

**UNDP/AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE FOR ARAB STATES**  
**Private Sector Development Forum**  
**Terms of reference for Individual Contractor**  
**Consultant on Trade Facilitation in the Arab region from perspectives of businesses and industries**

**A. Project Title**

Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States.

**B. Project Description**

The Aid for Trade initiative for the Arab States (AFTIAS) aims to achieve inclusive economic growth with increased

Employment opportunities and greater competitiveness through trade policy reform in Arab countries as an integral part of the regional trade and economic integration agenda.

The project focuses on helping countries and the main sub-regional and regional integration entities to accelerate the pace of trade reform and regional economic integration, to strengthen the employment effects of those reforms with particular focus on women and youth. Economic integration through increased trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) are considered as means available in the short to medium term to policy makers to engage countries on a higher path of sustainable economic growth.

As the implementing partner, responsible for the overall management and implementation of the project, UNDP works in close partnership with the League of Arab States (LAS), the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) and UN agencies from the CEB Trade and Productive Capacity Cluster (ILO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, and UNIDO) responsible for leading work in specific result areas in coordination with partners in the region.

Building upon UN agencies' expertise, ongoing technical assistance and capacity development interventions in the region, the initiative particularly supports the LAS to promote regional trade integration, as per the GAFTA commitments and the resolutions adopted by the 3rd Arab Economic and Social Development Summit.

The partnership and cooperation with the LAS is seen as such critical to advance and promote the regional trade integration agenda as re-affirmed in the Riyadh Declaration, renewing the commitment of the Arab leaders to "remove all barriers that stand in the way of inter-Arab trade".

To this end, the initiative also supports initiatives aiming at improving performance of cross border operations at selected border posts in the Arab countries, along specific trade/transport corridors to facilitate flow and movement of goods, means of transport and people.

Combination of policy instruments (in terms of policy measures, regulatory framework) with good, future-oriented practices would create a "virtual loop" contributing to the achievement of the project objective. This evidence-based policy approach would support the implementation of quality development solutions that best serve the needs of the Arab region and its member states.

**C. Scope of work and methodology**

As part of the Private Sector Development Forum planned in the context of the 4th Arab Economic and Social Development Summit 2015, a session would be dedicated to the role of businesses and industries in supporting Trade Facilitation.

The session would aim at promoting active engagement of investors, transport operators and service suppliers in deepening economic linkages between Arab economies towards the establishment of the Arab Customs Union.

As part of this session, there would be discussions on the activities and efforts that the private sector are pursuing to contribute to Arab economic integration with respect to design of public policies and measures as well as promotion of good governance and institutional development.

From the findings of empirical exercises by the private sector, UNDP will present key policy recommendations on how businesses and industries are well placed to contribute to facilitate trade, transport and movement of goods, people while fulfilling requirements of security in the region. Such contribution can also be realized through production of operational experiences of the conduct of business in Arab countries to trade and economic policy makers with concrete suggestions to make it as part of a more comprehensive program of realizing GAFTA and of modernization of productive capacity. As consequence, businesses and industries will become engaged partners to economic policy makers of Arab countries in driving the process forward.

Areas of key interest comprise:

- (i) Improvement of business processing toward more simplification and harmonization.
- (ii) Design of business and customer friendly operational models in leveraging on new development of technology and management techniques.
- (iii) Lessening unnecessary burden on business and industries, particularly on SMEs in certain operational areas such as tied up cash flows.
- (iv) Upgrading existent practices of logistics services to the international standards (Efficiency in Cost – Reliability in delivery – Timeliness).
- (v) Promotion of competition and institutional development.

The session would be conducted with a holistic presentation of key findings from practical experiences that result from a detailed and comprehensive study. The latter would include an assessment of potential benefits, challenges and opportunities that active engagement by the private sector might bring about, particularly their contribution of information, data, technical suggestions to public officials in trade facilitation (TF). To that end, it is essential to document facts and operational information in a structured manner with evidence-based analysis to substantiate policy recommendations and suggestions of holistic directions.

A particular focus would be on the benefits that Public and Private Partnerships (PPP) in TF offers for: i) the implementation and improvement of TF-related reforms in infrastructures, ICT, border management, corridors; ii) coordination, harmonization and standardization of processes in international trade and iii) simplification and modernization of administrative and operational procedures. Expected reduction in costs, time and other improvement would result direct or indirectly through decrease of processes of administrative procedures, reduction of clearance time, increase in

regulatory visibility, transparency and restrained corruption, and generation of more revenue in function of accelerating] economic development.

In achieving the objectives of the assignment, the Contractor will be required to establish a clear work method that enables a fact-based study and evidence-supported analysis. In this pursuance, a conduct of a survey or the like may be necessary and shall be agreed in advance to its effective implementation. As overall, the study targets operations of logistics services in any Arab country while priorities would be given to practices taking place in countries like Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and modes of border crossing, primarily lands and sea ports.

Moreover, attention should also be given to the assessment of the effectiveness, relevance and efficiency those PPPs initiatives on trade facilitation. The assessment should include an analysis of the funding model and to which extend those initiatives are sustainable.

Finally, the study will identify key issues, risks and opportunities in promoting and advocating for further involvement of the private sector in the region with focus on Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as appropriate, in support of achieving key objectives of promotion of Arab economic integration and connectivity. Consequently, it may compile lessons learned from initiatives by the private sector, either independently or under any partnership program with the public sector, and from other projects dealing with trade/transport corridors. The study will look into empirical practices and experiences from the private sector in dealing with challenges and mismatch between operational needs and existent regulatory framework for fact-based recommendations and addressing measures.

#### **D. Expected Output and Deliverables**

It is expected, within 4 months from the contract signing, that the Contractor will develop and submit to UNDP a comprehensive study in evaluating the benefits, challenges and opportunities of Private Sector and Public and Private Sector Partnership initiatives in the Arab region to facilitate trade and investment. The study will include policy recommendations to address and promote collaborative frameworks such as PPP, including recommendations accompanying policy and practical guidance.

##### ***Deliverables:***

Deliverable 1: Study outlines, methodology (including questionnaire) and its work plan;

Deliverable 2: 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the complete study;

Deliverable 3: Final draft of the complete study;

Deliverable 4: Presentation of the study findings and recommendations;

<b>Deliverables/Outputs</b>	<b>Target Due Dates</b>	<b>Review and Approvals Required</b>
Deliverable 1: Submission of the study outline, methodology (including questionnaire) and workplan	2 weeks from the start of the contract	AfTIAS Chief Technical Advisor
Deliverable 2: Submission of 1st consolidated draft study	8 weeks from the acceptance and approval of the 1st deliverable	AfTIAS Chief Technical Advisor

Deliverable 3: Submission of the final draft of the complete study	4 weeks after submission of the inputs, comments and corrections from the reviews process.	AfTIAS Chief Technical Advisor
Deliverable 4: Submission of a presentation of the study findings and recommendations	1 week after the submission and acceptance of the final and complete draft study	AfTIAS Chief Technical Advisor

## **E. Institutional Arrangement**

The Contractor will perform the assigned tasks under the guidance of the Chief of Regional Programme Division and direct supervision of the AfTIAS Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). The supervision by the CTA will include approvals/acceptance of the outputs as identified in the previous section. The Contractor will report and consult with the CTA on regular basis and ad hoc as needs arise. Progress reports shall be prepared by the lead researcher appointed by the firm on monthly basis, or on the basis of specific requirements.

## **F. Duration of work**

The duration of the work is expected to cover approximately a period of 4 months from the start of contract.

## **G. Duty station**

The consultants will be home-based and may be required to travel to locations where survey works and or specific works require.

## **H. Qualifications of the successful Individual Contractor**

### **Education**

- a) Preferred PhD's Degree or equivalent in Economics, Social Sciences, International Relations, Political Sciences, Development Studies or related field;

### **Experience**

- a) 15 years of relevant experience in the areas of trade facilitation, international trade, economic development preferably in the Arab region;
- b) Convincing experience in designing and managing projects focusing on trade facilitation, economic development through provision of evidence-based policy advice;
- c) Excellent knowledge and experience in applying results-based management and strategic planning methodologies and tools.
- d) Substantive knowledge of UNDP programming and application of UNDP's operational policies & practices.
- e) Ability to meet deadlines and prioritize multiple tasks

### **Language requirements**

- a) Excellent writing, editing, and oral communication skills in English and Arabic.