

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR SERVICES



Date: January 15, 2020

Post Title:	Individual Contract (IC) – Senior Expert on Rules of Origin to conduct the study on “Effective implementation of cumulation of origin within the framework of the Pan Arab Free Trade Area”
Starting Date:	10 February 2020
Duration:	Forty (40) working days over a period of 3 calendar months
Location:	Home-based assignment, with travel to Cairo as per travel plan
Project:	Strengthening Arab Economic Integration for Sustainable Development (AEISD)
Requisition Number:	
National or International consultants:	International Consultant
Is this a LTA (yes/no):	No

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

Trade has significant potential to fight poverty in Arab countries through generation of more in-come and access to markets. To realize the vision, the project of Strengthening Arab Economic Integration for Sustainable Development (AEISD), by UNDP, sets as objective, provision of technical assistance to the League of Arab States (LAS), specifically 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. Upgrading current preferential trade arrangements will contribute to the realization of strategic visions of Arab Common Market while fostering the sustainability.

Along this line, its second important component relates to strengthening the Arab connectivity among economies in the region with the expectation, these efforts would be translated into more contribution of economic integration for better livelihood of people, more employment opportunity and participation by the private sector. The 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 the previous program of support to implementation of PAFTA (Executive Program of the agreement on Facilitating and Developing Trade among Arab Countries), 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 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 presents 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 with collaboration with national policy makers in trade and economic fields in efforts of modernization and reform of trade policy in taking into consideration new developments.*
- 4. Facilitation of transport and trade activities constitutes one of key areas to support national programs of enhancement of national competitiveness and better market access and more integration of the value chain.*
- 5. Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment as well as generation of business and job opportunity for youth is also a key target of project activities. Moreover, good governance constitutes a pre-requisite in deepening Arab economic integration to a higher level of commitment with inclusiveness and sustainability.*
- 6. Promotion of the contribution of trade, as one of the pillars to achievement of SDGs at national and regional level.*

These priority dimensions form the basis of the work program of the project. Specifically, the project targets the following result-oriented activities:

- 1. Development of the technical framework and required instruments for the PAFTA Upgrading - an upgrade from the existing PAFTA, and for the Arab Customs Union (ACU) preparations, to deepen Arab economic integration.*
- 2. Reinforcement of mechanisms of policy design, measures of implementation and of systems of documenting the progress of implementation to secure smooth acceleration of realization of regional commitments.*
- 3. Building the technical capability and capacity of policy makers of Arab countries to support accelerated implementation of the PAFTA Upgrading and preparations for the ACU.*
- 4. Introduction of institutional arrangements that are necessary for the LAS to respond to the requirements of implementation of the PAFTA Upgrading, and consequently of designing and establishing the ACU.*
- 5. Delivery of awareness raising activities and provision of technical guidance on good governance and integrity approaches.*
- 6. Promotion of regulatory transparency, open dialogues and consultations with related stakeholders, targeting all social groups but particularly women, for more active participation to cross border operations and related economic activities, among others.*

The project team also cooperates with several national authorities and regional organizations in the implementation of defined activities in taking into account requirements and priorities of national socio-economic development plans and strategies of Arab economic integration. The execution is carried out under

rules and regulations by the UN applicable for Delegated Direct Implementation and fully aligned to UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP).

Full implementation of PAFTA and achieving its defined objectives to increase intra-Arab trade require the effective implementation of Arab rules of origin and the enhancement of the cumulation of origin among Arab industries in promoting the complementarity among Arab economies. The latter prioritizes identification of practical modalities of enhanced implementation of PAFTA rules of origin. At the regular session numbered 104, held in September 2019, LAS ECOSOC adopted the detailed rules of origin for the outstanding list of goods being subject to negotiations in recent years. As part of its resolutions, ECOSOC decided the review of the general provisions of Arab rules of origin (adopted in 2007) to keep them abreast with new international developments in trade policies and formulate proposals of amendment. It is also mandated that the Committee on Arab rules of origin to develop rules of origin to materialize the principle of accumulation of origin among Arab countries.

On the basis of these resolutions and requests by PAFTA Member States, the Technical Secretariat seeks assistance from UNDP to prepare the analytical study concerning the development of the new rules of origin on accumulation and design the action plan to promote these in corresponding stages. As part of the support to the PAFTA in 2019 - 2020, UNDP in collaboration with the LAS Secretariat would seek the provision of services by an expert on rules of origin to study these rules of origin in making rules of origin an effective tool of fostering Arab trade (intra-Arab countries and between them and trading partners) within the platform of PAFTA, and amendments thereto.

The consultant will discharge her/his duties under the supervision and guidance of the Chief Technical Advisor of AEISD and would be supported by the team of domain experts.

SCOPE OF WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED WORK

Within the scope of the AEISD focusing on the deepening of regional economic integration, the technical study shall focus on analyzing the current PAFTA system of cumulation of origin, and on studying experiences from other regional trade grouping (for example, the EuroMed system) toward the design of corresponding rules and practical modalities of implementation. These rules and operational mechanisms should serve to encourage accumulation of different materials and production processes in industry, agriculture and economic activities in the Arab region. In effect, this support Arab economies to capitalize on the competitive and comparative advantage individual countries have toward the Arab common market. The study might start with the technical re-view of PAFTA rules of origin as documented in the corresponding Protocol.

The cumulation of origin means that products that have obtained originating status in one partner country may be used with products originating in another partner country without prejudice to the preferential status of the finished product.

Subsequently, this assignment might require the technical analysis of accumulation rules of origin and identification of the current and potential opportunity for accumulation of origin of products and commodities of various economic sectors and industries in the region.

The analytical study shall comprise of qualitative and quantitative analysis, as required, aimed at raising the understanding of PAFTA members on the regional experiences on applying cumulation of origin and to support countries in developing enhanced rules of origin to capitalize on the accumulation to promote more economic and trade complementarity. It should review the application of the principle of cumulation within the PAFTA (as detailed in the adopted General Provisions in 2007) and identify any constraint that may be associated with these rules.

More importantly, findings of the paper should help to understand existent constraints and lead to proposals of concrete measures to achieve their better effectiveness in enhancing intra-Arab trade and regional integration. Furthermore, the conclusion and recommendations of the paper would be formulated and presented to senior officials members of the Committee on Arab rules of origin for their consideration and incorporation into the negotiations of new instruments for a more modernized Pan Arab Free Trade area.

In achieving the objectives of the paper, the expert shall establish the work methodology that applies a fact-based analysis and evidence-supported assessment. In this pursuance, operational modality of the conduct of the analysis and major outlines of development shall be agreed in advance to its effective implementation with the LAS Technical Secretariat. The assignment targets a throughout review of the cumulation of origin article within the general provision of rules of origin and conducting a gap analysis for a comprehensive assessment of the current situation.

The expert will meet and consult with the LAS Technical Secretariat and whenever necessary with relevant officials and stakeholders in PAFTA members in function of the completion of defined deliverables and to gather data, required for technical analysis.

The assignment consists of two main parts as follows:

1. *Study of approaches to realize the cumulation of origin within the PAFTA*

In order to be qualified and eligible to preferential tariffs, goods being traded among Arab countries must be given the Arab origin in accordance with the Rules of origin, approved and adopted by the LAS ECOSOC. In the pursuit of effective implementation of PAFTA, the LAS ECOSOC, through resolutions adopted by the regular meeting, numbered 104 (September 2019) requests the Committee on Arab rules of origin to held regular sessions to which shall be held periodically to solve the problems facing the application of detailed rules of origin.

Specifically, Rule 3 of the General Rules for PAFTA (adopted by LAS ECOSOC, 2007) defines the principle of origin accumulation and accompanying conditions.

In addition to that, product specific rules are also identified in a comprehensive list for goods traded under PAFTA. Members completed specific rules of origin for goods traded under PAFTA where negotiations have been concluded in September 2019 by the ECOSOC.

It was also mandated that the Committee on Arab rules of origin undertakes these general provisions of the Arab rules of origin in order to keep pace with international developments and proposing the necessary amendments; and developing a system for applying the principle of accumulation of origin among Arab countries. Through this assignment, UNDP is assisting the PAFTA Technical Secretariat and Member States to look into concerned matter as part of measures to strengthen Arab economic integration.

As evidenced by multiple regional trade areas or agreements, cumulation is an integral part of preferential trade agreements and it shall facilitate the interaction and joint manufacturing among participating countries. And it might also be true for Arab economies, which are going through economic diversification from absolute dependency on extractive industries. Essentially, it is one of the ways to provide producers with a greater flexibility in terms of sourcing inputs and parts as it allows to use inputs

and parts from suppliers located in participating countries and treat them as originating from the regional trade agreements for the purpose of determining the origin of the final product, once completed.

The study shall also analyze different models of cumulation of origin, as adopted by different regional trade agreements, and looks into the pros and cons of following each model for the design of new rules of origin to support effective operationalization within the PAFTA. It is also required to look into mechanisms of activation of the accumulation system for policy recommendations to PAFTA Member States. For that purpose, the expert will help to design a system to materialize the cumulation in close consultation with trade policy makers and businesses/private sector.

2. Presentation of the paper during a workshop for the members of the committee on Arab Rules of Origin

The expert shall present the outcomes of the technical paper during a workshop that shall be conducted to members of the Committee on Arab rules of origin.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

The following are the deliverables that should be completed by the Expert.

1. *Prepare an action plan with work methodology to implement the required tasks and the outline of the study and discuss them with the LAS Technical Secretariat of PAFTA and AEISD;*
2. *Review the general provisions of Arab rules of origin as adopted by ECOSOC in 2007;*
3. *Review the current implementation of cumulation of origin among Arab countries and consult with the AEID on outcomes of implementation of cumulation on the basis of the General Provisions in 2007 through the review of official documents and working materials of the Committee on Arab Rules of Origin;*
4. *Review the specific rules of origin adopted by Arab countries for the list of goods traded within the framework of the executive program of PAFTA and analyze the opportunities these specific rules offer for accumulation according to the production scheme of Arab countries;*
5. *Review the application of cumulation of origin in different regional and bilateral trade agreements and analyze which model/approach fits the Arab region for policy recommendations on the modality to mainstream the cumulation;*
6. *Develop a system for applying the accumulation of origin among Arab countries on the basis of the technical proposal;*
7. *Prepare the final report that includes the analysis and the recommended system of cumulation of origin within the framework of PAFTA; and*

The final report shall include:

- ✓ Establish proposals of definition of key concepts of cumulation to be applicable to the PAFTA;
- ✓ Define different types of cumulation of origin, implications of the use of each type within the PAFTA rules of origin, or those being revised;

- ✓ Present the application of accumulation in different origin systems; mechanisms of cooperation in the accumulation of origin in regional economic blocs while taking into account international practices to policy makers of Arab countries;
 - ✓ Analyze the current framework of accumulation of origin within the framework of the PAFTA, and the status of its application by respective Member States;
 - ✓ Analyze the specific rules of origin for the goods traded under PAFTA and analyze the potential for accumulation provided for Arab industries to promote intra-Arab trade and economic complementarity as part of the Arab regional integration; and
 - ✓ Establish recommendations and the technical guidance for a manual/comprehensive system for the cumulation of origin within the framework of PAFTA.
8. *Presenting the outcomes of the report during a workshop that will be conducted to members of the Committee on Arab rules of origin.*

Matrix 1. List of Expected Deliverables

Expected Outputs and Deliverables	Targeted Due Dates	Indicative Due Date	Review and Approvals Required
Deliverable 1: <i>Prepare an action plan with work methodology to implement the required tasks and the outline of the study and discuss them with the LAS Technical Secretariat of PAFTA and AEISD.</i>	03 working days from contract signature	By 13 February 2020	Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 2: <i>Review the general provisions of Arab rules of origin as adopted by ECOSOC in 2007.</i>	17 working days following the satisfactory completion of deliverable 1	By 09 March 2020	Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 3: <i>Review the current implementation of cumulation of origin among Arab countries and consult with the AEID on outcomes of implementation of cumulation on the basis of the General Provisions in 2007 through the review of official documents and working materials of the Committee on Arab Rules of Origin.</i>			Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 4: <i>Review the specific rules of origin adopted by Arab countries for the list of goods traded within the framework of the executive program of PAFTA and analyze the opportunities these specific rules offer for accumulation according to the</i>			Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)

<i>production scheme of Arab countries.</i>			
Deliverable 5: <i>Review the application of cumulation of origin in different regional and bilateral trade agreements and analyze which model/approach fits the Arab region for policy recommendations on the modality to mainstream the cumulation.</i>	07 working days following the satisfactory completion of deliverables 2-4	By 18 March 2020	Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 6: <i>Develop a system for applying the accumulation of origin among Arab countries on the basis of the technical proposal.</i>			Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 7: <i>Prepare the final report that includes the analysis and the recommended system of cumulation of origin within the framework of PAFTA.</i>	10 working days following the satisfactory completion of deliverables 5-6	By 01 April 2020	Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)
Deliverable 8: <i>Presenting the outcomes of the report during a workshop that will be conducted to members of the Committee on Arab rules of origin.</i>	03 working days following the satisfactory completion of deliverable 7	By 06 April 2020	Reviewed and Approved by UNDP-AEISD Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

- The individual is required to exhibit his or her full-time commitment with UNDP-RBAS;
- S/He shall perform tasks under the guidance of the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of the Strengthening Arab Economic Integration for Sustainable Development (AEISD) project.
- 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 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;
- 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.

DURATION OF THE WORK

The expected duration of the assignment is expected to be up to forty (40) working days over a period of three (3) calendar months from the contract signature date.

DUTY STATION

Home Based Assignment with foreseen travel to Arab countries. Refer to the “Travel Plan” section hereafter.

TRAVEL PLAN (OPTIONAL)

This assignment requires the individual contractor to travel in line with the indicative travel plan/schedule hereunder

City, County	Duration (No. of working days)	Number of Mission(s)	No. of Round Economy Class Ticket(s)
Cairo, Egypt	03	1	1

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SUCCESSFUL INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR

- I. Education:
 - Master’s Degree or equivalent in international trade, business administration, economics, trade and development or related field.
- II. Work experience:
 - At least 10 years of practical experience in international trade and customs unions affairs related to rules of origin and the implementation of regional agreements requirements related to rules of origin; and
 - Proofed track record in policy making and negotiations related to rules of origin.
 - Strong knowledge of the Pan Arab Free Trade Area and the obstacles related to rules of origin that hinder trade among Arab countries.
- III. Language Requirements:
 - Language proficiency in both English and Arabic written and oral is required. French proficiency is desirable.
- IV. Key Competencies:
 - a) *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.
 - Knowledge of Arab region (Arab economies and trade) and institutional environment is a must.
 - b) *Functional*
 - Background knowledge about the SDGs, United Nations and UNDP;
 - 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;
 - Excellent writing, editing and oral communications skills;
 - Strong analytical and synthesis skills, as well as presentation and drafting skills;
 - 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.

c) Leadership

- Demonstrated ability to think strategically and to provide credible leadership;
- Demonstrated intellectual leadership and ability to integrate knowledge with broader strategic overview and corporate vision;
- Demonstrated flexibility in leadership by performing and/or overseeing the analysis/resolution of complex issues;
- Ability to conceptualize and convey strategic vision from the spectrum of development experience.

d) Managing Relationships

- Demonstrated well developed people management and organizational management skills;
- Excellent negotiating and networking skills with strong partnerships in academia, technical organizations and as a recognized expert in the practice area.

e) Managing Complexity

- Ability to address global development issues;
- Demonstrated substantive leadership and ability to integrate knowledge with broader strategic, policy and operational objectives.

f) 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;
- Provides constructive coaching and feedback;
- Demonstrates a strong capacity for innovation and creativity in providing strategic policy advice and direction.

g) Judgment/Decision-Making

- Mature judgment and initiative;
- Proven ability to provide strategic direction to the project implementation process;
- Independent judgment and discretion in advising on handling major policy issues and challenges, uses diplomacy and tact to achieve result.

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 (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal. Also, please note that the contract price will be Deliverables/Outputs based - not fixed - subject to change in the cost components.

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:

Matrix 2: Schedule of Payment

Milestone	Estimated Due Date	Payment
Milestone 1: Successful completion and submission of deliverables from Deliverables 1 to 4 (as per Matrix 1 above).	20 working days following contract signature	After satisfactory completion of milestone 1 and submission of duly certified Certification of Payment (CoP) up to 30% of total contract amount.
Milestone 2: Successful completion and submission of deliverables from Deliverables 5 to 6 (as per Matrix 1 above).	07 working days following successful completion of Milestone 1	After satisfactory completion of milestone 2 and submission of duly certified Certification of Payment (CoP) up to 20% of total contract amount.
Milestone 3: Successful completion and submission of Deliverable 7 (as per Matrix 1 above).	10 working days following successful completion of Milestone 2	After satisfactory completion of milestone 3 and submission of duly certified Certification of Payment (CoP) up to 25% of total contract amount.
Milestone 4: Successful completion and submission of Deliverable 8 (as per Matrix 1 above).	03 working days following successful completion of Milestone 3	After satisfactory completion of milestone 4 and submission of duly certified Certification of Payment (CoP) up to 25% of total contract amount.

Recommended Presentation of Offer

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications. Candidates that fail to submit the required information will not be considered.

- 1) **Personal CV or P11:** indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references;
- 2) **Samples of Previous Work:** submission of two samples or extracts of previous works in rules of origin.
- 3) **Financial Proposal:** that indicates the all-inclusive Deliverables/Outputs based total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided. The terms “all-inclusive” implies that all costs (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal. If an Offeror is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the Offeror must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Interested candidates shall submit above documents to the Job Advertisement Website:

https://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_jobs.cfm as one document not later than 26 January 2020.

Interested candidates can find Procurement notice, letter of confirmation of interest and availability and P11

<http://procurement-notice.undp.org/>

Please do not submit financial proposal in this stage. Financial proposal shall be requested from Candidates who are considered technically responsive

EVALUATION

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on the following methodologies:

Step I: Screening and desk review:

Applications will be first screened and only candidates meeting the following minimum criteria will progress to the pool for shortlisting:

- I. Master's Degree or equivalent in international trade, business administration, economics, trade and development or related field.
- II. Practical experience for at least 10 years of work in matters related to rules of origin and the implementation of regional agreements requirements related to rules of origin.
- III. Language proficiency in both English and Arabic written and oral is required

Shortlisted Candidates will be then assessed and scored against the following evaluation criteria:

Technical evaluation Criteria max 100 points (Weighted 70% of total evaluation):

- I. Practical experience for at least 10 years of professional experience related to rules of origin and the implementation of regional agreements requirements related to rules of origin (35 points);
- II. Proofed track record in policy making and negotiations related to rules of origin and submission of two samples or extracts of previous works in rules of origin (30 points);
- III. Strong knowledge of the Pan Arab Free Trade Area and the obstacles related to rules of origin that hinder trade among Arab countries. (35 points);

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation

For those offers considered in the financial evaluation, the lowest price offer will receive 30 points. The other offers will receive points in relation to the lowest offer, based on the following formula: $(PI / Pn) * 30$ where Pn is the financial offer being evaluated and PI is the lowest financial offer received.

Step II: Final evaluation

The final evaluation will combine the scores of desk review and financial proposal with the following weights assigned to each:

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on the **cumulative analysis** methodology (weighted scoring method), where the award of the contract will be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- Responsive/compliant/acceptable; and
- Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Technical Criteria weight: [70%]

Financial Criteria weight: [30%]

Only Individual Consultants obtaining a minimum of 49 points (70%) on the Technical evaluation would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.