I. Job Information

| Job title: | International Consultant for preparing a feasibility study on establishing cross-border economic zones between Uzbekistan and neighboring countries |
| Type of Contract: | Individual Contract |
| Project Title/Department: | UNDP “Aid for Trade in Uzbekistan” project |
| Duration of the service: | 50 w/d during August - October 2022 |
| Work Status: | Part time |
| Duty station: | Home based with one possible mission to Tashkent, Uzbekistan |
| Reports to: | Project Manager of “Aid for Trade in Uzbekistan” |

II. Background Information

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.

### III. 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.

IV. 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage I: International experience and Legal/Regulatory</td>
<td>August 20, 2022</td>
<td>1st installment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>(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</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(50%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage III. Presentation and validation of a feasibility</td>
<td>October 20, 2022</td>
<td>3rd installment</td>
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<tr>
<td>study</td>
<td></td>
<td>(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.

V. Monitoring and control
The obligations of Consultant under this Contract will be fulfilled after the submission of final drafts of deliverables defined by the current TOR and upon acceptance by the UNDP “Aid for Trade in Uzbekistan” project.

VI. Qualification Requirements
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.
o Excellent understanding of CBEZs functioning.
o Proven experience in preparation of feasibility studies is required.
o Previous experience with a development partner or government will be an asset.

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

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

VI. Signatures- Post Description Certification
Incumbent

____________________________ Signature Date

Kamoliddin Nuritdinov,
Aid for Trade in Uzbekistan, Project Manager

____________________________ Signature Date