

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Contracting a Consultancy Firm for

Global Regulatory Shifts and Business Resilience After LDC Graduation

A. Project Title
IP Transformative Economic Policy Programme (TEPP II)
B. Project Description
<p>IP TEPP II serves as an important platform to complement all efforts on trade- and investment-related support for the upcoming LDC graduation of Bangladesh. One of the outputs of the project is to improve engagement with the private sector through regular consultations on business, trade policies and investment climate. This engagement is aimed to improve coordination with the private sector through regular consultation and information exchange on trade barriers, regulatory barriers, investment climate, trade agreements, export promotional measures and supporting specific exporter groups (e.g., women traders, SME exporters etc.). This will support the private sector in their preparation and adjustment to the changing trade landscape. Accommodating and responding to the private sector’s specific requests and concerns through the consultative process will ensure that their needs are directly addressed, fostering a more responsive and supportive environment for their growth and adaptation to LDC graduation challenges.</p> <p>The topics for discussions are crucial challenges faced by the private sector businesses, which is determined through consultation with private sector associations. These are demand-led and can include but will not be limited to post-LDC trade preferences and other provisions, significance of product standards, changes in rules of origin provisions in different markets, and export incentives. Leveraging and equipping the private sector for an inclusive and sustainable graduation is a key mandate for these discussions. There is special focus on export diversification, tariff and non-tariff barriers, working conditions, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) compliance, and their impact on trade policy.</p>
C. Scope of Work and Overall Objectives
<p>The consulting firm will be responsible for the following tasks:</p> <p>Task 1: Inception and Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct a desk review on the prevailing context relevant to the dialogue themes.• Develop an Inception Report, which will include methodology, work plan, proposed dialogue themes, and logistical arrangements.• Develop a stakeholder mapping of key private sector actors, business associations, chambers, relevant ministries/ agencies and think-tanks, ensuring inclusivity, diversity, and sectoral representation. <p>Task 2: Facilitation of Dialogues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a structured format and agenda for each of the three dialogues and share with TEPP UNDP with a concept note for each dialogue.• Facilitate three dialogues in close coordination with TEPP UNDP.

- Develop summary reports on the three dialogues, including key discussion points and proposed recommendations.

Task 3: Develop Policy Briefs

- Develop three concise policy briefs with actionable recommendations (approx. 5–7 pages each), which should include a background, prevailing challenges, summary of stakeholder views and actionable policy recommendations with next steps for implementation
- Incorporate feedback from TEPP, UNDP for developing the final versions.

Objectives

- Facilitate informed dialogue with businesses, associations, Chambers and policy makers on selected trade and investment issues
- Synthesize findings from these consultations into evidence-based and actionable policy recommendations.
- Develop three policy briefs, each of which will be under dialogue theme—capturing key discussion outcomes and proposed policy actions.

D. Expected Results and Deliverables

The deliverables for this assignment include:

1. Inception report

An Inception report needs to be prepared with details on the firm’s understanding of the concept of the assignment, methodology, design, and delivery. The workplan and timeline need to be clearly specified as per the ToR.

2. Organize three Multistakeholder Dialogues

The assignment will include organizing three multistakeholder dialogues as per consultation between the hired firm and TEPP UNDP. The focusing areas will be private sector development and preparedness for LDC graduation in the context of the changing global regulations. Summary reports on the consultations will be prepared and submitted to UNDP.

3. Develop Three Policy Briefs

Develop three concise policy briefs with actionable recommendations (approx. 5–7 pages each), which should include a background, prevailing challenges, a summary of stakeholder views, and actionable policy recommendations with next steps for implementation

Specific Deliverables and Payment Terms

Deliverables/ Outputs	Payment Percentage	Target Due date
1. Developing an inception report	20%	05 March 2026

2. Organizing two dialogues with the private sector, business associations, and the relevant government ministry/agency, and developing a summary of consultations	50%	08 April 2026
3. Organizing one dialogue with the private sector, business associations, and the relevant government ministry/agency, and developing a summary of consultations	20%	23 April 2026
4. Submission of three concise policy briefs with actionable recommendations	10%	15 May 2026

E. Institutional Arrangement

The Consulting Firm will be contracted by UNDP Bangladesh under UNDP’s standard rules and regulations. The contracted firm will report to UNDP. The Project Manager, IP TEPP II will provide oversight and quality assurance and will also carry out a performance evaluation at the end of the assignment. UNDP will play the role of a facilitator and will be responsible for ensuring the quality of the reports.

F. Duration of the Work and Duty Station

The duration of the contract will be 3 months with expected start date from 25 February 2026. The Firm is expected to work from its own offices, attend meetings at UNDP offices as required, and organize dialogues with stakeholders.

G. Qualification of the Successful Contractor

The key qualifications of the Firm, Team Leader, and other team members are listed below. Firms are welcome to propose additional team members to meet the objectives of the consultancy within the allotted time period. CVs must be tailored to demonstrate competence against these requirements. Failure to demonstrate the experience of the Firm and individual team members against these eligibility criteria will result in proposals being discarded.

Minimum eligibility criteria of the Firm

1. At least 8 years of experience in conducting research and policy advocacy related to private sector development, export competitiveness, sustainability, trade policy, and sectoral dynamics with UN agency / International NGO / bilateral donor/ Government (please submit a minimum of two copies of the Contract as proof).
2. At least 8 years of working experience with the government directly on research-driven policy advocacy (please submit a minimum of one copy of the Contract as proof)
3. Having a multidisciplinary team including expertise in trade, sustainability, gender, business policy, and quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
4. Company profile, which should not exceed fifteen (15) pages, including any printed brochure relevant to the services being provided.
5. Legal Documents:
 - a. Valid Business Registration Certificate/ Trade License (including Articles of Association- if applicable)
 - b. TIN and VAT /BIN certificate
6. Last two years' audited financial statement – income statement and balance sheet to indicate financial stability, liquidity, credit standing, market reputation, etc.

7. List of clients: name of the organization, address, name of the contact person, e-mail address, contact number, and description of the work done with the amount.

Along with other manpower required for carrying out the assignment, the Firm should provide detailed information and curriculum vitae of the following key personnel with the Proposal:

Minimum eligibility criteria of the team CVs of Key personnels

Team Leader (01)

- Minimum master's degree in Economics, Development Studies, Social Science, Business Studies or related discipline(s)
- At least 10 years of working experience in conducting policy advocacy based on primary data collection, stakeholder consultation and secondary data analysis on private sector development
- At least 05 years of working experience in the areas of private sector development, working in collaboration with the government

Research Associate (01)

- Minimum master's degree in Economics, Development Studies, Social Science, Business Studies or related discipline(s)
- At least 3 years of working experience in conducting research and policy advocacy based on primary data collection, secondary data analysis and stakeholder consultation

Project Coordinator (01)

- Minimum master's degree in development studies, Social Science, Business Studies or related discipline(s)
- At least 3 years of working experience in conducting research and policy advocacy based on primary data collection, secondary data analysis and stakeholder consultation

Note: Please share the signed CV (maximum 5 pages for each) for the positions

Competencies

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards (human rights, peace, understanding between peoples and nations, tolerance, integrity, respect, and impartiality)
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Functional Competencies:

- Demonstrates openness to change, flexibility, and ability to manage complexities.
- Proven strong written, analytical and communication skills.

H. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

The remuneration of the successful contractor will be fixed, and bids should be submitted on this basis. No adjustment will be given for the period and will be determined by the specified outputs as per this ToR. The

price should consider all HR costs and professional fees, travel costs, subsistence and ancillary expenses. The financial proposal shall specify the total lump sum amount and must be all-inclusive (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, medical allowances, communications costs etc.)

UNDP shall affect payments, by bank transfer to the consultancy firm's bank account, upon acceptance by UNDP of the deliverables specified in the ToR. Payments will be based on milestone deliverables upon submission of the invoice and certification of the work completed

- 1st payment: 20% of the total contract value will be paid after submission and acceptance of the inception report within 5 days of the signing of the contract
- 2nd payment: 50% of the total contract value will be paid after organizing two dialogues with private sector, business associations and relevant government ministry/agency within 45 days of signing the contract
- 3rd payment: 20% of the total contract value will be paid after organizing the 3rd dialogue with private sector, business associations and relevant government ministry/agency within 25 days of signing the contract
- 4th and final payment: 10% of the total contract value will be paid after submission of 3 reports with consultations during dialogues and actionable policy recommendations within 90 days after signing of contract.

I. Recommended Presentation of proposal

Interested Firms must submit the following detailed proposal made up of documentation to demonstrate the qualifications of the prospective Firm, to enable appraisal of competing bids. This should include technical and financial proposals, details of which are listed below.

Technical Proposal

- Firm/information –
- Name of firm/and details of registration, address and bank account; business registration certificate and corporate documents (Articles of association or other founding authority); description of present activities, and audited financial statements)
- Audited financial statement of last two (2) years– income statement and balance sheet to indicate financial stability, liquidity, credit standing, and market reputation, etc.
- Profile (the nature of business, field of expertise, licenses, certifications, accreditations) of the firm/should not exceed fifteen (15) pages, including any printed brochure relevant to the services being procured
- Relevant Experience –
 - Description of experience in projects of a comparable nature, with a specific description of the technical specialization of the firm in undertaking large-scale data dashboards, and a list of current and past assignments of the firm.
- Relevant Publications –
 - The firm/must submit evidence of relevant data projects
- Process –

- The technical proposal needs to contain a detailed description of the process the contractor intends to follow to complete the tasks, including a detailed work plan and time schedule for completion/delivery of the final product, which, after selection of the firm, will be agreed upon by the Project in consultation with the relevant stakeholders
- Human Resources –
 - The Technical Proposal needs to contain a list and detailed information on the proposed Human Resources which will be utilised for the task, including their respective qualifications and relevant experience/exposure. Besides, the technical proposal needs to mention the responsibilities and minimum engagement (months/days) of each proposed HR.
 - CVs of Team Leader, Solution Architect, Software Engineer, Data Scientist and Visualizer, User Interface Designer, Infrastructure Engineer, Documentation Expert.
 - Two references must be provided by the contractor. These should be from the past two years and should relate to projects on which proposed team members worked.

Note: If the Bidder is a group of legal entities that will form or have formed a Joint Venture (JV), Consortium or Association for the Proposal, they shall confirm in their Proposal that : (i) they have designated one party to act as a lead entity, duly vested with authority to legally bind the members of the JV, Consortium or Association jointly and severally, which shall be evidenced by a duly notarized Agreement among the legal entities, and submitted with the Proposal; and (ii) if they are awarded the contract, the contract shall be entered into, by and between UNDP and the designated lead entity, who shall be acting for and on behalf of all the member entities comprising the joint venture. After the Deadline for Submission of the Proposal, the lead entity identified to represent the JV, Consortium or Association shall not be altered without the prior written consent of UNDP.

Financial Proposal (including fee, travel cost, DSA, and other relevant expenses)

- The financial proposal shall specify a total delivery amount (in USD or BDT), including the cost of human resources, development, testing, documentation, hosting, maintenance, software license, travel costs, subsistence per diems and overhead charges. The local firms will submit the financial proposal in BDT, whereas the international firms will share their budget in USD.
- To assist UNDP in the comparison of financial proposals, the financial proposals will include a breakdown of this amount, disclosing the key assumption employed in costing.
- The cost of preparing a proposal and negotiating a contract, including any related travel, is not reimbursable as a direct cost of the assignment.
- All applications must include (as an attachment) the above documents. Applications without financial proposal will be treated as incomplete and will not be considered for further assessment.

Template for Budget Estimate

Given in the Annex I

J. Specification and Evaluation (70%)

In response to the ToR, the contractor will have to submit a technical proposal as per the Terms of Reference and a Financial Proposal separately. The tender selection committee will first evaluate the technical proposal of the institutions/firms. Any institutions/firms getting more than 70% of the maximum achievable points (i.e.,

490 points) in the technical proposal will be considered for financial appraisal, and if the financial proposal is approved, then for contracting. The financial proposal will be evaluated based on the lowest price.

The total scoring points for both evaluations will be 1000; the technical evaluation will be based on 700 points, and the rest 300 points are to be allotted to the bidder proposing the lowest price.

A cumulative analysis weighted-scoring method will be applied to evaluate the firm. The award of the contract will be made to the tenderer whose offer has been evaluated and determined as follows:

- a) Responsive/compliant/acceptable with reference to this ToR and;
- b) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to this solicitation, with the ratio set at 700:300, respectively.

In this methodology, the technical criteria weight is 700, and the Financial Criteria weight is 300. Accordingly, the maximum number of points assigned to the financial proposal is allocated to the lowest price proposal. All other price proposals receive points in the inverse proposal.

The formula for evaluation is as follows:

$P = y (\mu/z)$ Where

P = points for the financial proposal being evaluated

y = maximum number of points for the financial proposal μ =
price of the lowest-priced proposal

z = price of the proposal being evaluated

The proposal obtaining the overall highest score after adding the score of the technical proposal and the financial proposal is the proposal that offers the best value for money.

The technical and financial proposal should be submitted following the UNDP guidelines and formats. UNDP Procurement reserves the right to accept or reject any.

Only a firm/obtaining a minimum of 490 points and above would be considered for the financial Evaluation.

Broad Three Evaluation Criteria:

1. Firm
2. Project Management Methodology
3. Team Experience

K. Responsibilities of the Contractor regarding cost component

All costs related to this assignment, including logistics, office arrangements, accommodation, etc., shall be borne by the contractor.

L. Responsibilities of UNDP regarding cost component

UNDP shall pay the lump sum amount quoted in the financial proposal and shall be paid as achievement of milestones as per the ToR.

Achieving the deliverables shall be the sole responsibility of the contractor. Any delay shall be communicated to the UNDP along with a plan to remedy the delay.

M. Identification of Risk and Risk Mitigation Plan

The firm will be solely responsible for the deliverables and will be responsible for achieving these milestones. Any delay should be reported prior to the time point of the milestones as per the submitted work plan.