ACCELERATING TRANSPORT AND TRADE CONNECTIVITY IN EASTERN SOUTH ASIA (ACCESS) – BHUTAN PROJECT

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PROJECT COORDINATOR

1.   BACKGROUND

The World Bank's Accelerating Trade and Transport Connectivity in Eastern South Asia (ACCESS) Multi-Phase Programmatic Approach (MPA) consists of a series of linked transport and trade facilitation projects in eastern South Asia designed to increase the efficiency and resilience of trade and transport along selected regional corridors. The ACCESS Program was approved on June 28, 2022, with Phase 1 covering Bangladesh ($753m) and Nepal ($275m). ACCESS Phase 2 consists of a $155m notional allocation for Bhutan. The proposed project development objective is to enhance the resilience and efficiency of trade and transport along selected corridors in Bhutan ("Project").

The ACCESS program framework consists of three main pillars: (a) Digital Systems for Trade: provision of digital solutions and automation, designed to eliminate manual and paper-based processes, resulting in faster border crossing times; (b) Green and Resilient Infrastructure: enhancing regional corridors, infrastructure, and trade gateways; and (c) Institutional and Policy Strengthening for Transport and Trade: technical assistance and capacity building for trade and customs modernization.

The Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) is currently preparing the Bhutan phase of the ACCESS Project ($155m), including but not limited to targeted road investments, digital trade systems, and relevant enablers that are aligned with ACCESS objectives. The implementing agencies for the project are the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT, the lead agency) and the Government Technology Agency (GovTech), in coordination with other relevant stakeholders and technical partners. In addition, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formed to oversee high-level technical issues related to ACCESS. The Committee is Chaired by the MoIT Secretary, and co-chaired by GovTech Secretary. Currently the committee consists of representatives from MoF, GovTech, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, In October 2023, the RGoB received a Project Preparation Advance (PPA) of US$2.5 million to support the preparation of the proposed ACCESS Project, until approval of the eventual $155m loan.

The PPA is spread over 1 year. GovTech will lead the implementation of Component 1 (Digital Systems for Trade) that consist of the implementation of a National Single Window for Trade (NSW), digital enablers, cybersecurity, data center enhancement and digital connectivity. The NSW is overseen by a multi-sectoral management committee that consists of GovTech, MoICE, RMA, and MoF. Another PMU is setup in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport for Component 2, which will have its own PC. The two PMUs are expected to liaise closely for report and coordination, including with the Project Steering Committee, MoF, and the World Bank team.

The GovTech Agency, the Employer, intends to recruit an appropriately qualified individual to render consulting services for project coordination and monitoring as a Project Coordinator for the GovTech PMU ACCESS Project.

The services will be procured following the latest World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016, revised November 2017 & August, 2018 and September 2023. The proposed PMU would support the preparation and implementation of the ACCESS Project, and the Project Coordinator is a key member of the PMU.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of the consultancy assignment is to recruit a Project Coordinator (PC) to provide coordination and operational support to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and serve as the key contact point for the day-to-day running of the PMU at GovTech for the ACCESS Project. The PC will reinforce the role and capacity of the GovTech as the key implementing agencies for effective and efficient preparation and implementation of the overall project. The PC shall work full-time under the GovTech for the implementation of the Project, and will directly report to the Project Director (DDT Director, GovTech), and work closely with the project focals from the implementing teams. The PC will also be responsible for liaising closely with the MoIT PC, PSC, and World Bank teams.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

As a key member of the ACCESS PMU at GovTech, the Project Coordinator will perform the following duties/tasks (ToR):

3.1. Monitor progress of all activities under preparation under the Project.
3.2. Coordinate planning, preparation, and implementation of Project activities, including with MoIT, MoF, and supporting high-level coordination with the NSW Management Committee.
3.3. Ensure and support the preparation of all documents and reports required for the delivery of the Project for all implementing teams such as financial reports, progress reports, procurement plans, operational manuals, TORs, bidding documents, etc. as per the requirement of the project.
3.4. Coordinate with the PMU at DoST, MoIT and PSC Secretariat, to prepare for Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings, record minutes, follow up and to review the progress of the Project's preparation and implementation as well as to identify and agree on key actions required.
3.5. Monitor and evaluate the progress of the Project and submit timely reports following the provisions of the Project Agreement.
3.6. Assist and ensure timely procurement of consultants, works and equipment under the Project.
3.7. Assist the focal persons to update all documents in Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP).
3.8. Prepare a timely Interim Unaudited Financial Report (IUFR) and submit it to the World Bank for clearance, in coordination with the Finance Officer.
3.9. Maintain documentation of the project and publication of reports relevant to the Project.
3.10. Coordinate meetings, relevant trainings, workshops, record minutes and follow up on the decisions.
3.11. Setup and lead regular GovTech PMU project meetings, and progress meetings with the World Bank and record minutes where required.
3.12. Hold regular meetings with the PC at PMU, DoST, MoIT to update on implementation progress, bottlenecks, and high-level issues that need to be elevated for discussion with the PSC and World Bank teams.

3.13. Maintain close communication with the MoIT PMU, Project Director, implementing teams, the World Bank, and other Project stakeholders.

3.14. Any other related task assigned by the Project Director and project committees concerning the project.

4.   QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

4.1.   Education:

A bachelor's degree preferably in Information Technology, business administration, project management, or a related discipline. The preference will be given to the candidates with a master's degree in the above discipline and/or a certification in project management.

4.2. Experience:

10 years of relevant work experience in a position having responsibilities with a substantial content of his/her position in project coordination or project management. Experience in Government, international financiers, or donors preferred.

5.   REUMERATION AND COMPENSATION

The consultant shall be provided with the remuneration and benefits as per the contract. The contract will mention a lump sum amount of remuneration per month. The consultant shall be responsible to clear all taxes including the income tax as applicable in Bhutan. The normal government calendar and the working hours shall be applicable. The consultant shall be stationed at the ACCESS PMU office at GovTech, with possible visits to works sites. In case of travel outside Thimphu on project-related assignments, the consultant shall be paid daily subsistence allowance as per the contract to cover the expenses (food, lodging and travel).

6.   INPUTS FROM THE EMPLOYER

The Employer will be responsible for providing the following inputs to the PC;

6.1. Office space and equipment at the PMU office with basic furniture, internet access, stationery, etc.

6.2. The Employer will also facilitate the Consultant to get trained on the World Bank's STEP, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and other trainings as needed.

6.3. All relevant documents on the Project.

6.4. Authoritative support for effective coordination and monitoring.

7. **REPORTING**

The Project Coordinator will work under the guidance of the Project Director of the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the ACCESS Project. He/she shall be stationed at the ACCESS PMU office at GovTech, with possible visits to work sites when required.

8. **CONTRACT DURATION**

The duration of the consulting services will be 12 (Twelve) person-months (full time). However, the contract duration may be increased based on performance and project need.

9. **SELECTION METHOD**

A Consultant will be selected following the Selection of Individual Consultant in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, September 2023.[1]

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[1] https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/brief/procurement-policies-and-guidance#Guidelines