INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date: 12 July 2022

REF No.: IC/023/22
Country: Uzbekistan

Description of the assignment: International Consultant for preparing a feasibility study on establishing cross-border economic zones between Uzbekistan and neighboring countries.

Period of assignment/services (if applicable):
Homebased with one possible mission to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 50 w/d in total with a start date of August 1, 2022 and planned to be completed by October 30, 2022:

Application Process:
Interested candidates need to apply online at www.jobs.undp.org and upload requested documents in Part 5 of Procurement Notice no later than July 26, 2022 (New York time). Please combine all your documents into one (1) single PDF document as the system only allows you to upload a maximum one document. Your on-line application submission will be acknowledged to your email address provided in application. If you do not receive an email acknowledgement within 24 hours of submission, your application may not have been received. In such cases, please resubmit the application, if necessary. Link to application at the UNDP Job Site - https://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?cur_job_id=107854 (cut and paste into browser address bar if the link does not work).

You can review detailed Procurement Notice, Terms of Reference and download templates from the UNDP Procurement Notices Site following the link: http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_notice.cfm?notice_id=93316 (cut and paste into browser address bar if the link does not work).

Applications submitted via email, incomplete applications or received after the closing date (July 26, 2022 (New York time) may not be given consideration.

For more detailed information about UNDP Uzbekistan please visit our website at www.uz.undp.org. UNDP is an equal opportunity employer. Qualified female candidates, people with disabilities, and minorities are highly encouraged to apply. UNDP Balance in Manage Policy promotes achievement of gender balance among its staff at all levels. Requests for clarification must be sent in writing to pu.uz@undp.org, ensuring that the reference number above is included in the subject line. UNDP shall endeavor to provide such responses to clarifications in an expeditious manner, but any delay in such response shall not cause an obligation on the part of UNDP to
extend the submission date of the Proposals, unless UNDP deems that such an extension is justified and necessary.

1. BACKGROUND

Due to far location of border areas from the national capital and regional economic centres they often face multiple economic and social challenges reducing the economic opportunities available locally. Economic disadvantage is associated with many social problems such as unemployment, health deficiencies, substance abuse, access to proper infrastructure and living conditions, exclusion from main public services and many other relevant issues, that play a vital role in the prevention of multidimensional poverty. Border areas are also often home to ethnic minorities who face very specific challenges and are excluded from basic economic opportunities and social services. Many governments have therefore introduced measures to promote the economic and social development of these areas, such as national development programmes for border regions.

Promotion of economic and social development in the region has included the use of special economic zones (SEZs). SEZs, free trade areas (FTAs), and special commercial areas (SCAs) all involve differential (generally relaxed) policies on investment, income and trade within a limited geographical area within national boundaries. The commonly specified aims of special economic zones include attraction of domestic and foreign investment, development of industry, encouragement of exports, creation of employment and promotion of tourism.

Connectivity and adequate infrastructure are important elements of attracting investment. Therefore, many special economic zones have been located close to large cities or ports, with easy market access. However, some SEZs have also been built in border areas with the combined aims of encouraging trade and industry, and stimulating the local economy. Such SEZs are commonly referred to as cross-border economic zones (CBEZ), and in the context of globalization, they have become increasingly important and have taken many forms over the past decades.

CBEZ usually lies on a territory that includes border areas of two or more countries, and designed to stimulate economic development based on (i) preferential policy, (ii) financial subsidies from the state and the private sector, and (iii) provision of adequate infrastructure for the implementation of long-term macroeconomic and microeconomic goals.

The main goal of such zones is to promote the use of natural, human, industrial, technological and financial resources, develop cross-border economic cooperation, strengthen ties between border regions, and increase the level of economic development, economic interdependence and complementarity between border regions of neighboring states.

In that context, Uzbekistan, surrounded by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, has great prospects in establishing CBEZs with its neighboring countries. Based on international experience (China, EU, UAE, Russia, etc) and factors, such as connectivity and geography,
available infrastructure, resources and others, it is envisaged to analyze potential costs and benefits of CBEZs between Uzbekistan and its neighboring countries.

UNDP stands ready to assist the Government of Uzbekistan in promoting cross-border trade and investment activities and contributing to the development of Uzbek border areas, facilitation of inclusive economic growth and creation of new job opportunities.

In this regard, UNDP is planning to hire an International Consultant (thereafter Consultant) to perform a feasibility study on establishing cross-border economic zones between Uzbekistan and neighboring countries. The study should specifically analyse development of potential CBEZs between Uzbekistan and (i) Kazakhstan, (ii) Kyrgyzstan and (iii) Tajikistan, and propose key investment plans in priority sectors of such CBEZs.

The feasibility study will be managed by UNDP “Aid for Trade in Uzbekistan (AFT)”. The main objective of AFT is to support the inclusive growth in Uzbekistan through the promotion of trade and enhancement of competitiveness, to support the country’s efforts to reduce poverty and improve peoples’ lives.

The broad purpose of the feasibility study is to get solid evidence and to assess the feasibility to setup and launch CBEZs between Uzbekistan and its neighboring countries that will serve as an engine for developing the supply chain and the production network as a result of border connectivity.

2. FUNCTIONS/ SCOPE OF WORK

Consultant will work under the general guidance and direct supervision of Project’s Manager.

The main objective of Consultant’s work is to carry out a feasibility study on establishing CBEZs between Uzbekistan and neighboring countries. In doing so, Consultant will ensure the qualitative and timely delivery of the following tasks:

Stage I. International experience and Legal/Regulatory assessment
- To identify existing models of CBEZs based on the experience of China, EU, UAE, Russia and other countries;
- To analyze the current legal and regulatory framework for the CBEZ operations in Uzbekistan and its neighboring countries.

Stage II. Designing CBEZ and its operational model
- To develop suitable model of CBEZ between Uzbekistan and (i) Kazakhstan, (ii) Kyrgyzstan and (iii) Tajikistan, based on connectivity and geography, infrastructure, resources and other factors;
- To identify the most suitable geographic areas for establishing CBEZs between Uzbekistan and (i) Kazakhstan, (ii) Kyrgyzstan and (iii) Tajikistan.
- To identify priority sectors for investment in potential CBEZs between Uzbekistan and (i) Kazakhstan, (ii) Kyrgyzstan and (iii) Tajikistan;
- To engage with potential investors and relevant stakeholders, including the Government of Uzbekistan;
- To identify necessary steps to initiate CBEZs and submit recommendations on development of CBEZs between Uzbekistan and (i) Kazakhstan, (ii) Kyrgyzstan and (iii) Tajikistan.

**Stage III. Presentation and validation of the feasibility study**
- To consolidate all relevant parts of the feasibility study developed under the Stages I and II
- To present and discuss the findings of the feasibility study with key stakeholders including UNDP Uzbekistan, the Government of Uzbekistan, independent experts, and others as well as revise them accordingly based on the feedback and recommendations received
- To perform other tasks relevant to the present assignment as requested by UNDP Inclusive Growth Cluster Leader and Project Manager.

### 3. DELIVERABLES AND DEADLINES

The following tentative schedule of deliverables is expected under the current assignment. The final schedule will be agreed upon in the beginning of the assignment. All deliverables should be submitted to UNDP in electronic form in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs/Deliverables</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Instalments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage I: International experience and Legal/Regulatory assessment</td>
<td>August 20, 2022</td>
<td>1st installment (30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage II: Designing CBEZ and its operational model</td>
<td>September 20, 2022</td>
<td>2nd installment (50%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage III. Presentation and validation of a feasibility study</td>
<td>October 20, 2022</td>
<td>3rd installment (20%)</td>
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This is a lump sum contract that should include all costs including the cost of hiring additional consultants and other related costs, if any, required to produce the above deliverables.

### 4. LOCATION OF WORK

The selected consultant will be home based with one possible mission to Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

### 5. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS
Education:
- University degree (Masters or above) in economics, finance, business administration, or other relevant disciplines is required

Experience:
- At least 5 years of proven senior level experience in the field of analytical researches in economic development, foreign trade activities and investments promotion.
- Excellent understanding of CBEZs functioning.
- Proven experience in preparation of feasibility studies is required.
- Previous experience with a development partner or government will be an asset.

Language Requirements:
- Fluency in written and spoken English is required
- Working knowledge of Uzbek or Russian would be an asset.

Competencies:
- Strong data collection, communication, analytical, research, and writing skills
- Client-orientation and excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills
- Ability to use information and communication technology as a tool and resource

6. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS.

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the template provided by UNDP (Annex III);
2. CV with indication of the e-mail and phone contact, but successful consultant will be requested to submit filled in and signed a Personal History Form (P11 form) before contract issuance
3. Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
4. Financial Proposal – specifying a total lump sum amount for the tasks specified in this announcement. The financial proposal shall include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (number of anticipated working days, travel, daily subsistence allowance and any other possible costs), using template provided.

UNDP is an equal opportunity employer. Qualified female candidates, people with disabilities, and minorities are highly encouraged to apply. UNDP Balance in Manage Policy promotes achievement of gender balance among its staff at all levels.

7. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount. Payment will be made in lump sum in three installments upon completion of the tasks/works indicated in the TOR and their acceptance by Project Manager and Inclusive Growth Cluster, UNDP Uzbekistan as well as submission of payment documents (PEF, CFP, etc.). In order to assist the requesting unit in the comparison of financial
proposals, the financial proposal will include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including travel, per diems, and number of anticipated working days).

**Travel:**

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel including visa cost. In general, UNDP does not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources.

In the case of unforeseeable travel, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit and Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

**8. EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the offers will be arranged according to *Cumulative analysis.*

The award of the contract will be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

a) responsive/compliant/acceptable

b) having received the highest score out of the set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

* Technical Criteria weight – 70%
* Financial Criteria weight – 30%

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points for the Technical Criteria will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Max. Point</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical</strong></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education and Language skills</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proven working experience</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proven experience preparation of feasibility studies</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Excellent understanding of CBEZ functioning.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30</td>
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**9. ANNEXES**

ANNEX 1 - TERMS OF REFERENCES (TOR)

ANNEX 2 - INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

ANNEX 3 - OFFEROR’S LETTER TO UNDP CONFIRMING INTEREST AND AVAILABILITY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR (IC) ASSIGNMENT AND FINANCIAL SUBMISSION FORM (BREAKDOWN OF COSTS SUPPORTING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE FINANCIAL PROPOSAL)