of women, dynamic and qualified youth.

Conclusions and findings of the study should help to identify concrete solutions for transformational improvement of the PortNet to achieve higher level of efficiency for logistics services in Morocco. Expectedly, the study might help to formulate pertinent policy recommendations and measures to assist governmental agencies to establish a synchronized platform of inter-agency cooperation and partnership.

As part of the study, the identified expert should also design key performance indicators, which can be used to periodically assess the progress of improvement. These outputs gained from the baseline and assessment survey in relation to the proposed KPIs will be used to measure changes in the speed of customs processing and clearance using Port Net, as well as adoption and operationalization of the needed technical and legal framework.

For the above purpose, a survey will be developed to collect data and information to obtain detailed understanding of the achievements by PortNet and what could be the best alternatives to improve the platform. Taking into account the progress of adoption of information processing by governmental agencies and e-Commerce in the country.

Data sources and methodology

The assignment will make use of data, statistics and information being provided by the Directorate General of Customs and Excises, concerned governmental agencies and those made available by PortNet. Information and suggestions of new services and features for the formulation of the new digital platform of a more integrated processing environment could be obtained through surveys to end-users like traders and investors.

Data could be either quantitative and/or qualitative on the basis of available information and statistics related to international trade, investment and transport of Morocco. The analysis aims at looking at concrete modality to enhance further operations of PortNet as one of logistics platforms in the country.

Methods to be used in the analysis of data and information will be based on international standards and good practices.

Methods for collecting data include: (i) desk research on available data on national single window and trade statistics in order to assess technical functions of the PortNet; (ii) survey to be distributed to PortNet stakeholders; and (iii) interviews with selected stakeholders, as needed.

The expert would also identify required data and information which could be provided by governmental agencies as well as the private sector, particularly the operating companies of PortNet.

3. Expected Outputs and deliverables

<i>Deliverables/ Outputs</i>	<i>Estimated Duration to Complete</i>	<i>Target Due Dates</i>	<i>Review and Approvals Required</i>
<p>Milestone 1: Preparation of the Inception Report and suggested framework of thematic analysis</p> <p>The Inception report should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A detailed schedule of the design of activities to support the review of the current digital platforms for operations within the Single Window platform; 2. A presentation detailing the methods and design of an integrated information processing platform; 3. An elaboration on the methodology to be applied in designing and assessing the functions of the National Single Window based on international standards and successful experiences of countries that have previously developed it; and 4. An analysis of key factors for a successful delivery of a NSW. 	05 working days	January 2019	AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
<p>Milestone 2: Design and formulate the questionnaires to collect information, data and statistics on the technical functions and operational features of the PortNet.</p> <p>The exercise may also involve a review of technical functions of the automated systems of information processing of concerned agencies (working on trade management and cross border operations) as required.</p> <p>It is comprised of the following, among others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire on related customs processing for the release and clearance of shipments (Customs techniques) 2. Questionnaire on trade-related licenses for 	10 working days	January 2019	

<p>Technical Barriers to Trade (Ministry of Trade, Standard and Metrology Organization, other concerned entities).</p> <p>3. Questionnaire on trade-related licenses for Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures to Trade (Ministry of Agriculture, Veterinary and Quarantine Authorities).</p> <p>4. Questionnaire for Importers/Exporters.</p> <p>5. Questionnaire for logistics operators such as customs brokers and freight-forwarders.</p> <p>6. Questionnaire for transportation operators, including express industries.</p> <p>7. Questionnaire for the Ministry of Transport.</p> <p>8. Questionnaire on the technical features of the PortNet (to collect information from PortNet).</p> <p>9. Data and analysis of the volume of transactions being processed by the PortNet.</p>			
<p>Milestone 3: Design and conduct the national workshop to present the survey to concerned stakeholders from the Government, private sector and port community.</p> <p>Planned activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of the survey. 2. Design of basic indicators based on the assessment of performance of a National Single Window. 	08 working days	February 2020	
<p>Milestone 4: Consolidation, reformatting and conduct of analysis of data collected from Moroccan stakeholders and institutions.</p> <p>This includes definition of key performance indicators and baseline benchmarks.</p>	18 working days	March 2020	
<p>Milestone 5: Preparation of the Revised Implementation Strategy Measurement Report by looking into:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of achievements and description of current technical features. 2. Presentation of challenges for the potential upgrading of technical functions and operational features of the new PortNet. 3. Presentation of proposals in making the next generation of PortNet more comprehensive and inclusive. 4. Exploring technologies and management techniques for the expected upgrading. 	18 working days	April 2020	
<p>Milestone 6: Consultation with Directorate General of Customs and Excises of Morocco and relevant authorities</p>	7 working days	May/June 2020	

4. Institutional arrangements

- The individual is required to exhibit his or her commitment to this assignment with UNDP-RBAS;
- S/He shall perform tasks under the general guidance and direct supervision of the Project Manager of the of the AEISD regional project. The supervision will include approvals/acceptance of the outputs as identified in previous sections;
- The individual is expected to liaise and collaborate in the course of performing the work with other consultants, suppliers and UN colleagues;
- The individual is required to maintain close communication with the UNDP-RBAS on regular and needed basis at any period throughout the assignment in order to monitor progress. In the event of any delay, s/he will inform UNDP promptly so that decisions and remedial action may be taken accordingly. Delays that would affect the flow of the collaborative work and the delivery of outputs on schedule will lead to termination of contract; and
- Should UNDP deem it necessary, it reserves the right to commission additional inputs, reviews or revisions, as needed to ensure the quality and relevance of the work.

5. Duration of work

The duration of the work is expected to be 66 working days over a period of 6 months from the contract signature date.

6. Duty station

- This assignment is home-based.
- If unforeseen travel outside the consultant home based city is requested by UNDP and not required by the Terms of References (ToR), such travel shall be covered by UNDP in line with applicable rules and regulations and upon prior written agreement. In such cases, the consultant shall receive living allowances not exceeding the United Nations (UN) Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) rate for such other location(s).

7. Requirements for experience and qualifications

I. Academic Qualifications:

Master's Degree in Computer Sciences or sciences in information processing, Economics, International Development, or any other related fields to logistics facilitation.

II. Years of experience:

Minimum of 10 years of practical experience in electronic processing of information and data required for clearance of shipments of international trade and/or logistics services.

III. Technical experience:

- Experience in designing, developing and deploying any regional/National Single Window is a major asset;
- Rich experience in customs techniques for clearance and release of the cargo as well as technical control by controlling agencies of the Government;
- Extensive experience in designing and establishing automated applications concerning information processing for trade and transport management in a multi-agency platform is required;

- Adequate understanding of the WCO Data Model and the international standards and practices implemented by UN/CEFACT;
- Proven experience in business process re-engineering and data harmonization;
- Demonstrated knowledge of technical standards and international standards, applicable to the design and operations of a NSW, among them, those developed by UNECE, World Customs Organization, relevant international and multilateral organizations;
- Experiences in freight-forwarding and customs brokerage is an advantage;
- Previous experience working for the UN is a plus;
- Demonstrated experience in performing similar assignments in the Arab region is an asset.

IIV. Competencies:

I. Language Requirements

- Excellent writing, editing and oral communications skills in English. Being fluent in Arabic is desirable.

II. Key Competencies:

Corporate

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness, by modeling the UN/UNDP's values and ethical standards;
- Promotes the vision, mission and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Functional

- Time management and organizational skills, with the ability to undertake multiple tasks and deliver under pressure;
- Strong analytical and synthesis skills;
- Ability to work independently and achieve quality results with limited supervision and within tight schedules;
- Strong quantitative and qualitative research skills;
- Experience in reports production;
- Ability to write in a clear and concise manner;
- Good teamwork and interpersonal skills;
- Flexibility and ability to handle multiple tasks and work under pressure;
- Excellent computer skills especially Word, Excel and Power Point.

Knowledge Management and Learning

- Ability to strongly promote and build knowledge products;
- Promotes knowledge management in UNDP and a learning environment in the office through leadership and personal example;
- Seeks and applies knowledge, information and best practices from within and outside of UNDP;
- Demonstrates a strong capacity for innovation and creativity in providing strategic policy advice and direction.

8. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Interested candidates should provide lump sum fees for requested services with detailed breakdown. This amount must be "all-inclusive". Please note that the terms "all-inclusive" implies that all costs of professional fees and any other fees that could possibly be incurred are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal. Payments shall be made in accordance with the below table.

The contractor will be paid an all-inclusive Deliverables/Outputs based lump sum amounts over

the assignment period, subject to the submission of Certification of Payment (CoP) duly certified or an invoice and confirmation of satisfactory performance of achieved work (deliverables/outputs) in line with the schedule of payments table hereunder, noting that the maximum number of working days for this assignment shouldn't exceed 66 working days.

Milestones	Estimated Working Days	Estimated Due Date	Payment
<p>Milestone 1: Preparation of the Inception Report and suggested framework of thematic analysis, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A detailed schedule of the design of activities to support the review of the current digital platforms for operations within the Single Window platform; 2. A presentation detailing the methods and design of an integrated information processing platform; 3. An elaboration on the methodology to be applied in designing and assessing the functions of the National Single Window based on international standards and successful experiences of countries that have previously developed it; and 4. An analysis of key factors for a successful delivery of a NSW. 	05 working days	January 2019	10% of total contract payment
<p>Milestone 2:</p> <p>Design and formulate the questionnaires to collect information, data and statistics on the technical functions and operational features of the PortNet.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire on related customs processing for the release and clearance of shipments (Customs techniques) 2. Questionnaire on trade-related licenses for Technical Barriers to Trade (Ministry of Trade, Standard and Metrology Organization, other concerned entities). 3. Questionnaire on trade-related licenses for Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures to Trade (Ministry of Agriculture, Veterinary and Quarantine Authorities). 4. Questionnaire for Importers/Exporters. 5. Questionnaire for logistics operators such as customs brokers and freight-forwarders. 6. Questionnaire for transportation operators, including express industries. 7. Questionnaire for the Ministry of Transport. 8. Questionnaire on the technical features of the PortNet (to collect information from PortNet). 9. Data and analysis of the volume of transactions 	10 working days	January 2019	15% of total contract payment

being processed by the PortNet.			
<u>Milestone 3:</u> Design and conduct the national workshop to present the survey to concerned stakeholders from the Government, the private sector and the port community Planned activities: 1. Presentation of the survey. 2. Design of basic indicators based on the assessment of performance of a National Single Window.	8 working days	February 2020	25% of total contract payment
<u>Milestone 4:</u> Consolidation, reformatting and conduct of analysis of data collected from Moroccan stakeholders and institutions.	18 working days	March 2020	
<u>Milestone 5:</u> Preparation of the Measurement Report in looking into: 1. Presentation of achievements and description of current technical features. 2. Presentation of challenges for the potential upgrading of technical functions and operational features of the new PortNet. 3. Presentation of proposals in making the next generation of PortNet more comprehensive and inclusive. 4. Exploring technologies and management techniques for the expected upgrading.	18 working days	April 2020	25% of total contract payment
<u>Milestone 6:</u> Consultation with Directorate General of Customs and Excises of Morocco and relevant authorities on the Measurement Report and forward-looking strategies	7 working days	May/June 2020	25% of total contract payment