



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

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL TRADE FACILITATION EXPERT

1. Purpose

The Government Technology Agency (GovTech), in collaboration with the Department of Trade (DoT), Department of Revenue and Customs (DRC), and the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA), is undertaking the second phase of the Bhutan National Single Window (BNSW) to facilitate trade. The first phase, completed between October 2024 and May 2025, produced the BNSW blueprint, including governance structures, functional architecture, legal frameworks, and preparatory documents for system acquisition.

The purpose of this TOR is to recruit a **National Individual Trade Facilitation Expert** for the implementation of BNSW. The expert will be responsible for coordinating the implementation process, ensuring alignment with trade facilitation principles, and delivering on project milestones in close coordination with stakeholders and technical teams.

2. Background

The BNSW is a core initiative under Bhutan's trade facilitation agenda and is supported by the World Bank Group through the ACCESS project. The BNSW aims to streamline and automate trade-related procedures by enabling traders and regulatory agencies to submit and process documents through a single electronic platform.

ACCESS will finance the design, development, and implementation of the BNSW solution and the associated streamlining of procedures of all regulatory border agencies and has formed a BNSW working group, comprising of members from Department of Revenue and Customs, Department of Trade, Royal Monetary Authority and the GovTech Agency. The BNSW solution will improve transparency and integrity, lower trade transaction costs, improve inter-agency coordination, and reduce the time taken to clear goods.

The BNSW implementation is divided into:

- Phase 1: Blueprint and system design (completed)
- Phase 2: Acquisition, development, and rollout of the BNSW system (current phase).

3. Objective of the assignment

The Trade Facilitation Expert will lead the BNSW implementation phase, ensuring effective project coordination, stakeholder engagement, and adherence to international best practices in trade facilitation. The Trade Facilitation Expert will serve as the principal coordinator and domain expert, driving the overall project toward successful implementation.

To support the successful acquisition, development, management, and implementation of the BNSW, a qualified Trade Facilitation Expert is required to oversee the entire project lifecycle.



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4. Scope of Services

The BNSW implementation will focus on the actual implementation of the BNSW, including the establishment of the operational entity, the development, implementation, and rollout of the BNSW system, training, and capacity building in the affected Government Agencies (GAs) as well as Traders. S/he will work in close consultation and collaboration with the BNSW Working group and the cross-functional agencies, and report to the BNSW Management committee on the progress and implementation status of the project.

The Expert will be responsible for:

- 4.1. Lead and manage the overall implementation of BNSW in alignment with trade facilitation priorities.
- 4.2. Developing a comprehensive project plan, including timelines, budgets, and resource allocation.
- 4.3. Coordinating with government agencies, trade bodies, private sector stakeholders, and technical teams to ensure alignment of objectives and smooth execution.
- 4.4. Serve as the primary interface between the BNSW Management Committee, Working Group, vendor(s), GovTech PUM, and the World Bank ACCESS team.
- 4.5. Oversee and track the implementation plan, monitor risks, and propose mitigation strategies.
- 4.6. Support legal, institutional, and procedural reforms to ensure BNSW readiness.
- 4.7. Supervising the development of technical infrastructure, software applications, and data security protocols in close coordination with the technical lead.
- 4.8. Provide subject-matter expertise on international standards (WCO, WTO, ASEAN Single Window, etc.).
- 4.9. Lead change management and stakeholder sensitization efforts across public and private sectors.
- 4.10. Report progress, prepare documentation, and participate in steering committee meetings.
- 4.11. Ensuring post-implementation support and continuous improvement mechanisms are in place.
- 4.12. Ensure proper documentation of the BNSW project plan, expenditure, portfolios, project documents, etc, for reference and record.
- 4.13. Collaborate with the working group & agencies, to develop a plan to roll out the BNSW nationally, including a plan for Capacity Building.

5. Deliverables

The key deliverables expected from the Project Manager include:

- 5.1. Detailed project implementation plan with milestones.
- 5.2. Regular progress reports and risk assessments.
- 5.3. Stakeholder engagement and communication strategy.
- 5.4. BNSW system design and functional requirements document (FRS).
- 5.5. Oversight of software development and integration with existing systems.
- 5.6. Testing, Training and capacity-building programs for users.
- 5.7. Review and validation of technical deliverables (from a trade facilitation perspective)
- 5.8. Post-implementation impact assessment and sustainability roadmap.



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6. Qualifications and Experience

Education

- A Master's or Bachelor's degree in International Trade, International Business, International Commerce, or related disciplines with subjects including Customs Administration, Trade Facilitation.
- Training on Public Procurement.
- Certifications on WCO, UNCTAD to professional body of international repute Trade is preferred.

Experience

- At least fifteen (15) years of relevant experience in managing trade and customs reform projects or similar large-scale trade facilitation programs/projects is highly desirable. Strong understanding of trade facilitation concepts, customs procedures, and international trade agreements.
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- Proven experience having worked in the relevant field (Customs, Trade, Land Customs stations/Liasons authorities, or trade & CusDec related government agencies, involving import, export, and goods transit.
- Excellent Project management, communications & stakeholder engagement skills, strategic thinking/leadership, and problem-solving skills.
- Attended training or certification programs in WCO or WTO-related customs declaration and trade facilitation courses; Project Management (e.g., PMP, PRINCE2) will be an added advantage.
- Experience in business process analysis, gap analysis, stakeholder mapping and process diagnostics (BPR and BPI), particularly as it relates to the processing of import, export, and transit of cargo;
- Fair knowledge in developing strategic information systems plans for trade facilitation, complex enterprise software systems implementation, extensive knowledge in informatics management, and current technology trends;
- Broad understanding of trade & CusDec-related legal and regulatory issues. Knowledge of legal and regulatory impacts on ICT systems for trade and trade facilitation is highly desirable.
- Experience in the development and implementation of change management, risk management strategies, and managing stakeholder expectations.
- Experience in public sector procurement, including in the competitive acquisition of large-scale complex ICT systems, as well as the competitive procurement of service providers or operators is desirable.
- Previous experience of having worked in Bhutan on trade, customs, and goods transit-related projects would be a distinct advantage.
- Fluent in English & Dzongkha (both written and Spoken/Verbal) to ensure inclusive stakeholder engagement, including those who may not be proficient in English. This will help gather ground-



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level feedback and ensure that proposed improvements reflect the realities faced by traders, the private sector, industries, freight forwarders, etc of the BNSW.

- Considering the complex, multi-dimensional nature of this role, an interview will also be conducted as part of the selection process.

7. Duration of Assignment

The Consultant will be initially engaged on a full time for a duration of Twelve (12) person-months and the contract may be renewed yearly for the project period based on performance and project need.

8. Reporting Arrangement

The Consultant will work will report to the Project Director of the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the ACCESS Project. 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.

9. Working Arrangement

The GovTech Agency will serve as the Technical Lead Implementing Agency, partnering with the Department of Trade and the Department of Revenue and Customs (the Business Lead). In close collaboration with the Royal Monetary Authority, these entities will coordinate and guide all stakeholders to ensure their full participation and effective contribution to the BNSW implementation. The BNSW Working Group, composed of key focal points from relevant agencies, will work full-time and onsite alongside the Expert and the BNSW supplier/vendor. They will provide periodic updates to the BNSW Management Committee to ensure alignment and progress.

Beside the responsibilities mentioned above, the Expert will also be responsible for planning resources, managing project throughput, assuring the quality of outputs according to the TORs, and overseeing the achievement of the KPIs identified for BNSW in the results framework. The Expert shall endeavor to conduct the project according to the WBG's standards and methodology, project management best practices, and will be expected to utilize the WBG's proprietary methodology templates for the acquisition, development, and implementation of BNSW to facilitate the speedy development of its product components.

The Project manager is expected to adopt a collaborative approach that involves multi-stakeholder consultations and contributions in delivering the Services. Where appropriate, workshops and other participative events should be held to facilitate frequent interaction with traders, agencies for their active participation during the design, development, testing and decision-making throughout the project execution.

10. Consultant's Obligations

The Consultant shall be fully responsible to coordinate and manage his assignment and reporting with the PD/Project Team with high integrity and ethical behavior. He/shall be responsible to coordinate Bi-weekly progress meetings and monthly written updates. There should not be any conflict of interest



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while working for the project activities and the Consultant should keep all the project information confidential.

11. Remuneration 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. 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).

12. Facilities and Support Services

The RGOB, with support from the World Bank, will provide:

- A working space and workstation.
- Information and necessary technical support on the trade facilitation systems and services existing in the country.
- Relevant Reports, studies, and information pertaining to Trade Facilitation in Bhutan;
- Existing laws and Regulations related to import/export activities; and
- Initial coordination and liaison with all appropriate government agencies, the trader communities, and other stakeholders of the BNSW.
- Applicable international or local communications, such as the use of telephone, teleconferencing, internet, and facsimile required for the purpose of the services;
- Printing and dispatching of the reports to be produced for the services;
- Workshops and other Participatory fora including refreshments as appropriate.

13. Selection Procedures

Selection of the Consultant will follow the procedures for Selection of Individual Consultants as set forth in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Sixth Edition, February 2025.